

In the Dark – Facts and Highlights

Ombudsman's investigation

- **10,565:** Unprecedented number of complaints, received April 2013-April 2015 (p. 6).
- **4,142** complaints resolved by Ombudsman staff and with Hydro One, April 2013-April 2015 (p.8). Cases in progress as of May 22, 2015: **330**.
- **66** recommendations; **65** for Hydro One (all accepted) and **1** for the Ministry of Energy (not accepted) (pp. 7, 104, appendices A and B).
- The Special Ombudsman Response Team conducted more than **190 interviews** (Page 8). Investigators reviewed the digital equivalent of **23,000 pages** of information from Hydro One, as well as **151,471 emails** (p. 9).

Hydro One

- Provides service to **21** remote communities, and some **1.3 million** rural and urban distribution customers – issues **1 million** bills per month (p. 10).
- Call centre staff handle more than **1.5 million** customer calls each year

Key dates

- **May 2013** – Hydro One introduces new customer information system
- **June 2013** – Increase of almost 30,000 billing-related calls to call centre, more than 89,000 customers don't receive bills.
- **Aug-Sept 2013** – Hydro One sends letter to 12,000 customers who didn't receive bills.
- **November 2013** – Hydro One executives inform board of directors that complaints quadrupled (mostly due to billing issues), but customer satisfaction reported at 80%.
- **December 2013** – Hydro One emails refer to 22,000 complaints (less than 2% of customers) and the company being in “crisis mode.”
- **February 2014** – Ombudsman launches investigation, Hydro One issues 1 million apology letters.

Bills, bills, bills

- January 2014: Hydro One suspended collection efforts, at a cost of **\$1.6 million/month** (p. 40)
- February 2014: **84,394** customers were either receiving multiple estimated bills or had not received a bill for more than 90 days (p. 5).
- Estimate of total customers likely affected by billing problems arising from the customer information system change: More than **100,000** (p. 6).
- In April 2014, Hydro One established a special team to handle customers with high bills. They answered **885 calls** in the **first two days** (p. 18).
- By June 2014, **5,112** refund cheques for erroneous overbilling had been issued, valued at **\$5.1 million** (p. 43).
- By the end of 2014, Hydro One paid out **\$7.3 million** worth of service credits – a credit for every month customers did not receive a bill (p. 43).
- **\$639,460** – Amount Hydro One wrote off in underbilled charges (p. 22).

Big numbers

- One corporate customer was billed **\$15 million** instead of **\$4,034.47** (p. 21).
- A ski club that received an erroneous **\$37,000 bill** was assured the problem would be resolved, but the next bill received was almost **\$37 million** (p. 41).
- Garrison Petawawa received an incorrect bill for **\$50,751,518.05** (p. 21).
- **\$88.3 million** – the cost of Hydro One’s Customer Service Recovery (p. 61)

Communities and individual cases mentioned in report

Bolton	Page 14	No bills, incorrect very high bills
Brockville	Page 83	Density classification
Carleton Place	Page 85	No bill (classified as general service)
Demorestville	Page 28	House destroyed by fire (Rebecca Carter)
Flesherton	Page 88	Retroactive billing
Goderich	Page 86	General service classification
Holland Landing	Page 88	Retroactive charges (Brenda Parkin)
Huntsville	Page 14	No bills for nine months
Ilderton	Page 78	Disconnection notice
Inglewood	Page 13	Incorrect high bill
Johnstown	Page 86	General service classification
Killaloe	Page 69	Bank withdrawal
Kilworthy	Page 14	No bills for a year
King Township	Page 14	Multiple high bills
Lively	Page 15	No bills, bank withdrawal (Madeleine Fex-Tinkis)
Matheson	Page 15	No bills, bank withdrawal
Mildmay	Page 68	Overpayment, no refund (Elaine Crilly)
Moorefield	Page 83	Density classification
Mountain	Page 40	Faulty meter, high bills (Nancy and Bob Zwarts)
Mountain	Page 77	Disconnection notice in winter
Ottawa	Page 28	Rebilled for period already paid for
Petawawa	Page 21	Wrongly billed \$50 million
Pickle Lake	Page 92	Incorrect amounts billed
Porcupine	Page 15	Large bill (William and Lise Burley)
Portland	Page 78	Disconnection notice
Red Lake	Page 78	Disconnection notice
Schreiber	Page 86	General service classification (Walter and Betty Klassen)
Schumacher	Page 16	Overbilled (meter issue with gold mine nearby)
Schumacher	Page 88	Retroactive bills
Shedden	Page 86	General service classification (Rebecca Sharpe)
Stouffville	Page 84	Density classification
Sudbury	Page 14	High bill
Timmins	Page 13	Incorrect withdrawal from bank account
Waterloo	Page 16	No bills, high bill
Wellington County	Page 28	Bank withdrawal (Alan Skeoch)
Woodlawn	Page 88	Retroactive billing