



RP-2005-0020
EB-2005-0416

IN THE MATTER OF the *Ontario Energy Board Act*,
1998, S.O. 1998, c.15 (Schedule B);

AND IN THE MATTER OF an Application by St. Thomas
Energy Inc. for an order or orders approving or fixing just
and reasonable distribution rates and other charges,
effective May 1, 2006.

BEFORE: Paul Vlahos
Presiding Member

DECISION AND ORDER

St. Thomas Energy Inc. ("St. Thomas Energy") is a licensed distributor providing electrical service to consumers within its defined service area. St. Thomas Energy filed an application (the "Application") with the Ontario Energy Board (the "Board") for an order or orders approving or fixing just and reasonable rates for the distribution of electricity and other matters, to be effective May 1, 2006. According to the Board's schedule for filings, St. Thomas Energy was to have filed its application no later than September 6, 2005. St. Thomas Energy actually filed in February 2006.

St. Thomas Energy is one of over 90 electricity distributors in Ontario that are regulated by the Board. To streamline the process for the approval of distribution rates and charges for these distributors, the Board developed and issued the *2006 Electricity Distribution Rate Handbook* (the "Handbook") and complementary spreadsheet-based models. These materials were developed after extensive public consultation with distributors, customer groups, public and environmental interest groups, and other interested parties. The Handbook contains requirements and guidelines for filing an application. The models determine the amounts to be included for the payments in lieu of taxes ("PILs") and calculate rates based on historical financial and other information entered by the distributor.

Also included in this process was a methodology and model for the final recovery of regulatory assets flowing from the Board's decision dated December 9, 2004 on the Review and Recovery of Regulatory Assets – Phase 2 for Toronto Hydro, London Hydro, Enersource Hydro Mississauga and Hydro One. In Chapter 10 of the decision, the Board outlined a Phase 2 process for the remaining distributors. By letter of July 12, 2005, the Board provided guidance and a spreadsheet-based model to the distributors for the inclusion of this recovery as part of their 2006 distribution rate applications.

In its preliminary review of the 2006 rate applications received from the distributors, the Board identified several issues that appeared to be common to many or all of the distributors. As a result, the Board held a hearing (EB-2005-0529) to consider these issues (the "Generic Issues Proceeding") and released its decision (the "Generic Decision") on March 21, 2006. The rulings flowing from that Generic Decision apply to this Application, except to the extent noted in this Decision. The Board notes that pursuant to ss. 21 (6.1) of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*, and to the extent that it is pertinent to this Application, the evidentiary record of the Generic Issues Proceeding is part of the evidentiary record upon which the Board is basing this Decision.

In December 2001, the Board authorized the establishment of deferral accounts by the distributors related to the payments that the distributors make to the Ministry of Finance in lieu of taxes. The Board is required, under its enabling legislation, to make an order with respect to non-commodity deferral accounts once every twelve months. The Board has considered the information available with respect to these accounts and orders that the amounts recorded in the accounts will not be reflected in rates as part of the Rate Order that will result from this Decision. The Board will continue to monitor the accounts with a view to clearing them when appropriate.

Public notice of the rate Application made by St. Thomas Energy was given through newspaper publication in its service area. The evidence filed was made available to the public. Interested parties intervened in the proceeding. The evidence in the Application was tested through written interrogatories from Board staff and intervenors, and intervenors and St. Thomas Energy had the opportunity to file written argument. While the Board has considered the entire record in this proceeding, it has made reference in this Decision only to such evidence and argument as is necessary to provide context to its findings.

On April 28, 2006, the Board issued an Order declaring rates then existing for St. Thomas Energy to be interim, effective May 1, 2006, until such time as the Board issued a final rate order for 2006 rates. This Decision and Order is final with respect to 2006 rates and supersedes the Order of April 28.

St. Thomas Energy has requested an amount of \$6,685,736 as revenue to be recovered through distribution rates and charges. Included in this amount is a debit of \$151,293 for the recovery of regulatory assets. Except where noted in this Decision, the Board finds that St. Thomas Energy has filed its Application in accordance with the Handbook and the guidelines for the recovery of regulatory assets.

Notwithstanding St. Thomas Energy's general compliance with the Handbook and associated models, in considering this Application the Board reviewed the following matters in detail:

- Unmetered Scattered Load Rates; and
- Consequences of the Generic Decision (EB-2005-0529).

Unmetered Scattered Load (USL) Rates

St. Thomas Energy proposed an amount of \$8.02 as the fixed monthly customer charge applicable to scattered unmetered loads. Apart from the amount, this figure complies in concept with the Handbook (i.e., 50% of the fixed monthly charge applicable to general service loads under 50 kilowatts) and was derived using the model.

In certain cases, the model provided only an approximation of this component of the USL rate. Rogers Cable, an intervenor in this proceeding, submitted that the USL monthly charge should be set at exactly 50% of the general service rate. In this case, the charge equalling 50% of the general service rate is \$7.78. St. Thomas Energy stated that it decided not to make the necessary manual adjustment to the model results to obtain this figure as it did not have the technical information to do so.

The Board agrees that the appropriate charge is as set out in the Handbook and approves a figure of \$7.78 as the fixed monthly charge component of the USL rate.

Consequences of the Generic Decision on this Application

The Generic Decision contains findings relevant to funding for smart meters for electricity distributors. The Applicant did not file a specific smart meter investment plan or request approval of any associated amount in revenue requirement. Absent a specific plan or discrete revenue requirement, the Generic Decision provides that \$0.30 per residential customer per month be reflected in the Applicant's revenue requirement. The Board finds that this increase in the revenue requirement amount will be allocated equally to all metered customers and recovered through their monthly service charge. This increment is reflected in the approved monthly service charges contained in the Tariff of Rates and Charges appended to this Decision. Pursuant to the Generic Decision, a variance account will be established, the details of which will be communicated in due course.

Resulting Revenue Requirements

As a result of the Board's determinations on these issues, the Board has adjusted the revenue requirement to be recovered through distribution rates and charges to \$6,733,191, including a debit amount of \$151,293 for the recovery of Regulatory Assets.

In its letter of December 20, 2004 to electricity distributors, the Board indicated that it would consider the disposition of the 2005 OEB dues recorded in Account 1508 in this proceeding. However, given that the final 2005 OEB dues are not available because of the difference in fiscal years for the Board and the distributors, and given that the model used to develop the Application does not incorporate this provision, the Board will review and dispose of the 2005 OEB dues at a later time.

Cost Awards

This Application is one of a number of applications before the Board dealing with 2006 rates chargeable by distributors. Intervenors may be parties to multiple applications and, if eligible, their costs associated with a specific distributor may not be separable. Therefore, for these applications, the matter of intervenor cost awards will be addressed by the Board at a later date, upon the conclusion of the current rate applications. If an intervenor that is eligible to recover its costs is able to uniquely identify its costs associated with this Application, it must file its cost claim within 10 days from the receipt of this Decision.

THE BOARD ORDERS THAT:

1. The Tariff of Rates and Charges set out in Appendix "A" of this Order is approved, effective May 1, 2006, for electricity consumed or estimated to have been consumed on and after May 1, 2006. The application of the revised distribution rates shall be prorated to May 1, 2006. If St. Thomas Energy Inc.'s billing system is not capable of prorating changed loss factors jointly with distribution rates, the revised loss factors shall be implemented upon the first subsequent billing for each billing cycle.
2. The Tariff of Rates and Charges set out in Appendix "A" of this Order supersedes all previous distribution rate schedules approved by the Ontario Energy Board for St. Thomas Energy Inc., and is final in all respects.
3. St. Thomas Energy Inc. shall notify its customers of the rate changes no later than with the first bill reflecting the new rates.

DATED at Toronto, June 15, 2006.

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. O'Dell', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Peter H. O'Dell
Assistant Board Secretary

Appendix "A"

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June 15, 2006

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

St. Thomas Energy Inc.

TARIFF OF RATES AND CHARGES

Effective May 1, 2006

This schedule supersedes and replaces all previously approved schedules of Rates, Charges and Loss Factors

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APPLICATION

- The application of these rates and charges shall be in accordance with the Licence of the Distributor and any Codes, Guidelines or Orders of the Board, and amendments thereto as approved by the Board, which may be applicable to the administration of this schedule.
- No rates and charges for the distribution of electricity and charges to meet the costs of any work or service done or furnished for the purpose of the distribution of electricity shall be made except as permitted by this schedule, unless required by the Distributor's Licence or a Code, Guideline or Order of the Board, and amendments thereto as approved by the Board, or as specified herein.
- This schedule does not contain any rates and charges relating to the electricity commodity (e.g. the Regulated Price Plan).

EFFECTIVE DATES

DISTRIBUTION RATES - May 1, 2006 for all consumption or deemed consumption services used on or after that date.

SPECIFIC SERVICE CHARGES - May 1, 2006 for all charges incurred by customers on or after that date.

LOSS FACTOR ADJUSTMENT – May 1, 2006 unless the distributor is not capable of prorating changed loss factors jointly with distribution rates. In that case, the revised loss factors will be implemented upon the first subsequent billing for each billing cycle.

SERVICE CLASSIFICATIONS

Residential

This classification refers to an account taking electricity at 750 volts or less where the electricity is used exclusively in a separately metered living accommodation. Customers shall be residing in single-dwelling units that consist of a detached house or one unit of a semi-detached, duplex, triplex or quadruplex house, with a residential zoning. Separately metered dwellings within a town house complex or apartment building also qualify as residential customers.

General Service Less Than 50 kW

This classification refers to a non residential account taking electricity at 750 volts or less whose monthly average peak demand is less than, or is forecast to be less than, 50 kW.

General Service 50 to 4,999 kW

This classification refers to a non residential account whose monthly average peak demand is equal to or greater than, or is forecast to be equal to or greater than 50 kW but less than 5,000 kW.

General Service 50 to 4,999 kW – Time of Use

This classification refers to an interval metered non residential account whose monthly average peak demand is equal to or greater than, or is forecast to be equal to or greater than 50 kW but less than 5,000 kW.

Large Use

This classification refers to an account whose monthly average peak demand is equal to or greater than, or is forecast to be equal to or greater than, 5,000 kW.

Unmetered Scattered Load

This classification refers to an account taking electricity at 750 volts or less whose monthly average peak demand is less than, or is forecast to be less than, 50 kW and the consumption is unmetered. Such connections include cable TV power packs, bus shelters, telephone booths, traffic lights, railway crossings, etc. The customer will provide detailed manufacturer information/documentation with regard to electrical demand/consumption of the proposed unmetered load.

Sentinel Lighting

This classification refers to an account for individual lighting on private property controlled by photo cells. The consumption for these customers will be based on the calculated connected load times the required lighting times established in the approved OEB street lighting load shape template.

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Street Lighting

This classification refers to an account for roadway lighting with a Municipality, Regional Municipality, Ministry of Transportation and private roadway lighting operation, controlled by photo cells. The consumption for these customers will be based on the calculated connected load times the required lighting times established in the approved OEB street lighting shape template.

MONTHLY RATES AND CHARGES

Residential

Service Charge	\$	10.97
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kWh	0.0157
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kWh	0.0010
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0053
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0045
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge	\$	0.25

General Service Less Than 50 kW

Service Charge	\$	15.55
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kWh	0.0143
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kWh	0.0006
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0048
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0040
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge	\$	0.25

General Service 50 to 4,999 kW

Service Charge	\$	73.17
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	2.9716
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	0.0386
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kW	1.9655
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kW	1.5992
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge (if applicable)	\$	0.25

General Service 50 to 4,999 kW – Time of Use

Service Charge	\$	607.22
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	0.7088
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	0.1462
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate – Interval Metered	\$/kW	2.3114
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate – Interval Metered	\$/kW	2.0048
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge (if applicable)	\$	0.25

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Large Use

Service Charge	\$	607.22
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	0.7088
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	0.1462
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate – Interval Metered	\$/kW	2.3114
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate – Interval Metered	\$/kW	2.0048
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge (if applicable)	\$	0.25

Unmetered Scattered Load

Service Charge (per customer)	\$	7.78
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kWh	0.0147
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kWh	0.0002
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0048
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0040
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge (if applicable)	\$	0.25

Sentinel Lighting

Service Charge (per connection)	\$	1.31
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	5.1405
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	5.4035
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kW	1.4898
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kW	1.2622
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge (if applicable)	\$	0.25

Street Lighting

Service Charge (per connection)	\$	0.04
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	0.2662
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	(0.3520)
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kW	1.4823
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kW	1.2363
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge (if applicable)	\$	0.25

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Specific Service Charges

Customer Administration		
Arrears certificate	\$	15.00
Statement of Account	\$	15.00
Pulling post dated cheques	\$	15.00
Duplicate invoices for previous billing	\$	15.00
Request for other billing information	\$	15.00
Easement letter	\$	15.00
Income tax letter	\$	15.00
Notification charge	\$	15.00
Account history	\$	15.00
Credit reference/credit check (plus credit agency costs)	\$	15.00
Returned cheque charge (plus bank charges)	\$	15.00
Charge to certify cheque	\$	15.00
Legal letter charge	\$	15.00
Account set up charge/change of occupancy charge (plus credit agency costs if applicable)	\$	30.00
Special meter reads	\$	30.00
Meter dispute charge plus Measurement Canada fees (if meter found correct)	\$	30.00
Non-Payment of Account		
Late Payment - per month	%	1.50
Late Payment - per annum	%	19.56
Collection of account charge – no disconnection	\$	30.00
Collection of account charge – no disconnection – after regular hours	\$	165.00
Disconnect/Reconnect at meter – during regular hours	\$	65.00
Disconnect/Reconnect at meter – after regular hours	\$	185.00
Disconnect/Reconnect at pole – during regular hours	\$	185.00
Disconnect/Reconnect at pole – after regular hours	\$	415.00
Install/Remove load control device – during regular hours	\$	65.00
Install/Remove load control device – after regular hours	\$	185.00
Specific Charge for Access to the Power Poles – per pole/year	\$	22.35
Allowances		
Transformer Allowance for Ownership - per kW of billing demand/month	\$	(0.60)
Primary Metering Allowance for transformer losses – applied to measured demand and energy	%	(1.00)

LOSS FACTORS

Total Loss Factor – Secondary Metered Customer < 5,000 kW	1.0339
Total Loss Factor – Secondary Metered Customer > 5,000 kW	1.0140
Total Loss Factor – Primary Metered Customer < 5,000 kW	1.0236
Total Loss Factor – Primary Metered Customer > 5,000 kW	1.0039