

# Hydro rates going up

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Think of it like daylight savings time — except instead of adjusting the time, you need to adjust behaviour.

Starting today, the seasonal peak times for electricity pricing set by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) changes to the summer schedule from the winter one.

The bi-annual change is accompanied with a rate hike that will likely cost the average Milton Hydro urban customer an extra few bucks on their monthly electricity bill.

The rate hike and the schedule change affect Milton Hydro customers, but not those who have a contract with an electricity retailer.

According to Milton Hydro, about 85 per cent of its customers — urban residents — are charged based on time-of-use pricing while the remainder in the rural area still pay according to the OEB's regulated price plan.

In the time-of-use plan, each day is split into three

Day of the Week	Time	Time-of-Use	Price (cents/kWh)
Weekends & holidays	All day	Off-peak	4.2
Summer Weekdays (May 1st Oct 31st)	7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Mid-peak	7.6
	11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	On peak	9.1
	5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.	Mid-peak	7.6
	10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.	Off-peak	4.2

different periods — on-peak, mid-peak, and off-peak — with corresponding differences in electricity prices. While weekends and holidays remain off-peak all year long, the May 1 to October 31 period's weekday on-peak period is from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. In the winter period just winding up, the peak times are in the early mornings and afternoons.

The on-peak prices for the upcoming summer season will rise to 9.1 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) from 8.8 cents, while the mid-peak goes to 7.6 from 7.2 and the off-peak to 4.2 from 4 cents. The OEB estimates the increase will result in an extra \$2.70 in monthly electricity charges for a resident using 1,000 kWh, though it said the typical customer uses less electricity.

For Milton Hydro's rural customers, the OEB's regulated price plan (RPP) operates differently, with one rate

charged up to a threshold and a higher price charged for usage beyond that limit. That means those RPP customers, which make up the vast majority of provincial electricity users, will pay 5.7 cents per kWh for the first 600 kWh used and 6.6 cents above that usage limit. The winter season threshold is 1,000 kWh.

Though the price hike is only .1 cents extra per kWh, the OEB said the increase combined with the normal threshold change means the average resident using 1,000 kWh will pay \$4.60 more on their monthly bills.

Milton Hydro said its rural customers would be switched over to time-of-use pricing by the end of the summer. The utility is currently the only one in Ontario that has mandatory time-of-use pricing.

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