



Ontario Energy Board

Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario

Overview of Consultation on Energy Issues Relating to Low-Income Consumers (EB-2008-0150)

LEAP Conservation Working Group

June 25, 2009

How Did We Get Here?

- In EB-2006-0034 (Enbridge Gas Distribution rates), LIEN proposed a “rate affordability assistance program”:
 - Board decided (with a dissenting opinion) that it did not have jurisdiction to consider rates based on income.
- On May 16, 2008, the court ruled (with a dissenting opinion) that the Board has the jurisdiction, but not the obligation to consider ability to pay in setting rates.
- On July 2, 2008, the Board announced it was beginning a consultation process on the subject of low-income energy consumers in relation to their use of natural gas and electricity. Consultation began with:
 - Stakeholder conference in Sept. 2008, followed by written comments.
 - Report by Concentric Energy Advisors on measures used in other jurisdictions to assist low-income energy consumers.

How Did We Get Here?

- March 10, 2009:
 - *Report of the Board: Low-Income Energy Assistance Program*
 - Financial Assistance & Conservation components of LEAP
 - *Notice of Proposal to Amend Codes*
 - Customer Service component of LEAP
- Parties submitted written comments.
- May 11, 2009: invitation for nominations for participation on 2 LEAP working groups – Conservation & Financial Assistance.
 - *NOTE: customer service component addressed through code amendment process, and not working groups.*
- June 5, 2009: announcement of working group membership.
- May 13, 2009: direction to gas utilities to separate low-income portfolio from main DSM portfolio.



- Low-income Energy Assistance Program (“LEAP”)
- Assistance with 3 components (tool box)
 - Emergency financial (bill) assistance
 - Tailored customer service rules
 - **Targeted DSM/CDM**

What does the LEAP Report say about Conservation?

- DSM & CDM effective tools to assist low-income consumers reduce overall energy use;
- There should be CDM & DSM programs specially designed for, & targeted to low-income consumers;
- Failure to meet TRC should not disqualify low-income programs from inclusion in portfolio;
- Distributors should have appropriate incentives to create targeted programs;
- Access for all customers that pay for programs;
- Guiding principles applicable to Conservation:
 - Distributors should partner with social service agencies; and
 - Eligibility for assistance should be based on need, as determined by a social service agency.