

Newsletter

Representing the unincorporated areas of the Kenora District without prejudice in a fair and equitable manner.

Winter 2023



DoKURA held its annual general meeting on September 21, 2023. In addition to the regular business of the board, reports were tabled on recent activities of the Board of Directors including participation on the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) and the All Nations Health Partners committee, as well as broadband, Federal election boundary changes and Provincial Land Tax advocacy efforts.

A motion to approve the revised bylaws for the District of Kenora Unincorporated Areas Ratepayers Association to meet the requirements of the Ontario Not-for-profit Corporations Act of 2021; and to reflect the current operation and activities of the association was passed. In addition, a motion to approve the waiving of an audit or review for the 2023-2024 fiscal year as permitted under the Act was also passed.

Currently Elected DoKURA Leaders

→ As per the Nominating Committee Report

Officers:

President - Vacant
Vice-President - Ed Murray (to 2025)
Secretary/Treasurer - Barry Baltessen (to 2024)

Kenora District Service Board TWOMO representatives:

(December 31, 2026)

Laurie Huffman - Oxdrift
Barry Baltessen - Lake of the Woods North
Mark Sobchuk - Lac Seul
Dennis Wallace - Lake of the Woods South

Directors at Large:

Bob Stewart
Ed Murray

Details regarding the AGM are available on our website:
[DoKURA Draft AGM Minutes](#)



Carbon Tax break for Home Heating Oil

A tax break in the range of \$1,800 over the next three winters is coming for those who rely on home heating oil for winter warmth. The federal government announced in October that beginning Nov. 9, 2023 the federal carbon tax, currently 17.38 cents per litre on home heating oil, will be waived for the next three years.

The government said the measure was intended to allow those homes a greater length of time to convert to other heating sources.

In this region, where the average use is in the 3,000 litre range, the savings amount to just over \$500 this winter, by 2026 the tax was set to rise to the 25

cent/litre range and the exemption would be worth about \$750 that year.

In a companion announcement, the government said the rural supplement will double next year for quarterly Climate Action Incentive payments – intended to offset direct tax levies on fossil fuels used for transportation and home heating. For families in this region, where everyone qualifies for the rural supplement, the increase from the current 10 percent of the basic amount to 20 percent coupled with an expected increase in the basic rate next April in the 25 per cent range to match carbon tax increases, the additional support will be worth an extra \$125 annually for a family of two adults and two children.



Trillium provides funding for two rinks

Strap on your skates and get on the rink as two arenas in the area are getting funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The Local Services Board of Wabigoon is getting \$30,000 to help build a covered rink. The funding is for 12 months and will help with costs of constructing the rink underneath its new pavilion.

The Woodland Arena in Vermillion Bay is getting almost \$26,000 for a new

boiler. The grant is for six months and will create a new hot water system for the area, which is more energy efficient and cost effective.





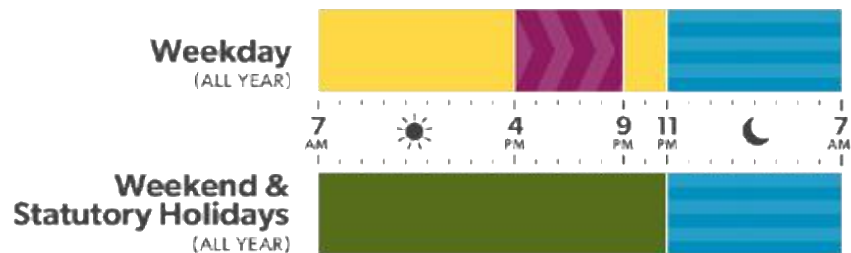
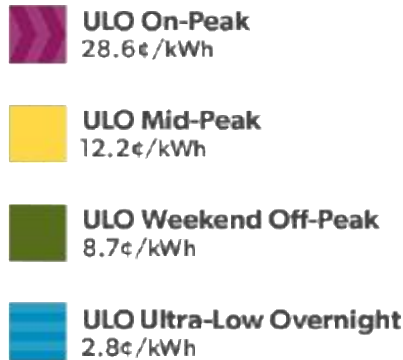
Ultra-Low Overnight Price Plan

Hydro One has launched its new Ultra-Low Overnight Price Plan as required by the Ontario government. It is designed to help customers who consume more electricity

overnight, from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., for example those who need to charge their electric vehicles.

Set by the Ontario Energy Board, the rate as of November 1, 2023 will be 2.8 cents per kilowatt-hour (kWh), which is 5.9 cents lower than the current off-peak rate. This is countered however with a higher on-peak rate.

This plan is one of a few options to consider, you will not be automatically changed to this plan. Use the calculator link below to compare options.



To see if switching to this plan is right for you, use this [calculator](#).



Ontario Investing in Fire Safety in the North

- ➔ New fire trucks and Mobile Live Fire Training Units will help save lives and keep property safe

The Ontario government is investing close to \$35 million in 17 new fire trucks, lifesaving firefighting equipment, and two new Mobile Live Fire Training Units to better protect northern communities and keep people safe. New firefighting equipment will include self-contained breathing apparatuses, thermal imaging cameras, and other essential firefighting equipment.

The Mobile Live Fire Training Units will help the Ontario Fire deliver additional high-quality, hands-on training directly to fire services to help firefighters prepare for real life scenarios. These modern mobile units can be transported right to a local fire station and simulate real situations. During mobile unit training, firefighters experience real flames, extreme heat, high humidity, severely restricted visibility, and thick smoke.

Funding for the new fire trucks and firefighting equipment will be delivered through the Northern Fire Protection Program which provides assistance and support for fire protection services in 47 communities that rely on more than 800 volunteer firefighters. Northern Fire Protection Program fire departments protect more than 34,400 permanent residents in unincorporated Ontario and respond to approximately 1,000 emergency calls per year.

This announcement is welcomed by the men and women who provide volunteer firefighting service in their community and it will enhance the training capacity of volunteer fire departments across the region.

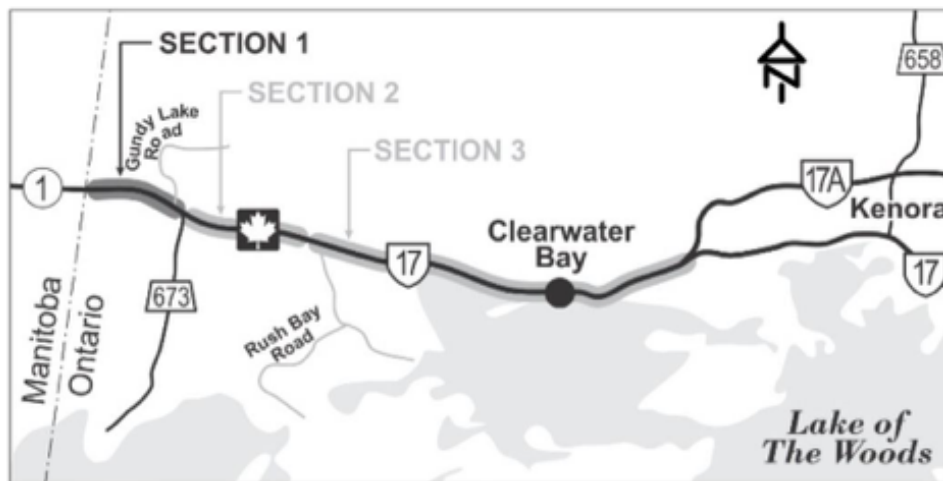


Serving Your Area

The Kenora District Services Board (KDSB) provides help and support when you need it. KDSB delivers essential social services. These services assist in helping everyone reach their full potential. KDSB's services support individuals, families and communities in the Kenora District. The KDSB is dedicated to improving everyday lives through early learning and care, housing, paramedic and social services. For more: www.kdsb.on.ca

Emergency Medical Services / Land Ambulance

Northwest Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is the Paramedic/Land Ambulance services division of the Kenora District Services Board (KDSB). As a service of the Kenora District Services Board, Northwest EMS is committed to the provision of effective and efficient District-wide services that support its individuals, families and communities in reaching their full potential. Northwest EMS is committed to providing exemplary care and transport that meets recognized professional standards in a safe and timely manner to individuals, families and communities in need of assistance.



Highway Twinning Update

Progress continues on Section 1 of the highway twinning project from the Manitoba border to Kenora. This is an important road safety initiative that will physically separate opposing lanes of traffic, minimize road closures and increase opportunities for safe passing.

A public information session on Section 2 was held on September 20, 2023. Various alternatives were presented, with the objective of obtaining input from interested groups, indigenous communities and the public on the existing environmental conditions on the alternatives, including modifications to existing access roads. Project team representatives from WTO and WSP

were on hand to answer questions, as well as discuss and receive comments.

The materials presented can be found at:

https://4lanehighway17kenora.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Hwy17FourLaning_Section2_Sept2023PIC_DisplayBoards.pdf

Comments can be provided through the Contact Us page on the project website <https://4lanehighway17kenora.ca/consultation-engagement/> or by email to project-team@4lanehighway17kenora.ca.

As this study progresses, there will be further opportunities for public consultation.



The True Cost of Electricity

Ontario electricity users, especially those who use electricity for home heating, are in for a shock. Rate changes effective November 1, 2023 have been approved by the Ontario Energy Board and announced in news releases on October 19.

On one hand the price of electricity itself is rising under the province's Regulated Price Plan (RPP) which applies to over 90 percent of residential and small business consumers. The rates vary depending on time of day and day of the week periods (Time-of-Use); or monthly volumes (Tiered) and will now average of 11.1 cents per kilowatt hour, up nearly 20 percent from last year's 9.3 cents/kwh.

To balance that increase the OEB has increased the Ontario Energy Rebate from 11.7% to 19.3% of total pre-tax bills. This additional support will offset much of the price increase under the Regulated Price Plan for mid-volume users (500-900 kwh a month), but not high-volume users (3,000 - 4,000 kwh hours), where the cost of electricity supply makes up the largest portion of total bills when compared to fixed costs like the monthly local utility service charge.

Cost Comparisons

Time of Use Rates	Nov 1, 2022 to Oct 31, 2023	Nov 1, 2023 to Oct 31, 2024
Off Peak	7.4 cents	8.7 cents
Mid-Peak	10.2 cents	12.2 cents
On-Peak	15.1 cents	18.2 cents

For mid-volume users there will be a modest increase of \$1-\$2 a month. This would generally apply to someone in a small home, condominium or apartment and using electricity for lighting and some appliances.

For high-volume users who use electricity for home heating and major appliances, the increase will be in range of \$40-\$50 a month. The monthly increase will be much higher for those customers using over 4,000 kwh monthly.



Broadband Update

A number of high-speed internet projects have been initiated in our region as part of the pledge by the provincial government to provide access to reliable high-speed Internet (minimum 50 MB download/10 MB upload) to all communities.

Examples:

- The Improving Connectivity for Ontario/Universal Broadband Fund in providing over \$49 million to provide fibre service through Bell Canada, with a targeted completion date of March 31, 2024.
- The Accelerated High Speed Internet Program – Lot 97 is providing over \$25 million to provide wired service through Bell Canada, with a targeted completion date of December, 2025.
- The Accelerated High Speed Internet Program – Lot 45 is providing \$34.5 million to provide wired service through KNet, with a targeted completion date of December, 2025.

For more detailed information, including an interactive map that will allow you to drill down to projects in your community, please click on this link:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-connects-making-high-speed-internet-accessible-in-every-community>

In addition, the province is seeking requests for proposals from satellite service providers. Satellite service could bring high speed Internet to some 43,000 homes and businesses in unserved and underserved areas.

“Where ground-based infrastructure is currently not an option, a qualified satellite service provider will ensure that the hardest-to-reach areas of our province will have access to reliable high-speed internet,” said Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure

“Infrastructure Ontario is proud to embark on a new, first-of-its-kind procurement for satellite service in Canada,” said Michael Lindsay, President and Chief Executive Officer of Infrastructure Ontario.

No date for implementation has been announced, nor has a provider been selected yet selected.

DoKURA Note: *The critical issue will be whether the government’s call for proposals for will include a monthly fee reduction. Satellite monthly fees are significantly higher than wired services. Satellite service is now available in all parts of the province, but its high monthly cost is a reason many have opted to stay with available lower speed wired or off air (wi-fi) services.*

DoKURA Needs Your Help

Bring your passion to the table

DoKURA was formed 25 years ago to represent the interests of both permanent and seasonal residents who live in the unincorporated territories in the southern portion of the District of Kenora. Many dedicated and passionate people have helped the organization increase its presence and reach across the District over the years.

The fuel that this organization runs on is committed and dedicated volunteers who have a desire to ensure that the interests and needs of unincorporated area residents are heard and included in policy development. We are looking to fill our gas tank with fresh perspectives and high-octane people who are committed to continuing this tradition.

We are committed to communicating with our fellow residents to ensure that they are informed and aware of issues that impact their well-being. We offer direct access to the four representatives from the unincorporated territory who have been elected to serve on the Kenora District Services Board. On the

health care front, we have a seat on the All Nations Health Partners Ontario Health Team and the Hospital Project Steering Committee. We are actively pursuing fairness in property taxation and access to broadband for our residents.

If any of these issues appeals to you, we are asking that you make a commitment to get involved by joining our organization as a board member to bring your perspective to the table.

Please send an email us at dokuraorg@gmail.com and one of our board members will contact you to discuss this opportunity in more detail.

