



Ontario
Energy
Board | Commission
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BY EMAIL AND WEB POSTING

July 17, 2020

To: All Registered Stakeholders

**Re: Consultation on the Deferral Account – Impacts Arising from the COVID-19
Emergency
Ontario Energy Board File Number: EB-2020-0133**

In its [letter](#) issued on May 14, 2020, the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) commenced a consultation on a deferral account (the Account) relating to impacts on utilities arising from the COVID-19 emergency in the electricity and natural gas sectors.

In its [follow-up letter](#) issued on June 4, 2020 regarding the draft issues list on the Account and other matters, the OEB set out dates for a stakeholder meeting beginning July 28, 2020, and continuing July 29, 2020 and July 30, 2020, if necessary. The stakeholder meeting was to provide a forum for discussion of the issues in this consultation. The OEB also noted that the dates of the stakeholder forum would be subject to change, pending the OEB's finalization of the issues list.

The purpose of this letter is to provide an update on the next steps in the consultation.

Based on the initial stakeholder meeting held on May 28, 2020 and the submissions on the draft issues list, the OEB has determined that future consultation would be assisted by a preliminary proposal to be prepared by OEB staff (Staff Proposal). The OEB is therefore cancelling the stakeholder forum previously scheduled for July 28, 2020 to July 30, 2020 to provide time for preparation of the Staff Proposal.

It is anticipated that the Staff Proposal will be in the form of a preliminary outline of the eventual guidance that the OEB has indicated will be the final outcome of this consultation. The intent of the Staff Proposal is not to pre-determine the issues that will be the subject of the consultation. Rather, the Staff Proposal will be provided for the purpose of facilitating and focussing stakeholder comments.

Further steps for the consultation will be determined and provided in due course, including a determination of whether a stakeholder forum will be of assistance to stakeholders to discuss the Staff Proposal or whether the OEB will proceed with written comments on the Staff Proposal. The OEB expects that the Staff Proposal will be ready by late summer 2020. In the event that the OEB convenes a stakeholder forum, the OEB expects that this will take place in September 2020. The OEB welcomes any comments from stakeholders in the meantime on the form of consultation to be adopted once the Staff Proposal has been issued. Cost eligible intervenors may include any such comments as part of their cost eligible activities up to a maximum of 0.5 hours.

The OEB anticipates that a final issues list and any advanced policy direction will be posted in the near future, and in any event, in advance of the Staff Proposal. Account data that is being reported to the OEB by utilities is expected to occur at the time the Staff Proposal is issued. This data will consist of balances recorded in the Account by utilities, as well as a preliminary analysis performed by OEB staff on this data.

Stakeholders may monitor the consultation by referring to the [OEB webpage](#) for additional information.

Any questions related to this consultation may be sent to Fiona O'Connell at fiona.oconnell@oeb.ca.

Yours truly,

Original signed by

Christine E. Long
Registrar and Board Secretary