

Consumer Alert

Communities Affected: Toronto, Kingston, Oakville, Ontario | Date: September, 27, 2019.

Consumer Alert: Beware of disconnection scams.

Consumers are reporting being contacted by scam artists pretending to be from their utility and threatening to disconnect electricity service if they don't receive payment immediately.

If you receive such a message by phone or text or letter, contact your utility **directly using the telephone number printed on your bill.**

The following utilities report the scam is occurring in their territories and offer tips and information on their websites:

[Toronto Hydro](#)
[Utilities Kingston](#)
[Oakville Hydro](#)

The OEB has strict rules electricity distributors must follow before disconnecting customers including:

- You cannot have your electricity supply disconnected for non-payment without having **10 days' notice.**
 - For residential consumers a disconnection notice from a utility must contain the following information:
 - The dates between which your electricity may be disconnected
 - Information about making payments
 - Financial assistance available to eligible customers
 - Payment arrears management programs available to all residential customers
 - Safety information
 - That a disconnection may take place whether or not you are home at the time of disconnection
 - Under certain circumstances, consumers may be allowed more than 10 days' notice before being disconnected. Please contact your utility for more information
- Residential electricity supply can't be disconnected for non-payment during the winter months, from November 15 to April 30.

Consumers with questions or concerns or who feel their utility has not followed the rules can call the OEB at 1-877-632-2727, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Consumer Tips:

- Know who you're dealing with. If you are threatened with disconnection, contact your utility **directly** using the phone number provided on your bill.
- Your utility bill is private. It contains personal information like your account number and energy usage. Do not feel pressured into sharing this information with anyone.
- [Find out](#) if you are eligible for financial assistance to help with your residential energy bills.

Resources

1. [Learn more](#) about our customer service rules for electricity utilities and unit sub-meter providers.
2. Learn more about financial assistance programs and special rules for low-income customers at oeb.ca/billhelp.
3. [Contact](#) the Canadian Anti-Fraud Center or call 1-888-495-8501.