



## Media Release

### **Horizon Utilities lowers distribution rates**

**Helps ease the overall impact of electricity rate increases by the OEB effective May 1**

HAMILTON / ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO – (April 30, 2010) – Horizon Utilities Corporation announced today that customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines can look forward to a decrease in distribution rates effective May 1. This is the fourth distribution rate decrease by Horizon Utilities in the past five years.

Electricity distribution rates cover the costs of delivering electricity to homes and businesses and do not cover the actual cost of electricity purchased from the market or an energy retailer and consumed by the customer. Each electrical utility in Ontario charges a different rate based on their cost structure. Horizon Utilities' costs, which are among the lowest in the province, represent about 25 per cent of their customers' overall electricity bill.

"Helping our customers maintain or reduce their electricity costs is important to us," said Eileen Campbell, Vice-President, Customer Services. "Our efficiencies have allowed us to reduce our part of the bill by almost \$2 a month for the average residential customer, which will help offset some of the increases in electricity rates the Ontario Energy Board is implementing effective May 1."

Despite the best efforts of Horizon Utilities to keep rates low, customers will see an increase in their total utility bill due to other rate increases regulated by the Ontario Energy Board (OEB). For example, an average Horizon residential customer using 680 kWh of electricity per month will see an increase of \$5.78 per month.

OEB rates are increasing for all Ontario electrical utilities, due in part to funds required for renewable generation projects, conservation and demand management programs and increased costs for existing generation. A detailed explanation of the charges on an electricity bill is found on the back of Horizon Utilities' invoices and rate charts are posted on the company's website at [www.horizonutilities.com](http://www.horizonutilities.com). Customers should also note that the new provincial Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) will take effect on July 1.

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“Consumers are entering a period of tremendous change as Ontario supports renewable energy sources and moves to reduce the impact of energy consumption on the environment. We do not set the price of energy for the province but we have an important role to play in helping our customers manage their electricity costs,” says Max Cananzi, President and CEO of Horizon Utilities Corporation. “The best advice we can give all our customers is to reduce the amount of energy they use. We are doing our best to provide our customers with the information they need to change how and when they use energy and we are actively participating and promoting programs that encourage conservation. For example, residential and small business customers can access their account through our secure website and view their hourly and daily electricity usage. These types of tools provide valuable information that allows customers to make informed decisions about electricity management.”

As one of Ontario’s largest and best-performing electricity distribution companies, Horizon Utilities is committed to building a utility that contributes to the sustainability of the communities it serves, helping to create a culture of conservation in Ontario, and providing added value to its customers and stakeholders. Last fall, Horizon Utilities Corporation was honoured with the prestigious *Company of the Year Award* by the Ontario Energy Association (OEA).

### **About Horizon Utilities**

Horizon Utilities Corporation, named Company of the Year by the Ontario Energy Association, is one of the largest municipally owned electricity distribution companies in Ontario providing electricity and related utility services to more than 230,000 residential and commercial customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines. Horizon's employees are committed to delivering a safe and reliable supply of electricity, providing unparalleled customer value and helping to create a culture of energy conservation in Ontario.

For more information, visit: [www.horizonutilities.com](http://www.horizonutilities.com) .

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