

Reporting Extinguished Hydro Lights Through 311 Toronto

Date:	September 27, 2013
To:	Government Management Committee
From:	Neil Evans, Director, 311 Toronto Anthony Haines, President & C.E.O., Toronto Hydro
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2013\Internal Services\311\Gm13002-311(AFS 17577)

SUMMARY

This report provides information on the ability of 311 Toronto to handle calls from customers wishing to report extinguished streetlights.

Although 311 Toronto does not formally manage service requests on behalf of Toronto Hydro, there is an opportunity for 311 Toronto staff to accept reports about extinguished streetlights and pass them along to Toronto Hydro by using an application on the Toronto Hydro's website.

(<https://www.torontohydro.com/sites/electricsystem/residential/customercare/pages/reportstreetlightout.aspx>).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Director, 311 Toronto and the President and C.E.O., Toronto Hydro recommend that:

1. The Government Management Committee receive this report for information.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications arising from this report at this stage

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on February 25, 2013, Government Management Committee adopted the motion on "Reporting Extinguished Hydro Lights through 311". In considering the motion, the Committee directed the City Manager to work with the Director of 311 Toronto and the President of Toronto Hydro to report to Government Management committee on the feasibility and the desirability of allowing residents to report extinguished streetlights through 311. <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2013.GM20.16#>

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Currently, when residents call 311 to report an extinguished streetlight, they are given the number to call Toronto Hydro or a link to visit Toronto Hydro's website. Many callers to 311 Toronto wanting to report an extinguished streetlight do not understand that this is not a service provided by a City division. This confusion can lead to dissatisfaction with City services, especially the 311 service.

COMMENTS

311 Toronto

In addition to handling general inquiries, 311 Toronto accepts service requests for a number of City divisions including Toronto Water, Transportation Services, Solid Waste Management, Urban Forestry and Municipal Licencing and Standards. All service requests managed by 311 Toronto have been Council approved. Services requests account for 27% of all contact to 311 Toronto

In order for 311 Toronto to manage service requests for divisions, an integration was built between the 311 technical system (Lagan ECM) and the specific back-end workforce management system used by the division (e.g. TMMS, IBMS, Hansen, Chameleon). This model of integration is seen as an industry best practice and was supported by Council when 311 was designed and built. Toronto is the largest 311 operation in North America with this end- to- end integration.

This technical integration is important because it drives efficiency. Call takers (Customer Service Representatives/CSRs) at 311 Toronto are required to only know one system (Lagan) and every service request is only entered into the 311 system--automation takes care of the rest. The integration also adds to improved customer service because it provides every service request with a tracking number and a service standard to allow the customer to know when to expect their request to be completed and a service request number to track the status of the request These integrated service requests are also

tracked and monitored through the 311 Business Intelligence Tool, offering a way to track performance measurement for divisions and Councillors.

Currently, as Toronto Hydro is not integrated with 311 Toronto, 311 Toronto CSRs do not accept service requests (e.g. reports of extinguished streetlights) for Toronto Hydro, but rather provide the caller with the Toronto Hydro phone number or website link.

Toronto Hydro

In the Secondary Distribution Services Department of Toronto Hydro, one of the core responsibilities is provide Street Lighting Services to the City of Toronto. The services that are provided include a call centre that provides 24/7 operation and the design, repair, maintenance and capital programs, including over 160,000 streetlight fixtures and approximately 20,000 streetlight classified poles. Over the past 7 years, Hydro has serviced an average of approximately 28,000 calls per year. Street Lighting calls are generated through the Hydro call centre, night patrol maintenance activity, web site requests plus other sources. Hydro crews complete work orders created in their Work Management System (WAL – Work Activity Log). Work timelines and completion dates are established from their Asset Purchase Agreement that they created with the City of Toronto when Toronto Hydro purchased the Street Lighting Asset back in 2006. Prior to 2006, The City of Toronto owned the Street Lighting asset. Toronto Hydro Energy Services – Street Lighting completed the maintenance program for the City and acted as one of their work execution groups.

Managing the Call

If 311 Toronto were to handle customer reports of extinguish streetlights as a service request in the same manner that 311 handles all of its other service requests, then the 311 technical system (Lagan) would need to be integrated with the Toronto Hydro system (Work Activity Log). This type of integration involves significant time and resources to complete the complicated work of making these different systems "talk" the same language.

Following a recommendation in the 2011 Core Service Review to "*consider reducing or eliminating the 311 development capacity when the model is fully implemented*" and the subsequent approval by Council to eliminate all new 311 development as of 2013, the 311 Toronto Division no longer has the capacity to build and implement new integrations. It should also be noted that even if 311 Toronto had the capacity for an additional integration at this time, it would be very unlikely that extinguished streetlights would be ranked high enough among the possible future integration with City divisions based purely on call volumes.

Despite the fact that a fully integrated service is not possible at this time, 311 Toronto and Toronto Hydro are working together towards having 311 Toronto accept reports of extinguished street light from callers not as a formal service request, but rather by using

the Toronto Hydro on-line application.

(<https://www.torontohydro.com/sites/electricsystem/residential/customercare/Pages/ReportaStreetlightOut.aspx>).

By using the Toronto Hydro Website, 311 Toronto CSRs will be able to act on behalf of callers and advise Toronto Hydro of an extinguished streetlight without having to transfer the call (this is known as "first call resolution"). Using the Toronto Hydro website will not demand the resources that would be required for a system integration. But what it will not provide is the same efficiency (the customer's report of an extinguished streetlight will be entered twice: once by 311 and then will be entered into the Hydro Work Activity Log by Toronto Hydro). Nor will it be as comprehensive a customer service as is provided by 311 for its integrated divisions as the customer will not be provided with a tracking number and 311 will not be able to provide status on the outcome of the request.

Reporting extinguished streetlights will not be promoted as a 311 Toronto service but it will be available if customers contact 311 with this type of request. This will, therefore, be an improvement to the current customer service practice for dealing with reports of extinguished streetlights. It also offers an opportunity for further investigation in additional opportunities between 311 and Toronto Hydro if this service proves to be a success.

CONTACT

Neil Evans
Director, 311 Toronto
nevans@toronto.ca
416-338-7789

Gary Soper
Manager
Secondary Distribution Services
Toronto Hydro-Electric System Ltd
gsoper@torontohydro.com
416-542-3337

SIGNATURES

Neil Evans
Director, 311 Toronto

Anthony Haines
President & CEO
Toronto Hydro