

## **OEB bans disconnection notices for residential electricity customers during stay-at-home measures**

**TORONTO (April 13, 2021)** —The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) is prohibiting electricity distributors from issuing disconnection notices to residential customers for the duration of the provincewide stay-at-home measures that took effect on April 8, 2021, which the government has announced will be in effect for 28 days.

The annual winter disconnection ban is set to end on April 30. Normally, electricity distributors would be permitted to issue disconnection notices for non-payment as early as 14 days before the end of the ban. This year, however, the OEB is prohibiting electricity distributors from issuing disconnection notices to residential customers until May 6, 2021. This effectively means that these customers cannot be disconnected for non-payment before May 21, 2021. Residential customers will have more time to contact their distributor to arrange a payment plan or see if they are eligible for a support program, if needed. The OEB will continue to monitor the situation and may consider extending the ban on disconnection notices as circumstances warrant.

### **Programs to support electricity customers**

There are a number of programs in place to support electricity customers at this time, including:

- **The COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program** – This program provides an on-bill credit to residential, small business and registered charity customers who have overdue amounts on their electricity or gas bills as a result of the COVID-19 emergency. Credits are a maximum of \$750 for residential customers and a maximum of \$1,500 for small businesses and charities.
- **The Ontario Electricity Support Program** – This program provides low-income customers with a monthly on-bill credit to reduce their electricity bills. This program provides ongoing monthly help, ranging from \$35-\$75 depending on household income and size.
- **The Low-income Energy Assistance Program** – This program provides low-income customers who are in arrears and facing disconnection with a one-time grant towards their electricity or gas bill. It is for emergency situations. Eligible customers can receive up to \$500 for their electricity bill (up to \$600 for homes that are electrically heated), and up to \$500 for their natural gas bill.

More information about these programs can be found at [oeb.ca/billhelp](https://oeb.ca/billhelp).

## OEB disconnection rules in place to protect electricity customers

The OEB has rules in place that electricity distributors must follow before disconnecting a customer for non-payment. The OEB takes compliance with the disconnection rules seriously. In 2020, OEB staff identified a number of instances of non-compliance with the disconnection rules. Steps were taken to ensure that customers were reconnected, that any reconnection fees were refunded and that measures were put into place as needed to ensure future compliance.

### Additional Information and Resources

- [The COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program](#)
- [Help for Low-income Electricity Customers](#)
- [Customer Service Rules for Electricity Utilities](#)
- [Programs to Reduce Your Electricity Bill](#)
- [Decision and Order Amending Electricity Distributor Licences \(EB-2021-0137\)](#)

### About the Ontario Energy Board

The OEB is the independent regulator of Ontario's electricity and natural gas sectors. It protects consumers and makes decisions that serve the public interest. Its goal is to promote a sustainable and efficient energy sector that provides consumers with reliable energy services at a reasonable cost.

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### Contact Us

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