



## **TIME-OF-USE: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **1. What are Time-of-Use (TOU) prices?**

Time-of-Use not only takes into account how much electricity is being used, it also looks at when it is being used. These prices were developed as part of the Regulated Price Plan (RPP) for consumers with smart meters.

### **2. Why are there different prices and time periods?**

Demand for electricity is different throughout the day, therefore the cost to produce electricity changes at different times of the day. The purpose of time of use pricing is to promote a shift in consumption away from periods of high total consumption (also known as “on-peak” hours) to periods of low demand (“off peak” hours). This will also help you save money on your hydro bill.

### **3. What is the difference between today’s electricity prices Regulated Price Plan (RPP) Two-Tiered Prices and Regulated Price Plan (RPP) Time-of-Use Pricing?**

RPP two-tiered prices are based on averaging the more expensive (weekday daytime) and less expensive (night-time and weekend) prices of electricity. Time-of-Use pricing better reflects what it costs to produce electricity at different times of the day and week. With Time-of-Use pricing, you’ll have a new way to help manage your electricity use (and costs), reduce the strain on the electricity system, and help the environment.

### **4. What are the benefits of having Time-of-Use pricing?**

With time of use prices, you have the opportunity to control the costs of electricity by managing your electricity use throughout the day. The three time periods (on-peak, mid-peak, & off-peak) encourages you to reduce the amount electricity you use during high demand hours and shift that consumption during periods of lower demand. Not only will this help smooth the supply and demand for electricity, it will also help save you money on your hydro bill!

### **5. When will Time-of-Use prices be effective for me?**

At the earliest, time-of-use prices will be effective for bills with a previous read date of April 1, 2012. That is, if there is any consumption in the month of April 2012 you will be billed with Time-of-Use rates in May 2012. (Please note this timeline may be delayed from April 2012 consumption to May 2012 consumption and billed in June 2012 instead of May 2012.)

### **6. Is being on Time-of-Use mandatory or do I have an option?**

As of now, Time-of-Use rates are mandatory for all residential and small commercial customers in the Province of Ontario.

### **7. What are the holidays for Time-of-Use?**

All Canadian statutory holidays are recognized for Time-of-Use and the whole day will be considered off-peak hours. The holidays include New Years Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day. It is important to note that if one of these holidays happens to fall on a weekend, the following Monday will be off-peak throughout the day. For more information on the specific dates for the year please visit the Ontario Energy Board website at [www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/OEB/consumers](http://www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/OEB/consumers).

## 8. When and how can I setup my online account to view my electricity usage?

Grimsby Power is planning to have the necessary tools in place in the near future for you to view your bills and usage online. We will inform you when this is available.

## 9. I do not have access to the internet; are there other options for me to view my electricity usage?

If you do not have access to a computer or internet, you can still view your electric usage by visiting our office and one of our customer representatives will gladly show you your usage history. We can also mail this information to you.

## 10. What are the best strategies for me to manage my electricity usage under Time-of-Use pricing?

There are many ways for you to save on energy and as a result, save money on your hydro bill. Here are a few tips to help you manage your electricity use:

### Year-round tips:

- Turn off lights, TVs, and other appliances when not in use
- Take shorter showers
- A five minute shower uses about half as much as a bath
- Install a low-flow shower head
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient fluorescent light bulbs
- Install motion sensors on light switches
- Try using smaller appliances more often such as a microwave, toaster oven, or slow cooker instead of the stove
- Use the dishwasher and do the laundry during off-peak hours
- Use cold water when doing laundry
- Hang dry clothing instead of using the dryer
- If using a dryer, try folding the clothes while they are still warm to help prevent wrinkling – your iron uses lots of energy!

### Winter tips:

- Plastic window covers can help reduce drafts (these can be purchased at most hardware stores)
- Keep window curtains open during the day to allow solar energy into your home
- Removable, temporary caulking can be used inside of your windows
- Reduce the temperature of your thermostat when you're not at home and overnight
- If you have forced air heating in your home, have your ducts cleaned regularly and checked for leaks

### Summer tips:

- Proper maintenance of your air conditioner can increase its efficiency
- Maintenance can include replacing air filters and proper cleaning, which will help with air flow and effective functioning of the air conditioner
- Reduce the amount of time you use your air conditioner
- Raise the thermostat by 1° C
- Open windows at night or on a cooler day – however try to keep curtains shut to help keep out solar energy
- Use fans to cool a room
- Use a 'green' method: Plant a tree or shrub to shade your central air conditioner – this will help improve its efficiency. You can even consider planting a larger size tree on the south side of your lawn (if possible) to help shade the sun during the summer months, and let in solar energy during the winter months when the leaves fall