

## Consumer Alert

Communities Affected: Toronto, Kingston, Oakville, Ontario | Date: September, 26, 2019.

# Consumer Alert: OEB disconnection rules can protect you from scam artists.

Consumers are reporting falling victim to scam artists who are threatening to disconnect electricity service if they don't receive payment immediately.

If you receive such a message by phone or text or letter, do not respond. Contact your utility **directly**.

The following utilities report the scam is occurring in their territories and offer tips and information on their websites:

[Toronto Hydro](#)  
[Utilities Kingston](#)  
[Oakville Hydro](#)

The OEB has strict rules electricity distributors must follow before disconnecting customers including:

- You cannot have your electricity supply disconnected for non-payment without having 10 days' notice.
  - A disconnection Notice from a utility must contain the following information:
    - The dates between which your electricity may be disconnected
    - Information about making payments
    - Financial assistance available to qualified customers
    - Safety information
    - That a disconnection may take place whether or not the customer is home at the time of disconnection
  - More time to pay may be provided to consumers who are sick or who are in the midst of applying for bill payment support programs. Customers, or a person or agency acting on their behalf, must speak with and provide appropriate documentation to their distributor in these cases.
- Residential electricity supply can't be disconnected for non-payment during the winter months, from November 15 to April 30.

Consumers with questions or concerns or feel the rules have not been followed can call the OEB at 1-877-632-2727 within the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday.

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### Consumer Tips:

- If you are threatened with disconnection, contact your utility directly using the phone number provided on your bill.
- Protect your personal information – Do not feel compelled to share your personal information. Your utility bill is private. It contains personal information like your account number and energy usage.

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### Resources

1. [Learn more](#) about our customer service rules for electricity utilities and unit sub-meter

providers.

2. [Find out](#) if you qualify for financial assistance to help with your energy bills.
3. [Contact](#) the Anti-Fraud Center or call 1-888-495-8501.