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## **BY E-MAIL AND WEB POSTING**

November 25, 2015

**TO: All Rate Regulated Natural Gas Distributors  
All Registered Participants in Board File No. EB-2015-0238  
All Interested Parties**

**RE: Natural Gas Market Review – Consultation and Stakeholder Conference  
(Board File No. EB-2015-0237)**

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The OEB invites interested stakeholders to participate in the OEB's 3<sup>rd</sup> Natural Gas Market Review (NGMR) consultation. The OEB's [2010](#) and [2014](#) Natural Gas Market Review consultations similarly convened stakeholders to examine ongoing developments and related issues in the North American natural gas market and assist the OEB's consideration of any potential impacts – including regulatory implications – of such developments for Ontario's natural gas market. Details on how stakeholders may participate, including by attending a Stakeholder Conference (Forum) to be held in January 2016, are set out below.

### **NGMR Consultation Elements**

#### **Consultant's Report**

Prior to the scheduled date of the Forum, the OEB will post a report prepared by an independent consultant engaged by OEB staff. The report will focus on the key factors influencing current North American and Ontario natural gas markets and will provide a forecast of demand, supply, and prices to 2020.

## NGMR Forum

The Forum date, time, location and modes of participation are as follows:

Date: Thursday, January 21, 2016  
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Location: Ontario Energy Board  
West Hearing Room,  
25th floor, 2300 Yonge Street, Toronto

The conference will be accessible through the OEB's website and teleconference to allow remote participation. Detailed instructions on how to participate remotely will be sent to all registered participants on or before the date noted above.

## Stakeholder Input on the Forum Agenda

While the Forum agenda is in development at this time, stakeholders are invited to provide feedback regarding their interest in (including whether they would provide a presentation on) the following preliminary session topics:

- the short to medium term impact of recent trends and/or changes in the factors driving North American and Ontario natural gas supply, demand and prices (e.g. geographic expansion of natural gas distribution service in Ontario)
- further developments with respect to issues raised in the 2014 Natural Gas Market Review, such as the impact of winter 2013/14 natural gas prices on distributor and large customer approaches to gas supply planning and the implications, if any, for the OEB's QRAM mechanism going forward
- the potential impact of cap and trade markets and carbon pricing on North American and Ontario natural gas markets
- the implications of recent and anticipated market developments for planning natural gas distribution asset investments over the longer term

Stakeholder suggestions on these and other topics related to natural gas market developments received in writing by Wednesday, December 9, 2015 will be posted on the NGMR webpage and considered in the preparation of the preliminary Forum agenda and session schedule.

### Stakeholder Presentations

Once the preliminary Forum agenda is posted, Forum participants who wish to make a presentation (or joint presentations where groups sharing common interests combine for that purpose) will be invited to indicate their intention to do so.

### Stakeholder Written Comments

Following the Forum, all interested parties will be invited to submit written comments on the issues raised in the consultant's report and explored at the Forum. Written comments are to be submitted to the OEB by Thursday, February 4, 2016.

### Staff Report to the Board

OEB staff will prepare a report to the Board on the consultation to summarize the key issues, identify and where appropriate make recommendations on any specific matters the Board may wish to consider in determining whether changes to the Board's regulatory framework/policies may be warranted.

### **How to Register for the NGMR Forum**

Interested participants wishing to attend the Forum are asked to register by sending an e-mail to [NGMR@ontarioenergyboard.ca](mailto:NGMR@ontarioenergyboard.ca) no later than 4:30 p.m. Friday, January 8, 2016. Please indicate "NGMR Forum" in the subject line and provide the following information in the body of the e-mail:

- participant/organization name;
- name(s) of attendee(s) to be registered;
- whether the participant intends to make a presentation, and if so, the presentation topic(s);
- whether attendance will be in person or by teleconference/webcast; and
- a contact name, telephone number and e-mail address.

Participants are asked to limit Forum in-person attendance to two persons due to seating capacity restrictions. As noted above, remote participation will be available through the OEB's website and teleconference.

Participants intending to give a presentation are asked to submit an electronic copy of any presentation materials to the Board Secretary no later than Friday, January 8, 2016 in accordance with the filing instructions set out below.

## Consultation Participation and Cost Award Eligibility Requests

Interested stakeholders must register their intent to participate in the consultation by filing a letter with the OEB by Wednesday, December 9, 2015 in accordance with the filing instructions set out below. Cost awards will be available to eligible persons under section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* for participation in cost eligible activities as set out in Appendix A. Appendix A also contains information regarding cost eligibility requests and objections. Costs awarded will be recovered from all rate regulated natural gas distributors based on their respective distribution revenues.

Filings to the OEB in relation to participation and/or requests for cost awards eligibility must be made in accordance with the filing instructions set out below. In order to facilitate a timely decision on cost eligibility, the deadlines for filing cost eligibility requests and objections will be strictly enforced.

### Filing Instructions

Please submit electronic copies of filings in searchable/unrestricted Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format through the OEB's web portal at [pes.ontarioenergyboard.ca/eservice](http://pes.ontarioenergyboard.ca/eservice) and also file two paper copies at the address below. You will need a user ID to make filings through the OEB's web portal. If you do not have a user ID, visit the "[e-filings services](#)" webpage on the OEB's website at [www.ontarioenergyboard.ca](http://www.ontarioenergyboard.ca) and fill out a user ID password request.

Please use the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlined in the document entitled "RESS Document Preparation – A Quick Guide" also found on the e-filing services webpage. If the OEB's web portal is not available, electronic copies of filings may be filed by e-mail to [boardsec@ontarioenergyboard.ca](mailto:boardsec@ontarioenergyboard.ca). If you do not have internet access, please provide a CD containing your filing in PDF format as described above to the Board Secretary at the following address:

Kirsten Walli  
Board Secretary  
Ontario Energy Board  
P.O. Box 2319  
2300 Yonge Street, Suite 2700  
Toronto, Ontario M4P 1E4

All filings to the OEB must be received by the Board Secretary by **4:45 p.m.** on the required date. Filings must quote file number **EB-2015-0237** and include your name, address, telephone number and, where available, your e-mail address and fax number. All filings received by the OEB in relation to this consultation will be available for viewing

at the OEB's offices and will be placed on the OEB's website.

Questions about this consultation process should be directed to Stephen Cain at [stephen.cain@ontarioenergyboard.ca](mailto:stephen.cain@ontarioenergyboard.ca) or 416-440-8144. The OEB's toll-free number is 1-888-632-6273.

Yours truly,

*Original signed by*

Kirsten Walli  
Board Secretary

Attachment: Appendix A Cost Awards

## **Appendix A**

To Cover Letter Dated November 25, 2015

EB-2015-0237

### **COST AWARDS**

#### **Cost Award Eligibility**

The OEB will determine eligibility for costs in accordance with its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*. Any person intending to request an award of costs must file with the OEB a written submission to that effect by Wednesday, December 9, 2015, identifying the grounds on which the person believes that it is eligible for an award of costs (addressing the OEB's cost eligibility criteria as set out in section 3 of the OEB's *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*). All requests for cost eligibility will be posted on the OEB's website.

If an OEB licensee has any objections to any of the requests for cost eligibility, such objections must be filed with the OEB by Monday, December 21, 2015. Any objections will be posted on the OEB's website. The OEB will then make a final determination on the cost eligibility of the requesting participants.

#### **Eligible Activities**

Cost awards will be available in relation to participation in the Stakeholder Conference; and in relation to the submission of written comments on the issues explored at the Stakeholder Conference.

The maximum number of cost eligible hours per participant for these activities are:

- prepare for, attend and report on Stakeholder Conference ..... 11 hours
- written comments on Stakeholder Conference issues ..... 25 hours

The maximum number of cost eligible hours for an expert retained to prepare a separate expert submission for the Stakeholder conference depends on whether eligible participants are collaborating for this purpose, as follows:

- separate expert submission:
  - For one eligible participant ..... 40 hours
  - For each additional eligible participant ..... 20 hours

## **Cost Awards**

When determining the amount of the cost awards, the OEB will apply the principles set out in section 5 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards*. The maximum hourly rates set out in the OEB's Cost Awards Tariff will also be applied. The OEB expects that groups representing the same interests or class of persons will make every effort to communicate and co-ordinate their participation in this process.

The OEB will use the process set out in section 12 of its *Practice Direction on Cost Awards* to implement the payment of the cost awards. Therefore, the OEB will act as a clearing house for all payments of cost awards in this process. For more information on this process, please see the OEB's [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#) and the [October 27, 2005 letter](#) regarding the rationale for the OEB acting as a clearing house for the cost award payments. These documents can be found on the OEB's [Rules, Codes, Guidelines and Forms](#) webpage.