

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is Net Metering?**

Net Metering measures the quantity of electricity you use against the quantity of electricity you generate. This results in a "net" total from which your bill is calculated. Excess generation credits can be carried forward for up to 11 months, including the 11th month, to offset future electricity costs. Hydro One does not pay you for any excess generation.

### **What are the benefits of Net Metering?**

Net Metering allows you to lower your electricity costs while protecting the environment.

Net Metering means you do not need to purchase expensive batteries or a backup generator or factor these costs into the price of installing a renewable energy generation system.

### **What type(s) of generation qualifies?**

Any combination of wind, water, solar radiation or agricultural biomass with a total nameplate rating of 500 kW or less.

If you live in an urban setting, a solar installation may work best since wind turbines may not be permitted given space requirements and local zoning bylaws. Wind and run-of-river water energy are options in rural locations. If you live on a farm, you may also be able to consider agricultural biomass.

### **What is the average size of a residential generating system?**

Most residential generating systems produce between 1 and 4 kW of power.

### **I am retailer enrolled; can I apply for Net Metering?**

Yes, if you are billed by Hydro One and you have an agreement with your Retailer that allows you to return eligible electricity to the retailer for the purposes of being billed on a Net Metering basis. Your retailer must confirm to Hydro One the existence of such an agreement before we will connect your generator.

### **How much money will I save?**

Given the size differences and other variables associated with many renewable energy systems, it is your responsibility to determine the potential savings. It would be impossible for us to predict how much electricity a system will produce over a given period of time and how much the production cost will be.

Typically, some renewable energy systems require relatively high levels of initial financial investment to purchase and install the equipment. In time, however, lower electricity bills can likely offset this investment. We cannot assume any responsibility for the appropriateness or financial viability of any renewable energy system.

## **What are the steps to get connected?**

Net Metering is a multi-step process:

- Investigate your renewable energy options
- Determine the technical requirements and what size system will suit your needs
- Understand the customer application process along with the **Hydro One Connection Impact Assessment** (CIA) and approval process
- Understand Hydro One's role during the project execution phase, including COVER if necessary
- Understand ESA's role (mandatory inspection and approval)
- Sign the Hydro One Net Metering Connection Agreement immediately prior to connection.

## **Do I need an extra power cut-off switch?**

Yes, for compliance with the Ontario Electrical Safety Code generation connections require the installation of an isolation switch (visible, accessible and lockable) located between the meter and the customer's equipment, at a location beside the meter. The installation of an isolation switch allows utility crews to work safely on our distribution system. For more information about switch details, please refer to Section 84 of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code or contact Electrical Safety Authority at 1-800-498-4600.

## **What is an interval meter?**

An interval meter is a meter that measures and records the net electricity you use on a time interval basis e.g. hourly. An interval meter requires access to your phone line in order to retrieve data.

## **How will my bill be calculated?**

We will continue to read your meter as we do now. For bills based on actual meter readings, the bill you see will reflect the difference between the value of the electricity you inject to the grid and the value of electricity you consume from the grid.

If your net consumption for a billing period is zero, or a credit, the delivery portion of your bill will not include kilowatt-hour based charges.

## **Will my billing period change?**

If your generator has a nameplate rating of less than 10 kW, there will be no change to your billing period, as long as you are not demand billed. If you are demand billed, you will require a two-channel interval meter and will be billed on a monthly basis.

Customers with a generator greater than 10 kW will require either a two-channel or bi-directional interval meter and will be billed monthly. The meter will be contacted monthly via your telephone line for retrieval of the data.

### **Are there any tax incentives?**

The Ontario government currently offers rebates of the provincial retail sales tax on the purchase of residential solar, wind, micro-hydroelectric or geothermal energy systems, or on any expansions or upgrades to existing systems installed in residential premises until January 1, 2010. For detailed information or to claim the sales tax rebate, contact the Ministry of Revenue at 1-866-668-8297 or visit their website at [www.rev.gov.on.ca/english/refund/windgeo/](http://www.rev.gov.on.ca/english/refund/windgeo/).

**What if I want to sell Hydro One my excess generated power?** Hydro One will purchase your electricity but you must enter into a different connection process not covered by the Net Metering program. You must:

- Request a connection from Hydro One.
- Obtain a Generator's Licence from the Ontario Energy Board.
- Purchase and install a distribution transformer.
- Purchase and install a four-quadrant interval meter and use the services of a meter service provider licenced by the Independent Electricity System Operator.
- Consult with Hydro One before the proposed generation facility is finalized.

### **Can I use my own power during an outage?**

If you wish to run your generator during a Hydro One power outage, your generator must have special transfer and isolating capabilities installed to ensure your generating facility cannot feed into the Hydro One distribution system during the power outage.

### **Can you recommend an equipment supplier?**

We do not endorse any equipment suppliers. We suggest you contact the following associations for more information:

- Canadian Wind Energy Association: [www.canwea.ca](http://www.canwea.ca) or 1-800-922-6932
- Canadian Solar Industries Association: [www.cansia.ca](http://www.cansia.ca) or 1-866-5CanSIA
- Electrical Safety Authority (ESA): [www.esainspection.net](http://www.esainspection.net) or 1-877-421-2228

### **Where can I find more information on Net Metering?**

You can call the Ministry of Energy at 1-888-668-4636 or visit their website at [www.mei.gov.on.ca](http://www.mei.gov.on.ca).

### **What is Gross Load Billing and why does it matter?**

Gross Load billing (GLB) is a cost recovery mechanism for a transmitter and/or distributor where they experience reduced demand revenues due to generation injection. There are certain criteria for the types of generation projects that are allowed to be gross load billed. GLB matters to you because it will greatly impact your bill. If you are distribution connected then your monthly bill from Hydro One will be adjusted to recover the reduced demand. If you are transmission connected then your GLB adjustment will happen on an annual basis with the IESO. To find out more information about GLB, which scenario your project falls into, and what's required please visit the individual FAQ advice sheets designed for distribution and transmission connected projects on our website under "[Information for Connected Generators over 10kW](#)".