



Ontario  
Energy  
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de l'Ontario

**October 2, 2020**

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

**To: All Licensed Electricity Distributors  
Independent Electricity System Operator  
All Other Interested Parties**

**Re: Implementing the Process for Enabling Customers to Opt Out of Time-of-Use Pricing: Communications, Reporting Requirement and Smart Metering Entity Data**

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On September 8, 2020, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) issued a notice advising of the adoption of final amendments to the Standard Supply Service Code (SSSC) (Notice). These amendments, which come into force on October 13, 2020, will enable electricity consumers on the Regulated Price Plan (RPP) to opt out of Time-Of-Use (TOU) prices and to elect instead to be charged on the basis of tiered pricing.

### **Issuance of Communications Materials**

In the Notice, the OEB recognized the importance of having materials in place to support customer choice as soon as possible. The OEB stated that by October 2, 2020, it expected to have created a dedicated customer choice webpage for consumers, including a bill calculator, as well as a template election form that distributors may adapt and use if they wish.

In addition to launching [oeb.ca/choice](http://oeb.ca/choice) – the OEB's dedicated customer choice webpage for consumers – the OEB has also produced materials that distributors may adapt and use if they wish. It is important that distributors use these materials only in accordance with the timeline set out below, to reflect the timing of implementation of the customer choice initiative and to avoid customer confusion:

- The following materials may be used immediately:
  - Common Q&As for distributor websites and call centres
  - Other suggested content for use on distributor websites and through other communications channels
- The following materials may not be used in public communications until October 13:
  - Template election form for use by TOU customers that wish to switch to tiered prices
  - Shareable graphics for social media and/or other communications platforms

To download these materials, please click on the following link:

<https://www.oeb.ca/documents/customerchoice/TOU-customer-choice-LDC-materials.zip> French versions of these materials will be available at this link early next week.

The OEB's new online bill calculator, which allows for a bill comparison as between tiered and TOU prices, will not be available to consumers until the winter RPP prices are announced. Distributors should not promote the calculator in any communications until that time. Distributor communications personnel will be advised when the bill calculator is available and can be promoted.

In the coming weeks, the OEB will be making additional communications materials available to customers to help inform them about customer choice: videos explaining the customer choice option; radio advertising targeted outside the GTA; and organic and paid social media promotions. In addition, the OEB will be launching an email campaign to a variety of stakeholder groups across the province.

As is the OEB's usual process, the RPP prices that will be effective November 1, 2020 will be announced through a press release. At that time, a price change bill insert will be shared with distributors for optional use.

### **Distributor Reporting Requirement**

The Notice stated that the OEB intends to monitor distributor implementation of the new SSSC rules, as it has done for other major initiatives. Further to standard condition 14.1 in each distributor's licence regarding the provision of information to the OEB, the OEB is introducing the following reporting requirement:

No later than October 19, 2020, each licensed, rate-regulated distributor shall confirm in writing whether it has adapted its systems and processes to enable it to comply with the amendments to the SSSC that came into force on October 13, 2020.

This confirmation should be provided by e-mail to [BoardSec@oeb.ca](mailto:BoardSec@oeb.ca) with the subject line "Customer Choice Implementation (EB 2020-0152): (Licensee Name)".

### **Tracking Customer Choice through Smart Metering Entity (SME) Data**

Section 3.5.13 of the amended SSSC specifies that "A distributor shall rely on the Smart Metering Entity (SME) for the provision of consumption amounts for billing purposes in respect of all residential consumers or general service < 50kW consumers" who have elected to be charged tiered prices. One of the reasons for this rule was to facilitate the centralized collection and reporting of data to the OEB on, for example, the number of RPP consumers on each pricing structure and associated consumption data.

The OEB has amended the SME's licence to align with the changes to the SSSC. The amended licence specifically requires the SME to ensure that distributors report the "commodity rate class" flag that is already built into the SME's Meter Data Management and Repository. Distributors are reminded of their obligation to provide the SME with the appropriate "commodity rate class" identification to indicate when a customer switches from one pricing structure to another. This will in turn support timely and accurate reporting by the SME to the OEB.

Any enquiries relating to this letter should be directed to the OEB's Industry Relations Enquiry e-mail at [IndustryRelations@oeb.ca](mailto:IndustryRelations@oeb.ca).

Yours truly,

*Original Signed By*

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Vice President  
Consumer Protection & Industry Performance