

## Fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh Pricing Effective January 1, 2021

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December 22, 2020

### **Bill Message Options\* based on character limits:**

1. To support Ontarians staying home under COVID lockdown, Ontario has taken steps to hold TOU and Tiered prices at 8.5¢/kWh for all electricity used at all hours starting Jan 1. 21 (182 characters)
2. To support Ontarians staying home under the COVID lockdown, TOU and Tiered prices are set to 8.5¢/kWh for all hours starting Jan 1. 21 (138 characters)
3. TOU and Tiered prices are set to 8.5 cents/kWh for all hours and thresholds starting Jan 1. 21 (98 characters)
4. TOU and Tiered prices are fixed at 8.5 cents/kWh starting Jan 1. 21 (71 characters)

\*French translation can be provided by OEB upon request.

### **Web/Email Copy\*:**

#### **Support for customers during the province-wide shutdown**

The province-wide shutdown means that more people will be staying home or running their small businesses from home. The Ontario Government has taken steps to hold the price of electricity at 8.5 ¢/kWh for electricity used from January 1 until the end of the day on January 28, 2021. Residential, small business and farm customers on Time-of-Use and Tiered price plans set under the Ontario Energy Board's Regulated Price Plan will pay that fixed price. So, no matter what time of day you use your electricity, or how much you use, the fixed price will apply.

The price change will happen automatically. No customer action is required. For more information, visit [oeb.ca](http://oeb.ca)

\*French translation can be provided by OEB upon request.

### **Sample Tweets\*:**

1. To support customers staying home during the shutdown, a fixed price for electricity will begin Jan/1/21. TOU & Tiered price plan customers will pay 8.5¢/kWh for all electricity used 24/7. Visit [oeb.ca](http://oeb.ca)

2. #NEW fixed price of 8.5¢/kWh for customers on Time-of-Use and Tiered price plans. Starts Jan/1/21, applies 24/7 and for all electricity used for 28 days. See oeb.ca #COVID19

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### **Key Messages\*:**

- To support Ontarians staying home during the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation, the Ontario government has taken steps to hold the price of electricity at 8.5 cents per kWh for electricity used from January 1, 2021 until the end of the day on January 28, 2021.
  - The fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price is equal to the off-peak price set by the OEB on December 15, 2020 for January 1, 2021.
- This fixed price will apply to residential, small business and farm customers who buy their electricity from their utility and applies to customers on Time-of-Use (TOU) or Tiered pricing.
- Customers don't need to do anything. This change will happen automatically for the electricity that they use from January 1, 2021 until the end of the day on January 28, 2021.
- There are also bill support programs for low-income customers. Find out more at [oeb.ca/billhelp](http://oeb.ca/billhelp).
- The OEB's winter disconnection ban is in place for residential customers at this time. Residential customers cannot have their electricity disconnected for non-payment before May 1, 2021.

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### **Q/As\*:**

#### **What is this about?**

To support Ontarians staying home during the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation, the Ontario Government has taken steps to hold the price of electricity at 8.5¢/kWh, 24 hours a day. This fixed price applies to electricity used from January 1, 2021 until the end of the day on January 28, 2021.

The fixed 8.5¢/kWh price is equal to the off-peak price set by the OEB on December 15, 2020 for January 1, 2021.

#### **Which customers does this affect?**

Residential, small business and farm customers that buy their electricity from their utility and are on the Ontario Energy Board's Regulated Price Plan (RPP) will pay the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price for all hours of the day, every day of the week. This fixed price applies whether the customer is on time-of-use (TOU) or Tiered pricing.

- **FOR USMPs:** Customers of unit-sub meter providers (USMP) that are in a building that is paying RPP Time-of-Use or Tiered prices will also benefit from the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price.

**Which customers are not affected by this change?**

Customers who purchase their electricity under contract from an energy retailer will continue to pay the price agreed to in the contract. The OEB does not set these prices.

The fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price also does not apply to customers that have opted out of the RPP in favour of market-based pricing.

**I am paying Tiered prices. Will I receive the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price, and does it apply even if I pass the winter Tier threshold?**

Yes. The fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price applies to all electricity consumed by customers on Tiered pricing, regardless of whether they pass the winter Tier threshold. The winter Tier threshold is 1,000 kWh per month for residential customers. The Tier threshold is 750 kWh per month for non-residential customers all year round.

**I am a customer of a unit sub-meter provider (USMP). Will the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price apply to me?**

Customers of USMPs that are in a building that buys electricity from its utility and pays RPP prices will also benefit from the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price.

**I signed a contract with an electricity retailer. Will the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price apply to me?**

No. Customers that buy their electricity from an energy retailer under contract will continue to pay the price they agreed to in their contract. The OEB does not set these prices.

**I just switched from TOU pricing to Tiered pricing. How does that affect me?**

The fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price applies to all RPP customers, regardless of whether they are on TOU or Tiered pricing.

**What do I have to do to get this price?**

Customers don't need to do anything. This change will happen automatically for the electricity that they use from January 1, 2021 until the end of the day on January 28, 2021.

**What happens after January 28, 2021?**

When the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price expires at the end of the day on January 28, 2021, customers will start to pay the RPP prices that were set by the OEB on December 15, 2020. Those prices will be either TOU or Tiered pricing, depending on which price plan the customer is on.

Customers do still have the option to switch from TOU pricing to Tiered pricing, but the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price will be in place until the end of the day on January 28, 2021 for customers on both price plans.

**Why is this price relief only in place until January 28, 2021?**

The government has chosen the 28-day period to align with other supports that the government has put in place for Ontarians staying at home during the province-wide shutdown announced on December 21, 2020.

**How much will customers save with this change?**

Because each customer consumes electricity differently, the bill impact of the fixed 8.5 ¢/kWh price will vary.

**How much is the government spending on this initiative?**

The Ontario Government has indicated that it plans to cover the financial impact of the price change through provincial revenues. That financial impact will therefore not be recovered from ratepayers on future electricity bills.

**What is the impact of this initiative on electricity distributors?**

The government has said the financial impact of the price change will be covered by the Province. Electricity distributors will not lose revenue as a result of this initiative. The OEB recognizes that there may be costs to distributors associated with implementing the price change. The OEB is allowing distributors to track these costs, and other costs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, in a deferral account. Distributors can later apply to the OEB for approval to recover the costs that they have tracked in the deferral account.

**When will this price change appear on my bill?**

For many customers, their next bill after January 1, 2021 will show this new pricing. Some customers may receive a bill before their utility or unit sub-meter provider has been able to implement the pricing change.

The timing of your monthly electricity bill might mean that you won't see the change on your bill right away. In that case, you will get a credit on a future bill.

For many customers, the first bill after January 1, 2021 will have more than the usual number of line items on the "Electricity" portion of their bill. These line items are necessary to reflect the different prices that are in effect at different times: (i) the current RPP prices that are in effect until December 31, 2020; (ii) the fixed, 8.5 ¢/kWh price that will be in effect from January 1, 2021 until the end of the day on January 28, 2021; and (iii) the RPP prices that will be in effect starting on January 29, 2021, as set by the Ontario Energy Board on December 15, 2020.

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