

Ontario Energy Board to defer setting summer electricity prices for households and small businesses

TORONTO (April 14, 2020) — The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) announced today that it will defer setting new electricity prices for households and small businesses under the Regulated Price Plan (RPP). The OEB is also leaving the winter time-of-use (TOU) periods and winter residential tier threshold in place beyond May 1, 2020, to provide greater price stability for consumers when they are staying at home.

The OEB typically sets new RPP prices in May and November, based on an estimate of how much it will cost to supply RPP customers with the electricity that they are expected to use. However, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in extraordinary uncertainty around various aspects of the supply cost and electricity demand estimates that underpin RPP prices. The OEB will monitor the impact of the COVID-19 emergency on supply costs and electricity demand, and may make pricing adjustments prior to November 1, 2020, if warranted.

On March 24, 2020, the Government of Ontario issued an Emergency Order, which fixed TOU prices at the off-peak price of 10.1 ¢/kWh for all hours of the day. This 45-day emergency measure, absent any future government intervention, supports residential and small business customers and farms on TOU pricing until May 7, 2020. Once the emergency TOU prices cease to have effect, customers on TOU pricing will go back to paying the November 1, 2019, RPP prices. Customers on tiered pricing will continue to pay the RPP prices in effect today.

On May 1, the TOU price periods normally shift to their summer hours and the winter tier threshold for residential customers shifts to its lower summer value. By keeping the winter tier threshold in place, customers that are on tiered pricing have an additional 400kWh/month available at the lower price. For customers on TOU pricing, keeping the winter TOU price periods in place means that the mid-peak rather than the higher on-peak price will apply in the afternoon (11 a.m.-5 p.m.), which can be a time of high electricity use for consumers at home.

The TOU prices that will start to apply when the emergency TOU prices cease to have effect are shown in the table below. The prices are the same as those set by the OEB for November 1, 2019, and they will remain in place until further notice. The table also shows the hours to which the different TOU prices apply.

TOU Price Periods – Winter Hours Remain in Effect	TOU prices
Off-Peak Weekdays 7 p.m. – 7 a.m., all day weekends and holidays <i>(These hours are off-peak all year round.)</i>	10.1 ¢/kWh

<p>Mid-Peak</p> <p>Weekdays 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.</p> <p><i>(In the summer period, electricity used during these hours would normally have been charged at the on-peak price. These hours can be a time of higher electricity use for consumers at home.)</i></p>	14.4 ¢/kWh
<p>On-Peak</p> <p>Weekdays 7 a.m. – 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.</p> <p><i>(In the summer period, electricity used during these hours would normally have been charged at the mid-peak price.)</i></p>	20.8 ¢/kWh

The table below shows the prices for customers paying tiered prices, as well as the tier thresholds that apply. These prices are the same as those set by the OEB for November 1, 2019, and they will remain in place until further notice.

Tiered RPP Prices - Winter Residential Tier Threshold Remains in Effect		Tiered prices
Tier 1	<p>Residential – first 1,000 kWh/month</p> <p><i>(In the summer period, the tier threshold would normally go down to 600 kWh. Keeping the winter threshold in place provides customers an additional 400kWh/month at the lower price.)</i></p> <p>Non-residential – first 750 kWh/month</p>	11.9 ¢/kWh
Tier 2	<p>Residential – for electricity used above 1,000 kWh/month</p> <p>Non-residential – for electricity used above 750 kWh/month</p>	13.9 ¢/kWh

There are a number of programs and measures to support electricity customers at this time. On March 19, 2020, the OEB extended the winter ban on disconnecting homes for non-payment to July 31, 2020. Low-volume, small business customers are also now protected by the ban. In addition, the OEB has called on distributors to focus efforts on promoting solutions for customers that have arrears and increasing awareness of support that may be available to customers.

There are a number of programs available to help low-income consumers. Find out more at oeb.ca/billhelp.

The Government of Ontario recently announced that it will provide \$9 million in emergency financial relief for customers that are falling behind in paying their energy bills due to COVID-19. The OEB is working closely with the Government to get this program up and running quickly.

Additional Information and Resources

- [Backgrounder](#)
- [Emergency Order](#)



About the Ontario Energy Board

The OEB is the independent regulator of Ontario's electricity and natural gas sectors. It protects consumers and makes decisions that serve the public interest. Its goal is to promote a sustainable and efficient energy sector that provides consumers with reliable energy services at a reasonable cost.

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