



Synergy North Corporation

**Application for electricity distribution rates beginning
May 1, 2024**

**PROCEDURAL ORDER NO. 1
September 27, 2023**

Synergy North Corporation (Synergy North) filed a cost of service application with the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) on August 16, 2023 under section 78 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998*, seeking approval for changes to the rates that Synergy North charges for electricity distribution, beginning May 1, 2024.

A Notice of Hearing was issued on September 6, 2023. Each of the Association of Major Power Consumers in Ontario (AMPCO), Consumers Council of Canada (CCC), School Energy Coalition (SEC) and Vulnerable Energy Consumers Coalition (VECC) applied for intervenor status and cost eligibility.

No objection was received from Synergy North.

AMPCO, CCC, SEC, and VECC are approved as intervenors. The list of parties in this proceeding is attached as Schedule A to this Procedural Order. AMPCO, CCC, SEC, and VECC are eligible to apply for an award of costs under the OEB's [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#).

Cost eligible intervenors should be aware that the OEB will not generally allow the recovery of costs for the attendance of more than one representative of any party unless a compelling reason is provided when cost claims are filed.

Being eligible to apply for recovery of costs is not a guarantee of recovery of any costs claimed. Cost awards are made by way of OEB order at the end of a hearing.

Issues List

OEB staff will canvas parties for any unique issues that warrant addition to the standard [Issues List](#) for electricity distribution rate applications. If parties recommend and agree to revisions, OEB staff will file a revised draft Issues List with the OEB. If there is no agreement on whether the standard Issues List should be revised, OEB staff will advise the OEB in writing. If intervenors and the applicant do not propose any amendments to

the standard Issues List, OEB staff will notify the OEB of this fact. The OEB will approve an issues list prior to the filing of interrogatories.

Interrogatories

At this time, provision is being made for written interrogatories. In preparing interrogatories, parties should refer to the OEB's approved Issues List. Parties should consult sections 26 and 27 of the OEB's [Rules of Practice and Procedure](#) regarding required naming and numbering conventions and other matters related to interrogatories. The OEB will review the single test year application both in the context of the projects and programs that are requested for the test year and from the perspective of the distributor's plans for the subsequent four years until the next scheduled rebasing application.

Parties should examine the value presented by the proposed investments as opposed to focusing only on the costs. Parties should also assess the fit between the applicant's plans and its stated objectives and consider how the plans contribute to positive outcomes for customers, in particular those outcomes that arise from the asset management decisions reflected in the applicant's distribution system plan. The OEB will consider the entire five-year distribution system plan to assess the planning and pacing proposals of the applicant and whether the test year requests are appropriately aligned with the distribution system plan. The OEB will also consider productivity and benchmarking results in assessing cost forecasts, bill impacts and distributor performance.

Parties should not engage in detailed exploration of items that do not appear to be material. Parties should use the materiality thresholds documented in Chapter 2 of the Filing Requirements as a guide. In making its decision on cost awards, the OEB will consider whether intervenors made reasonable efforts to ensure that their participation in the hearing was focused on material issues.

It is necessary to make provision for the following matters related to this proceeding. Further procedural orders may be issued by the OEB.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

1. OEB staff shall file a proposed issues list, or, alternatively, shall advise the OEB in writing that the parties and OEB staff have been unable to reach an agreement on a draft issues list by **October 4, 2023**.
2. OEB staff and intervenors shall request any relevant information and documentation from Synergy North that is in addition to the evidence already

filed, by written interrogatories filed with the OEB and served on all parties by **October 20, 2023**.

3. Synergy North shall file with the OEB complete written responses to all interrogatories and serve them on OEB staff and all intervenors by **November 10, 2023**.
4. A settlement conference among the parties and OEB staff will be convened on **November 20, 2023**, starting at 9:30 a.m. If necessary, the settlement conference will continue on **November 21-22, 2023**. This will be a virtual event and information on how to participate will be provided in advance of the conference. If OEB staff or intervenors intend to submit clarification questions to Synergy North as part of the settlement process, they are encouraged to submit these questions as far in advance as possible of the commencement of the settlement conference, in the interests of making the settlement process as efficient as possible.
5. **Within 48 hours** of the conclusion of the settlement conference, Synergy North shall file a letter informing the OEB of the status of the settlement discussions including whether a tentative agreement had been reached or if the parties propose to continue the settlement discussions.
6. If there is no settlement proposal arising from the settlement conference, Synergy North shall file a statement to that effect with the OEB by **November 29, 2023**. In that event, parties shall file and serve on the other parties by **December 6, 2023** any submissions on which issues shall be heard in writing, and for which issues the OEB should hold an oral hearing.
7. If there is a settlement, any settlement proposal arising from the settlement conference shall be filed with the OEB on or before **December 15, 2023**. In addition to outlining the terms of any settlement, the settlement proposal should contain a list of any unsettled issues, indicating with reasons whether the parties believe those issues should be dealt with by way of oral or written hearing.
8. Any submission from OEB staff on a settlement proposal shall be filed with the OEB and served on all parties by **January 15, 2023**.

Parties are responsible for ensuring that any documents they file with the OEB, such as applicant and intervenor evidence, interrogatories and responses to interrogatories or any other type of document, **do not include personal information** (as that phrase is defined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*), unless filed in accordance with rule 9A of the OEB's [Rules of Practice and Procedure](#).

Please quote file number, **EB-2023-0052** for all materials filed and submit them in searchable/unrestricted PDF format with a digital signature through the [OEB's online filing portal](#).

- Filings should clearly state the sender's name, postal address, telephone number and e-mail address.
- Please use the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlined in the [Regulatory Electronic Submission System \(RESS\) Document Guidelines](#) found at the [File documents online page](#) on the OEB's website.
- Parties are encouraged to use RESS. Those who have not yet [set up an account](#), or require assistance using the online filing portal can contact registrar@oeb.ca for assistance.
- Cost claims are filed through the OEB's online filing portal. Please visit the [File documents online page](#) of the OEB's website for more information. All participants shall download a copy of their submitted cost claim and serve it on all required parties as per the [Practice Direction on Cost Awards](#).

All communications should be directed to the attention of the Registrar at the address below and be received by end of business, 4:45 p.m., on the required date.

With respect to distribution lists for all electronic correspondence and materials related to this proceeding, parties must include the Case Manager, Amber Goher at Amber.Goher@oeb.ca and OEB Counsel, Jamie Sidlofsky at James.Sidlofsky@oeb.ca.

Email: registrar@oeb.ca

Tel: 1-877-632-2727 (Toll free)

DATED at Toronto, September 27, 2023

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

By delegation, before: Nancy Marconi

Nancy Marconi
Registrar

Schedule A
Synergy North Corporation
EB-2023-0052
Applicant and List of Intervenors

**Synergy North Corporation
EB-2023-0052**

APPLICANT & LIST OF INTERVENORS

September 27, 2023

APPLICANT

Rep. and Contact Information for Service

Synergy North Corporation

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APPLICANT

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INTERVENORS

Rep. and Contact Information for Service

**Association of Major Power
Consumers in Ontario**

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Consultant

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APPLICANT & LIST OF INTERVENORS

September 27, 2023

**Association of Major Power
Consumers in Ontario**

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School Energy Coalition

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APPLICANT & LIST OF INTERVENORS

September 27, 2023

School Energy Coalition

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**Vulnerable Energy
Consumers Coalition**

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