



Understanding the Ontario Energy Board's Decision re: Hydro One Delivery Rates

This is a topic that impacts MLA members, and is one that we have received many inquiries about.

Your utility bill is made up of 5 components; the price of electricity, Delivery, Regulatory, Debt Retirement and Ontario Clean Energy Benefit. The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) regulates the province's electricity and natural gas sectors in the public interest. They are responsible for setting the price of electricity, which makes up approximately one half of your utility bill, and for approving delivery, regulatory, debt retirement and Ontario Clean Energy Benefit charges.

Hydro One owns and operates the largest electricity transmission and distribution system in Ontario. The transmission system conveys electricity from generation facilities to large power consumers, urban centres and transformer stations. The distribution system conveys electricity from the transformer stations to homes and businesses, primarily in the rural and remote areas of the province. Hydro One does not generate electricity, nor does it have any influence over the cost of electricity.

In December 2013, Hydro One filed a rate application with the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to change certain distribution rates to its customers. And since the OEB published its decision on March 12, 2015, we thought this issue of ShoreLines would provide a good opportunity to provide an overview and update.

The rates approved in this decision are based on the OEB's 'determination of the level of revenue required by Hydro One to cover the reasonably incurred costs of operating and maintaining the distribution system at a level of service that meets the needs of its customers'.

In their original application, Hydro One requested approval to increase distribution rates for each of the years 2015 through 2019, representing a growth in revenues of 29%. The OEB felt that their application did not conform to the rate setting options as contained in their Renewed Regulatory Framework for Electricity Distributors (RRFE), which provides an array of options a distributor can choose from when establishing distribution rates. Accordingly, the OEB approved an increase of approximately 19% over 2015, 2016 and 2017. In short, Hydro One will be increasing their rates, but not as much as they had originally planned.

Following are the key considerations that led to the OEB decision.

Distribution Charges and Rate Class Review:

Hydro One undertook a rate classification review and proposed to

reclassify 11% of its customers. This would result in a 3.4% increase in revenue collected from all other customer classes to make up for lost revenue as a result of this reclassification. The OEB directed that a rate plan be implemented to mitigate the impact on customers who experience a 15% or greater increase to their total bill as a result of reclassification.

Delivery costs vary according to the rate classification or type of electric service provided to a residence. Permanent/residential applies to a customer's main place of abode; seasonal/residential applies to any non-primary residence such as cottages, chalets and camps. (For a full list of the classification criteria, visit www.hydroone.com – rate classes.) Within the permanent/residential classification, rates are also determined by customer density, defined as follows:

- Urban High Density Zone is defined as areas containing 3,000 or more customers with a line density of at least 60 customers per kilometre.
- Medium Density Zone is defined as areas containing 100 or more customers with a line density of at least 15 customers per kilometre.
- Low Density Zone is defined as areas other than Urban or Medium Density Zone.

Hydro One Delivery rates include a fixed charge component and a variable charge component. The OEB approved an increase in the proportion to be collected through the fixed charge from 40% to 42%. The following chart depicts the rate changes approved for 2015.

Electricity	Residential/ Seasonal 2014/2015	Residential/ Permanent Urban High Density (UR) 2014/2015	Medium Density (R1) 2014/2015	Low Density (R2) 2014/2015
Distribution service charge (\$/month)	\$23.63/\$29.78	\$16.64/\$20.28	\$24.07/\$27.17	\$61.53/\$67.37
Distribution Volume (metered/kWh)	\$0.08206/\$0.07640	\$0.02557/\$0.0208	\$0.0339/\$0.0331	\$0.03724/\$0.0424
**Rural Rate Protection (\$/kWh)				-\$0.0012/\$0.0013
Transmission Network (adjusted/kWh)	\$0.00663/\$0.0066	\$0.00707/\$0.0070	\$0.00719/\$0.0066	\$0.00702/\$0.0063
Transmission Connection (adjusted kWh)	\$0.0046/\$0.0042	\$0.00489/\$0.0050	\$0.00499/\$0.0048	\$0.0047/\$0.0045

** The Rural Rate Protection discount applies only to residential/permanent properties in low density zones and does not include seasonal/residential properties.

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What threatened to be the never-ending winter quickly leapt into summer, seemingly overnight. The ice has only been out for 15 days, yet its almost 30 degrees C. outside, as we write this Welcome to Spring in Muskoka greeting. A few of us brave soles have already taken the plunge, although very brief!

Like the budding trees and blooming crocuses, I too feel a new awakening. Spring always makes me feel a little bit younger; a little more energetic. The smell of spring showers, the call of the loon, the peaceful kayak ride and the long sunny days inspire me. I always get my first boat ride in a couple days after the ice goes out.

At the MLA, it is our mission to protect this paradise that is Muskoka. On the Victoria Day weekend we launched the 2015 Water Quality program. With over 100 volunteers again set to take water samples to test for phosphorus water clarity, eColi and dissolved organic carbon, we continue to monitor the health of our lakes, particularly close to shore where we swim.

Our annual seeding day was another success – we sold over 5000 native seedlings and over 85 monarch butterfly and pollinator gardens (a new addition this year). It was a pleasure chatting with individual members as they picked up their orders, and went about busy long weekend activities.

Plans are already underway for this year's aquatic and sailing regattas. We hope you can join us on the Saturday of the August long weekend for our 122nd Aquatic Regatta at the Muskoka Lakes Golf & Country Club, and at one of the five MLA Sailing Regattas over the summer. Call our office for details or check our web site for the schedule of events.

As I mentioned in my last message, more members are needed for our voice to be heard when we delegate on zoning by-laws, development and responsible taxation, on your behalf. One of the most effective marketing strategies in advertising history was a television commercial that asked you,

as the consumer, to tell two friends, and then they'll tell two friends, and they'll tell two friends, and so on and so on and so on. So we are asking you to tell two friends about the MLA value proposition. Tell them about this newsletter, about the NewsBites updates you receive every month – tell them about our water quality program, our regattas, our participation in municipal planning and budgeting. Please tell them why you became a member of the MLA. We all benefit as our numbers grow.

By now you will have received our Member Survey. We hope you take the time to complete it as your feedback helps direct our strategic plans. We need your input to guide us on the topics and issues that are important to you.

IN THIS ISSUE:

The Ontario Energy Board recently handed down a decision regarding Hydro One's application for changes to the distribution rates charged for delivery of electricity to our homes. We hope our article helps to explain these changes and how they might affect you.

Lyme Disease has become a growing concern for the health care community as cases in Ontario are on the rise. Read about this disease and how you can help prevent or fight against its symptoms.

Sailing and paddling are becoming popular again as cottagers look to be more at one with nature. The new "Get out on the Water" campaign outlined in this edition will give you an opportunity to learn more about these sports. You may discover your own love of a silent glide across a quiet lake.

And James Ross shares his love of spring and the rituals he witnesses from the front porch of his remote cottage.

With almost a year as your president under my belt, I can tell you that I have learned a lot, even about our own organization and I continue to feel privileged to be a part of the MLA. As the summer approaches, I wish everyone a safe and happy 2015 season and look forward to meeting as many of you as I can in the coming months.

Michael Hart - President

Social Media, 101

The MLA, like many of our members, is striving to keep up with social media and all of you tech savvy people out there, young and vintage! With this, we'd like to provide a bit of social media 101, specifically for Instagram. You can ask your closest teen about Instagram (or watch them post photos and count their "likes" hourly). For more on the biggest wave since Facebook, read on!

For those not familiar, Instagram is essentially a visual Facebook – amalgamating photos, with captions, and giving people the option to like and comment. It has really caught on! Its popularity has arguably taken over from Facebook with younger generations. Facebook actually bought Instagram in 2012 for \$1 billion. The draw being, it's instant! There are no status updates, articles, or lengthy text. And thankfully there are no paid ads. It's quick and "instant" visual social sharing. All you need is a SmartPhone.

People use #hashtags to gain a following in various areas and build a community. For example, some of the most popular hashtags of 2014 were #love, #summer, #fun. These terms are searchable, for similar photos, and like-minded users. Naturally when we cottagers think of summer, love and fun - we think of Muskoka and our beautiful lakes. With such a visual tool, we can't think of a better subject to photograph than Muskoka!

Instagram is easy to navigate and really quite fun. Ask that close

teenager, or google it on YouTube. We will also happily give you a live demo at the July AGM!

Instagram has proved to be invaluable for small businesses, as it's free promotion (for most of us that is, some celebrities are paid to promote products on Instagram and Twitter!). People search Instagram using hashtags (i.e. #Muskoka) to find photos of interest, and usually "follow" these users. The #hashtag is what used to be known as the pound or number sign – any word or phrase with "#" before it, and no spaces in between. When you log into your Instagram account, your "feed" is a list of photos from everything and everyone you have followed. The idea is that it's a quick visual fix of things you are interested in and passionate about. People often use more than one #hashtag per photo post. This is where the forum uses creative expression and quick wit!

This spring, the MLA launched @ServingMuskoka as our Instagram account. We will post Muskoka-related photos year-round, and we welcome members to email us photos for us to share with our MLA community. Some of our favourite #hashtags so far are #OurMuskoka, #MLA, #LoveMuskoka, #PreserveMuskoka. We would love to hear some of your creative Muskoka #hashtags – please tag us @ServingMuskoka.

Please also visit our Muskoka Lakes Association Facebook and Twitter (@MuskokaLakes) accounts.

Katharine Duncan



The Nesting Season

Springtime can be a dangerous time. Not solely because spring is purported to be the season when “love is in the air,” though that remains a good reason to be on guard. No, what I mean is that this beautiful season is a critical time in nature’s scheme. Spring is a time of new life, and our cottage environment puts us in touch with this daily.

Millions of creatures are born. The migrating birds have returned and gather their sticks and twigs for nests. Some settle for the cottage eaves, holes in trees, or the sweeping branches of the beautiful shade trees that support our hammock. Others will move into the nesting boxes that we charitably supply. Water birds have hidden in the waterside thickets that fringe our cottage shoreline, mothers sitting cautious and still.

Soon, broods of goslings, ducklings, merganser chicks and baby loons appear, gracing our serene bays, following clumsily after their mother along shores, hitching a ride on a parent’s back or swimming single file behind their guardian.

As such, spring is a wonderful time of the year for watching wildlife. The young are out in force, and there is a certain beauty in observing the rearing and development of even the commonest of animals. The Canada geese that we seldom look at twice, only cursing them as we gingerly wade through the mine field of their goosy deposits on shore, suddenly become a focus of our fascination when they have a young gaggle of goslings in tow.

Such is the case at our cottage each spring. We don’t even need to get a glimpse of the youngsters, but can tell from the posturing of their parents that they have arrived. The gander will stand on guard at the shore, neck arched in a display of aggressiveness. The mother feeds while he watches, and then the roles are reversed. Never will they graze at the same time.

This year, for two nights running, we are awakened from our sleep by the honking and squawking of the panicked geese. Then, when the tiny goslings make their first appearance, we are saddened that there are only two, when usually there are six or eight. Perhaps the blame lies with the gulls, or maybe it is the Great Blue heron that stalks the shores. Certainly the loons cannot be blamed this time, as the baby geese are not even old enough to get their feet wet.

One thing is certain, with only two surviving goslings it is much easier for us to become attached. We watch them each morning from our cottage window, as they seem to double in size daily. They are precocious brats, seemingly intent on giving their parents a hard time. The two demons wait until their protective parents look away, and then run for it. One scampers across the little wooden bridge that crosses to our swim rock moving faster than is seemingly possible for his small and scrawny legs. The female honks and runs after him. This gives the other gosling the opportunity to try his own escape, running awkwardly in the other direction along the shoreline. The holy terrors seem to be laughing as they put their mother through misery. Maybe it is no longer politically correct to peck one’s offspring, and this has led to such troublesome behaviour in the youngsters. Mother goose gathers the delinquent twins back in, and then peers out over the bay with a look of annoyance, perhaps feeling that the parental care is becoming a little one-sided.

When the male returns from his feeding, the mother goose seems to be chastising him before she waddles off for her own dinner. The gander stands there stupidly, perhaps trying to understand, but his attentions are soon taken up by the two active brats.

Perhaps, once again, nature has gotten things right, a brood of eight goslings would have been far too exhausting for the parents to rear, and for us to watch.

This year, take a moment to think about the wildlife at the cottage. Stay clear of water-birds with young broods, keep pets under control and away from wetland nesting sites, and, although it is always exhilarating getting the boat out for the first time, take care along the shorelines and respect your wakes. The beauty of nature that has attracted us to Muskoka often struggles against our indiscretions and our naiveté can add to nature’s peril during this very dangerous time.



James Ross

Is the author of the books “*Cottage Daze*” and “*Still in a Daze at the Cottage*” (Dundurn Press), featuring the best of his cottage stories.

Visit www.cottagedaze.ca

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Boaters – What YOU Need to Know about Fuel Containing Ethanol

Do you know how much ethanol is in your fuel, or why it may matter? In Canada, the majority of the fuel you use contains up to 10% ethanol. Marine and other small gasoline-powered engines are designed to run on levels of ethanol at 10 percent volume or lower. However, in the U.S. higher blends are causing engine damage including performance issues like stalling, corrosion leading to oil or fuel leaks, increased emissions and damaged valves, rubber fuel lines and gaskets.

What is E15?

E15 is fuel that is 15 percent ethanol in volume. The fuel currently stocked at our nation's gas pumps is E10, or 10 percent ethanol.

What makes E15 a concern for boaters in the U.S.?

- One of the greatest concerns facing the recreational boating industry today relates to the Renewable Fuel Standard, specifically the introduction of E15 into the marketplace.
- There are serious and well-documented human safety, environmental, and technology concerns associated with ethanol blends higher than 10 percent in recreational boat fuel tanks and engines.
- While marine engines are not currently approved by the Environmental Protection Agency for use with E15, confusion and mis-fueling at the pump is a danger for boaters unaware that E15 is not compliant with boat engines.
- Many manufacturers of automobiles have said that their models through 2012 are not designed to run on E15, and if your engine is damaged by doing so, your warranty is void. This same statement is true for marine engines; E15 can not only severely damage your engine, but will void any warranty protecting it.

When will I see E15 at my local gas station?

- E15 is not currently available in Canada.
- However, in some areas of the United States where ethanol infrastructure is better and gas retailers are more equipped for higher ethanol blends, consumers may see E15 earlier than in other areas.

What should I do until then?

- It is important that you become aware of this issue early. Learn about the problems associated with ethanol and stay tuned for updates from the National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) and others in the boating industry.

What about alternative biofuels?

- The recreational boating industry continues to explore alternative biofuels in response to the U.S. introduction of E15.
- NMMA is conducting a series of ongoing evaluations on isobutanol, a biofuel derived from corn. Isobutanol produced no more emissions than pure, EPA-approved test gasoline, while producing 30 percent more energy than ethanol.

Where can I get more information?

- Visit www.nmma.org for updates on this important issue or follow us on Twitter @therealnmma.
- NMMA is a member of the Smarter Fuel Future initiative, in partnership with many other industries concerned about the impact of ethanol. For additional resources, visit www.SmarterFuelFuture.org to stay involved through newsletters, alerts and more.

Get out on the Water

The MLA is teaming up with Ontario Sailing and ROWONTARIO to give you an opportunity to – Get out on the Water – coming to Muskoka Saturday July 18th.



In our continuing effort to help MLA members experience the enjoyment of boating in Muskoka, we have teamed up with two provincial associations – Ontario Sailing and ROWONTARIO. In 2012 these two successful associations partnered to form the industry leading Shells & Sails program, supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, to promote rowing and sailing and provide individual clubs with tools and resources to help them standardize best programming, operational and marketing practices. But best of all is the community outreach program with their Shells & Sails Mobile Team.

In the last two years of operation, the Shells & Sails Mobile Team, traveling across Ontario with rowing shells, sailing dinghies, safety boats, and an instructor for each sport, has co-hosted 25 TRY IT events with clubs. The Mobile Team saw over 1000 people try both sailing and rowing for *free!*

Another joint initiative between Ontario Sailing and ROWONTARIO, **Get Out on the Water** was launched in September 2014 to create and rejuvenate interest and passion into the sports of rowing and sailing, inviting the public to TRY their hand at rowing and sailing, *free!*

This will be a fun-filled, barrier-free day for those looking to **Get out on the Water**. In Muskoka, the South Muskoka Sailing Club will host its own TRY IT event with the Mobile Unit on Saturday, July 18th at the South Muskoka Sailing School on McVittie Island, Lake Muskoka.

Sign up early for this or other TRY IT events at your local rowing or sailing clubs; www.getoutonthewater.ca, as pre-registration is now in place. You can also tour their facilities, get member information, find out about Learn to Sail/Learn to Row programs and TRY IT.

Visit www.shellsandsails.ca to see where the Shells & Sails Mobile Team will be traveling or www.getoutonthewater.ca to find more TRY IT opportunities in your community!

Visit www.mla.on.ca for more information about Muskoka area clubs and on-water activities.

The MLA Sailing Network is comprised of Bala Sailing Club, Lake Muskoka; Beaumaris Yacht Club, Lake Muskoka; Go Home Bay, Georgian Bay; Kettles Sailing Club, Lake Muskoka; Lake of Bays Sailing Club, Lake of Bays; Lake Joseph Yacht Club, Lake Joseph; Muskoka Lakes Sailing Club; Lake Rosseau; Muskoka Lakes Golf & Country Club (sailing school), Lake Rosseau; South Muskoka Sailing Club, Lake Muskoka; and Sail Parry Sound, Parry Sound).

We encourage you to contact the club closest to you for any open-house activities and information about their programs.

See you on the water!

Barb Triskan & Steve Phillips



The Legacy of Litter

What kind of people throw garbage out the window of their cars? We live on a quiet rural road just a few minutes from Bracebridge. Each spring, I pick up garbage from the ditches near our mailbox. Some of the garbage is bits of our recycling that blew out of our containers over the winter (I recognize our brands!). I also find all kinds of garbage that was tossed from the windows of passing vehicles.

I did my annual clean up a couple of weeks ago and decided to document what I found. I cleaned up both ditches in a 200 metre stretch of road. Here is what I found:

- 1 glove
- 11 plastic water bottles
- Numerous plastic shopping-sized bags
- 2 tetrapak wine boxes
- 11 beer cans
- 2 glass beer bottles
- Several super-size styrofoam drink containers
- 2 pop cans
- 1 glass Coke bottle
- 1 pair of running shoes (!!)
- 1 broken glass bottle
- 1 plastic six-pack ring
- 1 two litre plastic juice bottle
- 1 high school text book
- 2 high school binders
- 1 pair of wooden drum sticks
- Fast food garbage, particularly McDonalds and Tim Horton's

Several things are evident from this tally. One is that people have bad luck on occasion and loose things that they didn't mean to (like the shoes and the single glove I found). I watched my neighbour driving down the road one day, only to see him turn around and drive back to pick up the shoe that his toddler had just chucked out the window!

It is also apparent that drinking and driving is shockingly common. If you consider that I found 15 alcohol containers in a 200 metre stretch of road, multiplying this number by the length of any road gives us an estimate of how many get tossed out the window. Our road is 11 km long, so that would mean 825 containers. Multiply that by all the km of roads in Muskoka and that would be a really large number. That is a lot of drinking and driving.

We all know that fast food is a fact of life in Canada – aside from the general unhealthiness of most fast food, it generates an awful lot of the garbage, much of which ends up as roadside litter. My informal survey suggests that much of the litter is from McDonalds and Tim Horton's but other fast food brands are present as well. Litter can last a long time. Aluminum cans and glass bottles do not disintegrate over time and some plastics take decades to break down. One statistic indicated that of the 100 billion plastic grocery bags used by Europeans in a year, 8 billion of them end up in the ocean.

Canadians love their Tim Hortons but the garbage resulting from our addiction is astounding. The lids of Tim's cups are not biodegradable although they are recyclable. Apparently, Tim Horton's cups are the

Muskoka's Waste Management Guide

The 2015/2016 waste management reference tool is now available to all residents/cottagers in Muskoka. The Waste Management Guide provides customized collection schedules for each municipality and information regarding special dates, acceptable set-out, landfill and transfer stations and more.

The Guide can be downloaded electronically at www.muskokarecycles.ca. Residents who want a physical copy can fill out an online request at www.muskokarecycles.ca or pick up a Guide at any landfill, transfer station, municipal office or library in Muskoka.

fastest growing litter item in Toronto. I decided a couple of years ago that I wouldn't buy take-out coffee unless I had a traveling mug. However sometimes I see that the staff use a paper cup to fill my travelling mug so they can ensure I get a medium if I order a medium. Also, when the roll-up-your-rim events are on, they offer you a clean empty cup, which presumably you would toss in the garbage once you have rolled up the rim. Surely they could come up with a more environmentally friendly method of operating their contests.

I find it disturbing when I find plastic six-pack rings. They are lethal to many wild animals which can accidentally get them stuck on their heads. The Toronto Zoo shared a photo a few years ago of a large snapping turtle shaped like a figure 8 as it had a plastic ring around its middle for many years. If you google six-pack rings, you will see a picture of a great blue heron with one around its neck. Whenever I find them, I pick them up and take them home where I cut them up with scissors. This has been recommended as a way to help prevent wildlife from becoming entangled in them where they sometimes strangle to death. The good news is that these rings are now made to photo-degrade within 90 days of being littered.

So, I think we all have a shared responsibility here. We can all clean up our own ditches. We can all strive to be litter-free and make better choices about the garbage we produce. We can encourage others, people and businesses, to do a better job as well. Clean is beautiful – good for the heart and soul and good for the environment too.

The Muskoka Conservancy (formerly the Muskoka Heritage Foundation) has been committed to nurturing, protecting and conserving our natural and cultural heritage for over 25 years. Visit www.muskokaconservancy.org or call 705-645-7393 to learn more about stewardship programs, protected properties, and educational outreach. You can help us conserve Muskoka's environment: become a member, make a donation, leave a legacy.

Jan McDonnell - Muskoka Conservancy

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The MLA Advantage Card is about more than the benefits you receive as a member; it's part of our effort to encourage members to 'Stock up in Muskoka' supporting local business and strengthening the District economy.



Preventing Lyme Disease

Recently, the Ontario Legislative Assembly tasked the Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care to develop a strategy to enhance public awareness of Lyme disease in Ontario and ensure that all scientifically verified tests and treatment for acute and chronic Lyme diagnoses are available to patients and health care practitioners in Ontario.

Lyme disease is a debilitating condition caused by infected, small, insect-like parasites called blacklegged ticks. These arachnids (related to scorpions, spiders and mites) feed on blood by attaching their mouthparts to people and animals. They get infected when they feed on mice, squirrels, birds and other small animals that carry the bacterium — and it can spread to humans through an infected tick bite. People and pets can pick up ticks by brushing against vegetation like grass, shrubs and leaf litter. Blacklegged ticks are most often found in forests and the overgrown areas between the woods and open spaces, although it is possible to be bitten outside of these areas. Those who participate in outdoor activities like hunting, camping, fishing and hiking may be at a greater risk for tick bites by spending time in areas where ticks tend to live. The public Health Agency of Canada has identified southern and eastern Ontario as an area where populations of infected ticks have been established or are spreading. The Government of Canada currently has data indicating a 79% increase in Lyme disease cases between 2009 and 2013.

Ticks can be as small as a poppy seed and their bites are usually painless, so you may not know you've been bitten. The greatest risk of getting Lyme disease is during the spring and summer months. Ticks might also be active in the winter, if the winter is mild with little snow.

The best way to prevent Lyme disease is to prevent tick bites. If you venture into forests or overgrown areas between the woods and open spaces, the following precautions can protect you:

- Cover up by wearing protective clothing like closed-toe shoes, long-sleeved shirts and pants;
- Pull your socks over your pant legs to prevent ticks from crawling up your legs;
- Wear light-coloured clothes to make spotting ticks easier;
- Use insect repellents containing DEET or Icaridin on your skin and clothing — always read and follow label directions;
- Shower or bathe within two hours of being outdoors to wash away loose ticks; and
- Do daily “full body” checks for ticks on yourself, your children and pets.

The disease can escalate quickly from flu-like symptoms to potential neurological illnesses including paralysis; however, it can be treated effectively if caught early. Removing ticks within 24-36 hours usually prevents infection. Ticks can be removed carefully with clean tweezers. Grasp the head as close to the skin as possible and pull slowly straight out. Afterwards, wash the bite site with soap and water or disinfect with alcohol hand sanitizer. If mouthparts break off, remove them with tweezers or, if you are unable to remove them easily, leave it alone and let the skin heal.

Initial symptoms differ from person to person, which makes Lyme disease very difficult to diagnose. Some will experience mild symptoms like fever or a skin rash soon after being bitten, while others may suffer severe symptoms, but not until weeks after the bite.

Diagnosis of Lyme disease can be difficult as symptoms vary from person to person and can be similar to other illnesses. Consult a health care provider as soon as possible if you have symptoms or if you feel unwell in the weeks following a tick bite. The sooner you get treatment, the more rapid will be your recovery. Lyme disease can be effectively treated with 2 to 4 weeks of antibiotics.

Signs and symptoms of Lyme disease can include one or a combination of the following with varying degrees of severity:

- Fatigue
- Fever or chills
- Headache
- Muscle and joint pain, spasms, or weakness
- Numbness or tingling
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Skin rash
- Cognitive dysfunction, dizziness
- Nervous system disorders
- Arthritis and arthritic symptoms
- Heart palpitations

Untreated, symptoms can last years and include recurring arthritis and neurological problems, numbness and paralysis. Although not common, fatalities from Lyme disease have been reported.

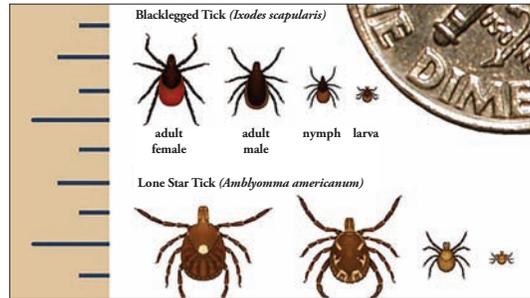
Steps can be taken to minimize the risk of tick bites by reducing tick habitats around your residence. Lawns should be mowed regularly; leaf litter, brush and weeds should be removed; firewood piles and bird feeders should be kept away from the residence and tree branches and shrubs should be trimmed to allow more sunlight. Mulch or woodchips along woodland trails and along the tree line, and hard or xeriscape (drier or less water demanding) landscaping can reduce exposure.

Although dogs and cats can contract Lyme disease, there is no evidence that they can spread the infection directly to people. Pets can, however, carry infected ticks into homes and yards. The most common symptom of Lyme disease in dogs and cats is arthritic pain, with some pets experiencing fatigue and fevers. Some

pets may eventually develop kidney problems.

For more information, visit the www.healthycanadians.gc.ca and click on 'Diseases and Infections'.

Marilyn Vogel - Editor



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Understanding the Ontario Energy Board's Decision re: Hydro One Delivery Rates

Continued

Seasonal Rate Class:

Of key importance was the OEB's decision that the seasonal customer classification is no longer justified and to subsequently direct Hydro One to prepare a plan to eliminate this rate class by August 4, 2015, to be effective January 1, 2016. The plan must include a mitigation strategy for seasonal customers expected to experience an increase in hydro rates of greater than 10% as a result of the migration to a different class. (Note: Hydro One had presented and then rescinded its proposal to move its 11,000 seasonal customers to the R1 (Medium Density) or R2 (Low Density) rate classes. Despite objection from OEB staff and representatives of the Federal Ontario Cottagers Association (FOCA), the OEB determined that seasonal class customers should be placed in a residential class according to their density.)

The net result of this reclassification will have cost implications for all cottagers. Customers moved to the R1 class will likely see a decrease in rates, while those moved to the R2 class will see an increase. Further, cottagers in the R2 class who do not meet the definition of permanent resident will not be eligible for the Rural Rate Protection subsidy. The following chart depicts an average monthly usage of 800 kWh and the related costs.

	Residential/ Seasonal	With 800 kWh Usage/ Month	Medium Density (R1)	With 800 kWh Usage/ Month	Low Density (R2)	With 800 kWh Usage/Month
Distribution service charge (\$/month)	\$29.78	\$29.78	\$27.17	\$27.17	\$67.37	\$67.37
Distribution Volume (metered/kWh)	\$0.07640	\$61.22	\$0.0331	\$26.48	\$0.0424	\$33.92
**Rural Rate Protection (\$/kWh)					-\$0.0013	-\$1.04
Transmission Network (adjusted/kWh)	\$0.0066	\$5.28	\$0.0066	\$5.28	\$0.0063	\$5.04
Transmission Connection (adjusted kWh)	\$0.0042	\$3.36	\$0.0048	\$3.84	\$0.0045	\$3.60
Total		\$99.54		\$62.77		\$108.89

*** The Rural Rate Protection discount will only apply to residential/permanent properties in low density zones and will not include seasonal/residential properties.

Unfortunately, Hydro One is not able to provide information with respect to where specific addresses fall in terms of the rate classes; however, they did advise that island properties and most waterfront properties will likely fall within the R2 or low density rate class. That may not bode well for islanders.

Vegetation Management:

The OEB denied Hydro One's request for an increase in their vegetation management budget (which includes cost for tree and brush clearing). The OEB

determined Hydro One's budget to be one of the highest costs per customer of its peers and therefore, directed a reduction to the vegetation budget.

Employee Compensation and Pensions:

A recent study, commissioned by Hydro One, showed employee compensation is about 10% higher than the industry average. Therefore, the OEB used the industry average to determine the percentage of compensation costs that will be included in the rates paid by Hydro One customers. They also encouraged Hydro One to move from a 72/28 employer/employee pension contribution level to a 50/50 ratio; however, pension costs and accounting methodology were not adjusted in this decision.

As reported in the Globe & Mail, Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne is proposing to sell a portion of Hydro One to the private sector and retain 40% ownership. The sale will happen in increments with an initial public offering of 15% expected this year. Premier Wynne intends to offer employees of Hydro One shares equivalent to 2.7% of their salaries annually for 12 years. In exchange, the Power Workers' Union has agreed that workers will pay more toward the cost of their defined-benefit pension plans.

Hydro One has been directed to prepare a plan for the elimination of the seasonal rate class by August 4, 2015. Reclassifications will become effective January 2016. The MLA will keep its membership apprised on further developments.

Marilyn Vogel - Editor

SILTATION OF THE MUSKOKA RIVER PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE Council Chambers - Municipal Office 1000 Taylor Court, Bracebridge, ON Saturday, July 18, 2015 at 10:30 a.m.

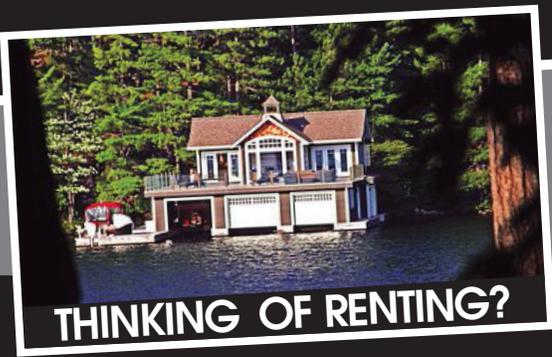
The Town of Bracebridge will be hosting two (2) Public Open Houses seeking input regarding siltation and erosion that appears to be occurring on the Muskoka River from Lake Muskoka to the confluence of the North and South Branches of the Muskoka River.

Deposition of materials at the mouth of the Muskoka River has been an ongoing natural occurrence. However, due to recent high flows experienced in the 2013 - 1 in 100 year flood event, corresponding alluvial deposits have created recreational and commercial concerns on this important navigation route.

Landowners having property fronting on the Muskoka River and other individuals who use the river for personal or business uses are invited to attend a Public Open House. Information is sought regarding observed changes in the river over the past number of years, the river's future both short-term and long-term, and the need for potential remediation to ensure safe navigation.

For further information contact: Walt Schmid, P.Eng., Director of Public Works - 705-645-6319 ext. 230, wschmid@bracebridge.ca

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In Our Opinion: The future of the ELA is up to us

It is well known that Water Quality testing is the Muskoka Lakes Association's flagship program. Through this program, the MLA monitors and reports on regional lake health, working with appropriate scientists and stakeholders to identify areas of concern and take remedial action.

We believe lake health is essential to all of Canada, which is why the MLA has been following the saga of the Experimental Lakes Area (ELA), a globally unique research station in northwestern Ontario, with great interest and concern.

The ELA is a set of 58 lakes, located near Kenora, about 250 km east of Winnipeg. Founded in 1968 to enable scientists to conduct controlled studies of lake pollution sources and impacts, the research facility was maintained by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). Work done by thousands of scientists over the years contributed to Canada's and the world's understanding of acid rain, greenhouse gases, mercury pollution, and algal blooms. The ELA has been awarded numerous prestigious international research awards.

As we reported in the Summer 2012 issue of Shorelines, the ELA came under threat of closure in May 2012 when the Government of Canada announced it was ending its funding. Financial support for the ELA ran out at the end of March, 2013, and researchers were banned from the site. At that time, Mike Logan, then chair of the MLA Water Quality Committee, expressed his concern to local media outlets that closing the ELA would essentially mean that progressive research would not be available to help us protect our lakes from emerging and new threats in the future. He pointed out that those past experiments at the facility determined phosphorus to be the water nutrient that causes algae in Canadian Shield lakes and that development regulations in Muskoka are based on the findings of that research. Further, he noted that other experiments done at the ELA contributed heavily to measures that addressed acid rain in the Canada-United States Air Quality Agreement of 1991. The MLA was the founding member of the Canadian coalition on acid rain, and results from the ELA experiments informed that bi-national treaty.

Consequently, the MLA joined the Environment Ministers of both Ontario and Manitoba and a coalition of scientists, academics and local groups, including the Muskoka Watershed Council, to rally against the closure. Despite widespread outcry, the government did not budge on its decision to close this vital research centre.

Fortunately, the Province of Ontario and the Winnipeg-based International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), a non-profit institute that focuses on sustainable development policy and operates in 70 countries – entered the picture. A one-year agreement with the federal government was reached that would allow the ELA to continue operating on a bare-minimum basis. Subsequently, just hours before this agreement was set to expire and the ELA to permanently close, a deal was finalized that will see the ELA supported for the long term. The Government of Ontario pledged \$2 million to the ELA, and the IISD committed \$900,000. For its part, the federal government agreed to give the ELA land to Ontario, and to transfer ELA operations to the Institute, allowing ELA scientists to focus on a broader range of studies than just those that fell within the mandate of the DFO.

"This opens a fresh, new chapter in the life of the ELA and the promise of many important and exciting research possibilities," said Scott Vaughan, the IISD's president and CEO. "What real-world research can tell us about the human impact on the natural environment is indispensable to putting the human relationship with this planet on a sustainable footing."

Since 2013, the ELA has continued to operate on funding received from hundreds of donors from around the world. In December 2014 the IISD announced that its ELA program had been granted full charitable status by the Canada Revenue Agency. This will allow the ELA to reach its full fundraising potential and confidently pursue its research and education goals.

The Experimental Lakes Area is the only site in the world where whole-lake experimentation is carried out. The MLA is pleased that this decision will enable the ELA to become less dependent on government largesse for its unique and essential research.

For more information on the ELA, visit <http://www.iisd.org>



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Muskoka Lakes Association, Box 298, 65 Joseph Street, Port Carling, ON P0B 1J0
P 705-765-5723 | F 705-765-3203 | E info@mla.on.ca | W www.mla.on.ca

Editor: Marilyn Vogel | P 705-765-5723 | E marilyn@mla.on.ca

