



RP-2005-0020
EB-2005-0434

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 Westario
Power 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

Westario Power Inc. ("WPI" or the "Applicant") is a licensed distributor providing electrical service to consumers within its defined service area. WPI 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, WPI was to have filed its application no later than September 6, 2005. WPI actually filed in January 2006.

WPI 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.

As a distributor that is embedded in Hydro One Network's low voltage system, the Applicant has included the recovery of certain Regulatory Assets that have been allocated by Hydro One Networks. The amount claimed by the Applicant was provided by Hydro One Networks as a reasonable approximation of the actual amount that Hydro One Networks will assess the Applicant. To the degree that the amount differs from the actual amount approved for Hydro One Networks in another proceeding (RP-2005-0020/EB-2005-0378), this difference will be reconciled at the end of the Regulatory Asset recovery period, as set out in the Phase II regulatory assets decision issued on December 9, 2004 (RP-2004-0064/RP-2004-0069/RP-2004-0100/RP-2004-0117/RP-2004-0118).

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 WPI 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 WPI 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 WPI 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.

WPI has requested an amount of \$10,667,828 as revenue to be recovered through distribution rates and charges. Included in this amount is a debit of \$1,828,502 for the recovery of regulatory assets. Except where noted in this Decision, the Board finds that WPI has filed its Application in accordance with the Handbook and the guidelines for the recovery of regulatory assets.

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

- Low Voltage Rates;
- Bad Debt; and
- Consequences of the Generic Decision (EB-2005-0529).

Low Voltage Rates

WPI included in its Application recovery of ongoing Low Voltage ("LV") charges that Hydro One Networks will be levying on WPI for Low Voltage wheeling distribution services provided to WPI.

The Board notes that this estimate reflects Hydro One Networks' current approved LV rate of \$0.56/kW. The Board further notes that Hydro One Networks has applied for an LV rate of \$0.63/kW in its 2006 rate application RP-2005-0020/EB-2005-0378, and the Board has approved this rate.

The Board is of the view that the LV adjustment that WPI has included in its Application is insufficient to recover its expected LV charges in 2006, as this amount does not reflect the updated Hydro One Networks rate. Although the Generic Decision provides that embedded distributors are to track differences between LV costs charged by the host distributor(s) and corresponding revenues recovered from ratepayers, the Board seeks to minimize systemic sources of variance. The Board is of the view that WPI's rates should reflect the LV rates authorized by the Board for the host distributor. Accordingly, the Board has revised the amount for LV charge recovery in WPI's revenue requirement.

Bad Debt

The Applicant is proposing a bad debt expense of \$175,000 for rate making purposes, which is an adjustment to lower the expense from \$309,503 in 2004. The Board notes that, in response to a Staff Interrogatory, WPI noted that it has undertaken extensive measures to improve its bad debt expense and that its 2005 experience significantly reverses the upward trend over the previous three years. The Board commends WPI for these steps and accepts the proposal.

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 file a specific smart meter plan in the revenue requirement. In this situation, the Generic Decision provides that an amount determined as \$3.50 per meter per month installed during the rate year be reflected in the Applicant's revenue requirement, instead of the smart meter-related costs proposed by the Applicant. Consequently, the amounts that the Applicant has proposed in the 2006 rate Application have been removed and replaced with the amount determined in accordance with the Generic Decision. Furthermore, the Board finds in this Decision that this smart meter revenue will be allocated to all metered customers and recovered through the monthly service charge. The revised amount 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 \$10,647,151 including a debit amount of \$1,828,502 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. Intervenor 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 June 15, 2006, for electricity consumed or estimated to have been consumed on and after June 15, 2006. The application of the revised distribution rates shall be prorated to June 15, 2006. If Westario Power 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 Westario Power Inc., and is final in all respects.

3. Westario Power 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", written over a horizontal line.

Peter H. O'Dell
Assistant Board Secretary

Appendix "A"

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June 15, 2006

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Westario Power Inc.

TARIFF OF RATES AND CHARGES

Effective June 15, 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 – June 15, 2006 for all consumption or deemed consumption services used on or after that date.

SPECIFIC SERVICE CHARGES - June 15, 2006 for all charges incurred by customers on or after that date.

LOSS FACTOR ADJUSTMENT – June 15, 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 customers residing in residential dwelling units taking energy at 600 volts or less, with energy generally supplied as single phase, 3-wire, 60 Hertz, having a nominal voltage of 120/240 volts.

General Service Less than 50 kW

This classification refers to general service buildings, defined as buildings that are used for purposes other than single-family dwellings, taking energy at 600 volts or less, requiring a connection with a connected load of less than 50 kW, and including Town Houses and Condominiums that require centralized bulk metering, whose average monthly maximum demand is less than, or is forecast to be less than, 50 kW.

General Service 50 to 4,999 kW

This classification refers to general service buildings, defined as buildings that are used for purposes other than single-family dwellings, requiring a connection with a connected load greater than 50 kW but less than 5,000 kW, whose average monthly maximum demand used for billing purposes 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 general service buildings, defined as buildings that are used for purposes other than single-family dwellings, requiring a connection with a connected load greater than 50 kW but less than 5,000 kW on time of use rates, whose average monthly maximum demand used for billing purposes is equal to or greater than, or is forecast to be equal to or greater than, 50 kW but less than 5,000 kW.

Unmetered Scattered Load

This classification refers to an account taking electricity at 600 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 accounts that are an unmetered lighting load supplied to a sentinel light.

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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 photocells. 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.

MONTHLY RATES AND CHARGES

Residential

Service Charge	\$	10.78
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kWh	0.0135
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kWh	0.0071
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0054
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0057
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	\$	19.79
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kWh	0.0086
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kWh	0.0037
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0049
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0051
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	\$	243.93
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	2.2244
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	0.5659
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kW	2.0031
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kW	2.0391
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	\$	44.42
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	0.3086
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	0.1345
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kW	2.1257
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kW	2.2350
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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Unmetered Scattered Load

Service Charge (per customer)	\$	4.47
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kWh	0.0460
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kWh	0.0077
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0049
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0051
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)	\$	1.37
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	7.0575
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	5.8550
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kW	1.5183
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kW	1.6091
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)	\$	2.35
Distribution Volumetric Rate	\$/kW	1.9635
Regulatory Asset Recovery	\$/kW	0.0308
Retail Transmission Rate – Network Service Rate	\$/kW	1.5107
Retail Transmission Rate – Line and Transformation Connection Service Rate	\$/kW	1.5761
Wholesale Market Service Rate	\$/kWh	0.0052
Rural Rate Protection Charge	\$/kWh	0.0010
Regulated Price Plan – Administration Charge (if applicable)	\$	0.25

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 cheques	\$	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

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Non-Payment of Account		
Late Payment - per month	%	1.50
Late Payment - per annum	%	19.56
Collection of account charge – no disconnect	\$	30.00
Collection of account charge – no disconnect – after hours	\$	165.00
Disconnect/Reconnect Charges - At Meter During Regular Hours	\$	65.00
Disconnect/Reconnect Charges - 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
Service call – customer owned equipment	\$	30.00
Service call – after regular hours	\$	165.00
Temporary service installation and removal – overhead – no transformer	\$	500.00
Temporary service installation and removal – underground – no transformer	\$	300.00
Temporary service installation and removal – overhead – with transformer	\$	1,000.00
Specific charge for access to power poles \$/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	1.0637
Total Loss Factor – Secondary Metered Customer > 5,000 kW	1.0145
Total Loss Factor – Primary Metered Customer < 5,000 kW	1.0530
Total Loss Factor – Primary Metered Customer > 5,000 kW	1.0045