



New Rates Effective April 1, 2004

The Ontario legislature has passed legislation that removes the current rate cap of 4.3¢ per kilowatt hour (kWh) and replaces it with a two-tiered pricing structure that better reflects the true cost of electricity and encourages consumers to conserve. This change has affected all customers currently paying 4.3¢ per kWh including those who signed up with a retailer. As of April 1, 2004, the first 750 kWh consumed each month will be priced at 4.7¢. Any amount of electricity used above the 750 kWh will be priced at 5.5¢ per kWh.

Orillia Power, like all other electrical utilities in Ontario has no control over this legislated rate increase. It is strictly a pass-through to you our customer with no markups or profit.

Why did the local distribution rates increase?

Prior to and since the electricity market opening on May 1, 2002, electrical utilities incurred enormous costs associated with getting their utility "ready" to function in the new market and to make it work. On December 19, 2003, the Minister of Energy granted approval for local distribution companies to amend their distribution rates in order to recover these accumulated costs (known as regulatory assets) over a 4-year period.

In compliance with these guidelines, Orillia Power applied to the OEB and received approval to adjust their distribution rates effective on consumption on and after April 1, 2004. These new distribution rates have an overall impact of less than a 1% increase on the electricity bill

Did you know ...

Orillia Power retains a list of their customers (who have identified themselves) who are on health/life support systems within their homes? No? Then read on. In the event there is a loss of power in your area, whether it is planned or unplanned, this list enables us to contact you with regards to your needs.

If you or someone you know is using a health/life support in their homes, ie. oxygen, heart monitors, baby monitors, sleep disorder equipment, etc. we would ask that you let us know. If we are not informed, we have no way of knowing you may need us. You would be doing yourself or your friend a big favour – you could be saving a life!

There is an on-line form on our website, or you can call a customer service rep at 326-7315. If you are already on our list and need to make a change, please let us know!

WHY DOES ORILLIA POWER PRUNE AND REMOVE TREES NEAR HIGH VOLTAGE POWER LINES?

PUBLIC SAFETY

- To prevent serious injury to **anyone** climbing or working in trees adjacent to power lines.
- Trees in contact with high voltage power lines can act as an ignition source of fires.

SYSTEM RELIABILITY

- To reduce outages as trees represent one of the largest causes of power outages.

IT'S THE LAW!

The Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, PART III, Section 40 (4), dictates that "a transmitter or distributor may enter any land for the purpose of cutting down or removing trees, branches or other obstructions if, in the opinion of the transmitter or distributor, it is necessary to do so to maintain the safe and reliable operation of its transmission or distribution system".

TREE REMOVAL/PLANTING PROGRAM

The City of Orillia has adopted a Municipal Trees Policy and Orillia Power will be working closely with the City in the implementation of this policy. In addition to providing the strategic framework used by the City of Orillia to protect and manage our trees, this policy will also maintain and enhance the safety of the public, City staff and employees of the Orillia Power Corporation.

The right tree in the right place ...

Landscaping adds beauty and value to your home. **Keep power lines -- both overhead and underground -- in mind when you plant shrubs, trees or other plants.** Place trees where they won't interfere with utility service lines. Remember that you are planting for tomorrow -- choose trees, shrubs and plants that will fit the site when they mature.

Contact your local utility company and they will mark the location of underground utility lines.

Orillia Power has a list of compatible trees. Call our office or visit our website @ www.orilliapower.ca



MOVING?

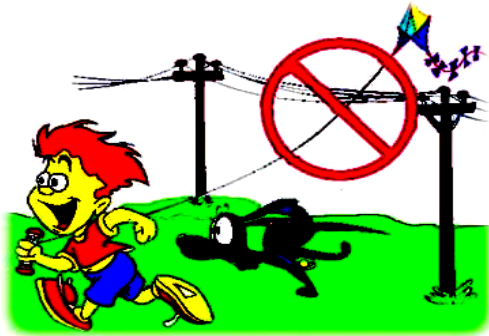
Please let us know when are moving. If you are purchasing, selling or renting property, it is important for you or your lawyer to inform us as soon as possible so that we will have time to schedule a final meter reading for you and prepare a final bill. Call 326-7315 to speak to a customer service representative.

A safety message.....

Teach your children well.

Electricity is safe, provided it is used properly. Teach children to play safely ... away from hydro poles.

Warn your children of the danger of touching power lines. If kites or model airplanes touch overhead lines, even touching their string or control wire may cause serious injury.



Electricity takes the easiest path to the ground and we don't want that path to be you!!

Climbing hydro poles, fences surrounding electrical equipment or trees near power lines is extremely dangerous. Children could fall or touch a wire and be injured or killed.

RESPECT THE POWER OF ELECTRICITY!!

In our ongoing safety program, Orillia Power visits all elementary schools in Orillia providing electricity safety demonstrations for all students in Grades 1 and 5.

PLANNING A RENOVATION TO YOUR HOME?

EnerGuide for Houses – Grants for Homeowners

The office of Energy Efficiency at Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) has programs that can help every municipality measure and meet its commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the housing sector.

EnerGuide for Houses provides a pre-renovation home energy use evaluation service complete with air leakage test, written recommendation report and EnerGuide rating label for the homeowner. Advisors will show you how to improve the comfort of your home and cut heating and cooling costs.

Grants for Homeowners – recently the government announced a new grant initiative to help support homeowners undertaking energy efficient renovations. These grants are only available for homes that have a pre-renovation EnerGuide for Houses rating.

EnerGuide for Houses is offered in cooperation with professional residential organizations across Canada. To locate a service provider in our area, visit their website at www.energuideforhouses.gc.ca or call their toll free line at **1-800-387-2000**.

PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY

Orillia Power is dedicated to respecting and protecting the privacy of personal information entrusted to us by our customers. We are committed to keep this information accurate, confidential and secure.

Additional information about our privacy policies and procedures will be posted on our website and in future billing inserts in accordance with our obligations to the federal Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA).

Is there a topic you would like to see in our newsletter? Please let us know. You can reach us at 326-2495, ext. 224 , fax at 326-0800 or e-mail us at info@orilliapower.ca

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