

BC Hydro 2015 Rate Design Module 2 Customer Group Meeting

Summary 31 January 2017 10:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Fort Ware (Kwadacha), BC

TYPE OF MEETING	Customer Group Meeting
FACILITATOR	Shane Hiebert
PARTICIPANTS	Kwadacha Elders, approximately 20 individuals
BC HYDRO ATTENDEES	Shane Hiebert, Regulatory; Eva Hoffman Eloff; Customer Service Operations; Lisa Whitney, Aboriginal Relations; Ben Gardiner, Conservation and Energy Management
AGENDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overview of the RDA Process 2. Residential End-Use Survey and electricity consumption information for Zone II and Kwadacha 3. Rate Options for Zone II

MEETING MINUTES

ABBREVIATIONS	kWh.....Kilowatt Hours REUS....Residential End-Use Survey OAP.....Old Age Pension
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1. AGENDA ITEM

Shane Hiebert provided an overview of the Rate Design process.

FEEDBACK	RESPONSE
1. Is it possible for Kwadacha to have its own rate because of its unique circumstances, or are we required to be on the same rate as everyone else?	<p>BC Hydro sets rates based on a principle call "postage stamp rates", which means that we apply the same rate to all customers in the same Rate Class in each Rate Zone.</p> <p>We currently have 3 Rate Zones: Zone I is the integrated system that is served by our large hydroelectric generating stations, Zone IB is Bella Bella District which is served by a hydroelectric storage facility, and Zone II which is the communities that are served by local generation facilities; mostly diesel stations. The reason for different zones is because of the different cost of serving customers in each zone.</p> <p>BC Hydro is not able set customer or location-specific rates.</p>

2. REUS Information, Zone II consumption, Kwadacha consumption and Zone II Rates

Shane Hiebert provided an overview of consumption and Rates in Zone I and Zone II.

FEEDBACK	RESPONSE
2. Would my rate change if I am a higher or lower user?	<p>The residential rate for Zone II is a tiered rated, which means that the first 1500 kWh consumed each month are billed at 9.93¢ and anything consumed above 1500 kWh is billed at 17.07¢.</p> <p>So, your per-kWh rate will go up if you are a higher consumer.</p>
3. What is the basic charge?	<p>19.57¢ per day, which is \$11.74 over a 60 day billing period.</p>

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3. Rate Options for Zone II

Shane Hiebert provided information about Rate Options for Zone II customers and the pros and cons of each.

FEEDBACK		RESPONSE
1.	<p>The current price of electricity is really hard on people because the cost of living here is very high. Food and groceries are very expensive.</p> <p>The only way to avoid using electricity in the winter for heat is to go out and chop wood, which is really hard for elders, as well as others in the community.</p>	
2.	<p>Income levels are not sufficient to cover high bills from BC Hydro. Our OAP is between \$1300 and \$1500 per month.</p> <p>Employment opportunities are limited here because of our remoteness, so our OAP is lower than what it would be in other places.</p> <p>A person becomes an Elder in Kwadacha at age 55, but is not eligible for OAP until age 65. People between the ages of 55 and 65 depend on income assistance from INAC to cover their living expenses, which is significantly less than OAP.</p>	
3.	<p>Elders in our community successfully lived on the land for most of their lives, and this [being customers of BC Hydro] is a new process for them. They need lots of support and coaching during this transition as they don't have the experience or knowledge to understand or manage their consumption or bills.</p> <p>Most of the people in this room did not grow up in a situation where they had hydro or hydro bills they needed to manage.</p> <p>We never had to pay for electricity before we were customers of BC Hydro.</p>	
4. B	<p>BC Hydro built the Williston Reservoir without consulting the people of Kwadacha. The Finlay River was their highway, and the Kwadacha Elders have very strong feelings about what the Williston did to their lives.</p> <p>It is a slap in the face that they have to pay such high hydro bills when they were the most impacted by the construction of the integrated system that serves [Zone I] customers who pay lower rates.</p>	