



REFERRAL OF MEMBER MOTION BY CITY COUNCIL

Request to Toronto Hydro-Electric System to cover the costs for consumers to change from unmetered flat rate billing to metered billing

Date:	November 2, 2009
To:	Executive Committee
From:	City Council
Wards:	All

City Council Decision

City Council on October 26 and 27, 2009, referred Motion MM41.1 to the Executive Committee.

Recommendations

Councillor Nunziata, seconded by Councillor Palacio, recommends that:

1. City Council request that going forward, Toronto Hydro-Electric System cover the costs associated with converting unmetered water heater service to metered service.
2. City Council request that Toronto Hydro-Electric System reimburse the costs of conversion to consumers who received notice from Toronto Hydro-Electric Service that the unmetered flat rate billing option has ended, and had their service converted at their own expense.

Summary

Toronto Hydro-Electric System (THES) has stopped offering the unmetered flat rate billing option for the electricity used by a water heater, requiring that all consumers who have been paying the unmetered flat rate switch to metered billing. THES states that this change has been made to encourage consumers to monitor their electricity consumption. As a result of this change, those being billed an unmetered water heater service rate have been advised that they must change to metered service. Doing so requires that an electrician be hired to disconnect the water heater control wire in the electrical panel and either install a circuit breaker or re-wire the water heater switch so that it is connected to

your main electrical panel supply, the cost of which THES is leaving to consumers to cover. THES has made arrangements with an electrical contractor to offer a reduced rate of \$185 plus GST to consumers who will have to change to metered service.

Consumers should not have to pay to convert their service from unmetered to metered. It was the decision of THES to discontinue unmetered flat rate billing, and as such, THES should cover the costs for the conversion. I have heard from many constituents who have received notice from THES that they must undergo this conversion or else their hot water will eventually be turned off. This is extremely disheartening for the approximately 36,000 consumers who are currently on unmetered flat rate billing, many of which are seniors, who cannot afford the cost associated with conversion. If THES cannot cover the full cost of conversion, they should at least cover a portion of the cost, as many people have reported to me that they were previously receiving metered service, until it was suggested by them to THES that they switch to the unmetered flat rate billing option. These individuals, who took the advice of THES, are now being forced to pay to switch back to the service they already had.

(Submitted to City Council on October 26 and 27, 2009 as MM41.1)