

Electrical Bills

Troubled for years by the 'line loss' charged by Hydro One, and having sought justification without success from the Ontario Energy Board and Hydro One, I resorted to the Ontario Ombudsman for an explanation. The Ombudsman referred the question back to Hydro One to answer.

Hydro One did provide a breakdown of the rural Ontario Hydro Delivery Charge:

Distribution Flat Charge: \$72.92/month

Rural rate Protection Credit: -\$31.50 per month (ie, a rebate)

Smart Metering Entity Charge: \$0.79/month

Distribution Volume Charge: $\$0.0425 \times \text{Metered Usage in kWh}$

Transmission Connection Charge: $\$0.0045 \times \text{Adjusted Usage in kWh}$

Transmission Network Charge: $\$0.0063 \times \text{Adjusted Usage in kWh}$

Line Losses: $\text{Adjusted Usage Cost} - \text{Metered Usage Cost}$

Hydro One determines Adjusted Usage by measuring the total electrical energy distributed to all its customers, and the Metered Usage by the total of all customers' meter readings, then averaging the difference for each level of service. Presumably, the difference between Distributed and Metered Usages is the energy lost due to heating resistance in the distribution system. (It must also include the energy consumed by 'Grow-ops' that tap into the distribution system, bypassing meters.)

Hydro One said that the rural 'line loss' is 10.5%. Before line losses were removed from monthly energy bills, I had ascertained that the rural line loss was 9.02% and the line loss in Oakville was about 4.5%.

These facts raise two concerns. First, regardless how much energy is being wasted, stolen or otherwise lost by Hydro One, the line loss to my farm is minuscule. I calculated the I²R (line) loss on a 10-mile-long, 50,000-volt line of # 8 AWG stranded copper wire to my transformer as 0.29 microWatts per hour, or about 0.0002%. (I won't bore you with the math.) Why, then, is my line loss over 10% of my actual consumption?

Secondly, as I am much closer to the wind turbines and nuclear plants of southern Ontario than the customers in Oakville, why is their line loss half of mine?

Two factors are yet to be confirmed. The Hydro One spokesman promised to tell me the actual size and nature of the high-voltage cables delivering energy to my farm's transformer, and the voltage thereon, as my calculations are based on assumptions of line material and voltage. I have not yet heard back from him, but suspect my estimates are close.

In 1996/7 my Hydro cost was \$.08/kWh. My bill today revealed that it is now \$.22/kWh, an almost triple increase in 19 years, and the letter announced another increase of 3.4%. This cannot continue.

Charles Hooker

East Garafraxa

Hip, Hip, Hurray for the LDC

After being given the date for Total Hip Arthroplasty (replacement) in the fall of 2014, for March 23/2015, I was proactive by making enquiries at my doctors offices and Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) offices, both in Guelph and Orangeville. I even enquired at the local hospital where I was told people are sometimes brought to for rehab, if they have no one at home to look after them. Wherever I made enquiry, I was given the same message, which was that I would be assessed in the hospital after the surgery, in other words, ?don't worry!?

In late March, I was called by a discharge co-ordinator from the Brampton Civic Hospital, who asked what my discharge plans were? shock number one! Then, on the day of my pre-op appointment, a call came from the surgeon saying he would not do the surgery, as I had no plans in place for the post-op period? shock number two.

For the second time in two days, I explained in detail that I had made numerous phone calls, including to several health care agencies, only to be told things would be taken care of. I pleaded with him, saying I couldn't wait any longer, as the pain was unbearable, and walking was almost impossible. He than gave me 72 hrs to get a signed document on his desk detailing my post-op arrangements, 48 of those hrs being a weekend.

Now I am desperate, totally frustrated at not knowing what to do, plus feeling bullied. At my wits end, I couldn't eat or sleep. The next morning, I found myself once more at the local CCAC where I had been told that I maybe I could stay at one of three, out of town nursing homes - I was even given a glossy brochure to look at, but again, nothing was put in place for me.

Then on Sunday afternoon, with less than 24 hrs before the surgeon's ultimatum was to run out, the ?clouds broke? as I found myself at the Lord Dufferin Centre. The receptionist listened empathetically, as I explained my situation. I was told that an email would be sent off immediately to the manager, even though she was off sick.

In a very short while, I had a call from Patricia Banks, the nursing consultant manager, who said it would be tight but she would take care of everything, I wasn't to worry and she would call me back again soon. Well, she did call back, and I couldn't have been more grateful.

After surgery, I spent 3 weeks in the loving care of the wonderful staff at the Lord Dufferin Centre, with nursing care, Personal Support Worker (PSW) care morning and evening - and through the day and night as needed - and a physiotherapist. I had my own suite with weekly housekeeping and laundry taken care of. I ate meals with the residents in the lovely dining room, and was free to enjoy any of the programs and entertainment. But all of this was only possible through a program offered at the Lord Dufferin Centre, called ?Bridging you Home? and is funded by the Central West Local Health Integration Network, subsidized for people such as myself. It is totally affordable with the cost based on ones income. The care I received was exceptional in a true family environment, by staff that, they themselves, work together in cohesive harmony.

I cannot thank or sing the praises of Ms Banks enough who, even herself made sure I was okay by always checking in with me with loving support and encouragement in the most professional way. I was one of the first PSW's to graduate in Canada, and was proud of the work I did for many years.

How sad that the struggles regarding the state of health care hasn't evolved since then. I am still in shock at what I endured, worrying about my post-op care, and the dreadful lack of communication and co-ordination between the agencies supposedly there to help those in need at their most vulnerable of times. The system is in total disarray.

To say the government doesn't have the money is wrong. The money is there, its just not being filtered down to where it is needed. The problem is mismanagement and disorganization. There are numerous article and reports out in the newspapers of which there have been many in the past several months. One only has to read them. What a sad reflection on our society indeed.

Rita Payne

Orangeville