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For Immediate Release

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New rules for energy retailers in 2017

TORONTO, ONT. (Jan. 31, 2017) —Tough new rules to better protect households and small businesses in their dealings with energy retailers came into effect on January 1, 2017.

Following a review of the *Energy Consumer Protection Act, 2010*, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) recommended several new measures to strengthen consumer protection.

New measures that came into force on January 1:

- Ban door-to-door energy retailers from signing you up for an energy contract while they are at your home
- Place limits on when energy retailers can come to your home to market or advertise their business
- Extend the time that consumers can cancel an energy contract without penalty to 30 days after they receive their second bill under the energy contract
- Require all energy contracts – even those entered into online – to be verified by the consumer 10-45 days after they've entered into the contract to confirm that they wish to continue with it
- Eliminate auto-renewal of all energy contracts
- Reduce cancellation fees for most residential consumers
- Require energy retailers to include OEB-approved plain language terms and conditions in their energy contracts

Door-to-door energy retailers can present consumers with information at the door of their home at certain times, but they can no longer sign them up for a contract when they are there. This gives residential consumers more time to consider whether an energy contract is right for them and make an informed decision.

Consumers can visit the OEB's website to access tips so they have the information they need to make decisions about their energy supply that are right for them. Consumers can also access complaint data, read about enforcement action taken, and report any concerns they have about their interactions with an energy retailer through the website.

The OEB encourages all consumers to visit its website and learn more about their rights and the rules that energy retailers have to follow, and to contact the OEB if they have any concerns.

Quotes:

“Protecting Ontario’s energy consumers is at the heart of what the OEB does every day,” says Rosemarie Leclair, OEB Chair and CEO. “We believe these new rules will give consumers greater confidence that they are protected against unfair business practices. Now that consumers can’t be asked to sign up for contracts while an energy retailer is at their home, they can make choices about their energy supply at their own pace and with better information.”

“It is critical that we hear from consumers to understand their concerns and how we, as the independent regulator tasked with protecting energy consumers, can better protect their interests,” says Martine Band, Associate General Counsel at the OEB. “It’s our goal to give consumers a voice in their energy sector – a voice that has impact – and we want consumers to know that they are being heard.”

About the Ontario Energy Board:

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is an independent and impartial public agency. We make decisions that serve the public interest. Our goal is to promote a sustainable and efficient energy sector that provides consumers with reliable energy services at a reasonable cost.

Resources

ECPA Backgrounder

oeb.ca/knockknock

Twitter: [@OntEnergyBoard](https://twitter.com/OntEnergyBoard)

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Contact Us

For more information, please refer to the attached backgrounder, visit the OEB website at oeb.ca or contact us directly.

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