

Disconnection/Reconnection Policy

PURPOSE

This policy describes the terms and conditions Orangeville Hydro Limited (OHL) will use for disconnecting and/or reconnecting the electrical service of a consumer while complying with the applicable legislation and codes.

POLICY STATEMENT

OHL will comply with the disconnection and reconnection requirements as defined in the Distribution System Code (DSC), Retail Settlement Code (RSC), Distribution Rate Handbook, Unit Sub-Metering Code (USMC) and Ontario Energy Board Customer Service Rules.

OHL may consider the following reasons for disconnection:

- Adverse effect on the reliability and safety of the distribution system.
- Imposition of an unsafe worker situation beyond normal risks inherent in the operation of the distribution system.
- A material decrease in the efficiency of our distribution system.
- A materially adverse effect on the quality of distribution services received by an existing connection.
- Inability of OHL to perform planned inspections and maintenance.
- Failure of the consumer or customer to comply with a directive of a distributor that OHL makes for purposes of meeting its license obligations.
- The customer owes OHL money for distribution services, or for a security deposit.

OHL will not disconnect a residential or general service <50 kW customer with a smart meter or interval meter based solely on an estimated bill.

The physical process by which OHL disconnects or reconnects shall reflect good utility practice and consider safety as a primary requirement.

PROCEDURE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Planned Interruptions

Although it is Orangeville Hydro's policy to minimize inconvenience to customers, it is necessary to occasionally interrupt a customers' supply to maintain or improve the OHL's system, or to provide new or upgraded services to other customers. Whenever practical and cost effective, arrangements suitable to the customer and OHL may be made to

Disconnection/Reconnection Policy

minimize any inconvenience. OHL will endeavor to provide the customer with reasonable advance notice, except in cases of emergency, involving danger to life and limb, or impending severe equipment damage.

Disconnection by Request

Customers may make a written request to OHL for temporary disconnection of electrical service. OHL will make every reasonable effort to respond promptly to a customer's request for disconnection. A charge for temporary disconnection and reconnection will apply.

Disconnection without Notification

OHL may disconnect without notice in accordance with a court order or for emergency, safety or system reliability reasons.

Disconnection for Non-Payment

OHL follows the Disconnection and Reconnection process prescribed by Sections 4.2.1 through 4.2.7 of the Distribution System Code (DSC).

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, prior to disconnecting a property for non-payment, OHL shall provide to any person that, according to OHL's Conditions of Service, receives notice of the disconnection:

- (a) A Fire Safety Notice of the Office of the Fire Marshall; and
- (b) Any other public safety notices or information bulletins issued by public safety authorities and provided to OHL, which provide information to consumers respecting dangers associated with the disconnection of electricity service.

OHL shall include a copy of the notices or bulletins referred to above along with any notice of disconnection that is left at the property at the time of actual disconnection for non-payment.

OHL intends to disconnect, pursuant to section 31 of the Electricity Act, the property of a residential customer for non-payment shall send or deliver a disconnection notice to the customer that contains, at a minimum, the following information:

- (a) The date on which the disconnection notice was printed by the distributor;
- (b) The earliest and latest dates on which disconnection may occur:

Disconnection/Reconnection Policy

- 60 days from the date on which the disconnection notice is received by the customer, in the case of a residential customer that has provided OHL with documentation from a physician confirming that disconnection poses a risk of significant adverse effects on the physical health of the customer or on the physical health of the customer's spouse, dependent family member or other person that regularly resides with the customer; or
 - 14 days from the date on which the disconnection notice is received, in all other cases.
 - A disconnection notice issued for non-payment shall expire on the date that is 14 days from the last day of the applicable minimum notice period referred to above, determined in accordance with the rules set out in section 2.6.7 of the DSC. OHL may not thereafter disconnect the property of the customer for non-payment unless OHL issues a new disconnection notice in accordance with section 4.2.2 of the DSC.
- (c) The amount that is then overdue for payment, including all applicable late payment and other charges associated with non-payment to that date;
- (d) The amount of any approved service charge(s) that may apply if disconnection occurs, and the circumstances in which each of these charges is payable;
- (e) The forms of payment that the customer may use to pay all amounts that are identified as overdue in the disconnection notice, which must at least include payment by credit card issued by a financial institution and any other method of payment that OHL ordinarily accepts and which can be verified within the time period remaining before disconnection;
- (f) The time period during which any given form of payment listed under paragraph (e) will be accepted by OHL;
- (g) That, in order to avoid disconnection if OHL attends at the customer's property to execute the disconnection, a customer will only be able to pay by credit card issued by a financial institution, unless OHL, in its discretion, will accept other forms of payment at that time and sets out the other forms of payment in the disconnection notice;
- (h) That a disconnection may take place whether or not the customer is at the premises;
- (i) That, where applicable, the disconnection may occur without attendance at the customer's premises;

Where OHL has issued a disconnection notice to a residential customer for non-payment, the distributor shall ensure it has the facilities or staff available to permit the customer to pay all amounts that are then overdue for payment by credit card issued by a financial



Policy No: CC-003
Motion: 857

Date Issued: March 2017
Date Revised: September 9, 2019

Disconnection/Reconnection Policy

institution. Subject to the paragraph below, this payment option must be offered during the regular business hours of OHL, from the time the disconnection notice is delivered to a residential customer until the time OHL's staff attends at the customer's premises to execute the disconnection.

Where OHL attends at a residential customer's property to execute a disconnection, whether during or after OHL's regular business hours, OHL shall ensure it has the facilities or staff available at that time to permit the customer to pay all amounts that are then overdue for payment by credit card issued by a financial institution. OHL may, in its discretion, also accept other forms of payment at the time of disconnection.

Where OHL was unsuccessful in its attempt to contact a residential customer 48 hours before the planned disconnection as required, and OHL intends to execute the disconnection by attendance at the customer's premises, OHL shall make a reasonable attempt to communicate with the customer, with due regard for the safety and security of OHL's personnel, if the customer is at the property, to advise that disconnection will be executed and that payment may be made by credit card issued by a financial institution.

OHL may recover from the customer responsible for the disconnection reasonable costs associated with disconnection, including overdue amounts payable by the customer. OHL may recover from the customer responsible for the disconnection reasonable costs for repairs of OHL's physical assets attached to the property in reconnecting the property.

OHL may recover from the person requesting the reconnection any Board approved reconnection charges.

Where OHL issues a disconnection notice for non-payment in respect of the disconnection of a multi-unit, master-metered building, OHL shall post a copy of the disconnection notice in a conspicuous place on or in the building promptly after issuance of the notice.

A disconnection notice issued for non-payment shall expire on the date that is 14 days from the last day of the applicable minimum notice period referred to in this policy. OHL will not thereafter disconnect the property of the customer for non-payment unless OHL issues a new disconnection notice.

After the minimum notice period OHL shall make reasonable efforts to contact, in person or by telephone, a residential customer to whom a disconnection notice has been issued for non-payment at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled date of disconnection.

Disconnection/Reconnection Policy**Third Party Notification**

OHL shall, at the request of a residential customer, send a copy of any disconnection notice issued to the customer for non-payment to a third party designated by the customer for that purpose provided that the request is made no later than the last day of the applicable minimum notice period set out in the OHL's Billing and Payment Policy.

In such a case:

- a. OHL shall notify the third party that the third party is not, unless otherwise agreed with OHL, responsible for the payment of any charges for the provision of electricity service in relation to the customer's property; and
- b. The rules set out in OHL's Billing and Payment Policy shall apply, with such modifications as the context may require, for the purposes of determining the date of receipt of the disconnection notice by the third party.

A customer may, at any time prior to disconnection, designate a third party to also receive any future notice of disconnection and OHL shall send notice of disconnection to such third party.

OHL shall accept electronic mail or written communications from the customer for purposes of disconnection and reconnection with respect to a designated third party.

Bill Payment Assistance

OHL shall suspend any disconnection action for a period of 21 days from the date of notification by a LEAP intake agency that it is assessing a residential customer for the purposes of determining whether the customer is eligible to receive bill payment assistance, provided such notification is made within 14 days from the date on which the disconnection notice is received by the customer. Where a residential customer had requested prior to the issuance of the disconnection notice that OHL also provide a copy of any disconnection notice to a third party, OHL shall suspend any disconnection action for a period of 21 days from the date of notification by the third party that he or she is attempting to arrange assistance with the bill payment, provided such notification is made within 14 days from the date on which the disconnection notice is received by the customer. Upon notification by a LEAP Intake Agency that a customer is not eligible to receive bill payment assistance, or if another third party who was considering the provision of bill assistance decides not to proceed, OHL may continue its disconnection process. OHL will have up to 14 days to act on the previous disconnection notice and must make a further reasonable effort to contact the customer in accordance with prior to executing disconnection.

Disconnection/Reconnection Policy

Payment to Avoid Disconnection

To avoid disconnection OHL makes every effort to offer solutions to customers that have arrears, including: offering an Arrears Management Program; increasing awareness of assistance or support that may be available through LEAP emergency financial assistance, OESP or other sources; and providing information about available conservation measures.

Disconnection can be avoided if payment is made as follows:

1. Once a disconnection notice to a residential customer for non-payment has been issued, OHL shall accept payment in:
 - Cash
 - Credit Card issued by a Financial Institution (VISA, MasterCard, AMEX)
 - Debit
 - Money Order
 - Electronic Banking *
 - Telephone Banking *

* Payments must be received in the office.

These payment options will be available during the regular business hours of OHL, from the time the disconnection notice is delivered to a residential customer until the time OHL's staff attends at the customer's premises to execute the disconnection.

2. Customer enters into an Arrears Payment Agreement

- a. If there is a security deposit it will be applied to the amount owing.
- b. A down payment of up to 15% of the total amount owing plus any additional service charges (such as a reconnection charge) must be paid in full.
- c. The remaining amount owing will need to be paid:
 - i. if the customer owes less than twice their average monthly bill OHL will provide at a minimum of 5 months to pay;
 - ii. if the customer owes more than twice their average monthly bill OHL will provide at a minimum of 10 months to pay.
- d. The current bill must be paid as well.
- e. If the customer defaults on more than one payment the arrears payment arrangement will be cancelled.
- f. If the arrangement is cancelled OHL will not allow another arrears payment arrangement for 2 (two) years.

Disconnection/Reconnection Policy

3. Eligible low-income customers that enter into an arrears payment agreement are allowed more time to pay outstanding balances.
 - a. If there is a security deposit it will be applied to the amount owing.
 - b. A down payment of up to 10% of the total amount owing. If the service is disconnected the reconnection fee will be waived.
 - c. The remaining amount owing will need to be paid:
 - i. If the customer owes less than twice their average monthly bill OHL will provide at a minimum of 8 months to pay;
 - ii. If the customer owes more than twice their average monthly bill OHL will provide at a minimum of 12 months to pay;
 - iii. If the customer owes more than 5 times their average monthly bill OHL will provide at a minimum 16 months to pay.
 - d. The current bill must be paid as well.
 - e. If the customer defaults on more than two payments the arrears payment arrangement will be cancelled.
 - f. If the arrangement is cancelled OHL will not allow another arrears payment arrangement for 1 (one) year.
4. Customer enters into an otherwise acceptable arrangement with OHL.

Broken Payment Arrangements

In the event a customer fails to meet the repayment terms, OHL will restart the disconnection process.

Reconnection

OHL shall reconnect a Customer's property within 2 business days of receiving full payment or entering into an Arrears Payment Agreement.

Service Expiry

Services that are disconnected for non-payment and which remain disconnected for 6 months or longer shall not be reconnected until the service has been inspected by the Electrical Safety Authority at the owner's expense.

Disconnection Ban Period

OHL will not disconnect a residential customer for non-payment of an account from November 15th in one year to April 30th of the following year.