

easybilling and GSU Go Paperless Campaigns Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Between mid-November 2016 and mid-January 2017, all Greater Sudbury Utilities (GSU) residential and small business customers will transition to a monthly billing cycle versus the current bi-monthly billing cycle.

Why are you changing?

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) requires all local electricity distribution companies in Ontario to bill residential and small business customers on a monthly basis for electricity used after January 1, 2017. GSU sends electricity bills on behalf of Greater Sudbury Hydro, and water/wastewater bills on behalf of the City of Greater Sudbury.

Why does the Ontario Energy Board want billing to change?

The OEB has said “We want the bill to be more effective in helping customers manage their costs.”

By sending bills monthly, the amounts owing should be smaller because the bill will be based on consumption over a shorter period of time, approximately 30 days versus 60 days. If usage patterns remain the same, smaller billing periods on more regular intervals should help people plan their budgets better.

Why is this affecting my water/wastewater bill if only the hydro component is required to change?

We want the bill to be more effective in helping customers manage their costs.

It doesn't make sense to only have a portion of the combined bill change to monthly when the goal is to have smaller, more frequent bills to help people better manage their money.

Also, in an effort to minimize the effect on water/wastewater rates, the CGS will not increase the frequency of water meter reading as that would increase costs which would have to be passed along to the customer. So, every other month, the water/wastewater portion of your bill will be presented as an estimate.

I'm already on a Pre-Authorized Payment Plan. How will this affect me?

That depends upon whether you are on a Variable Payment Plan or Equal Payment Plan.

Variable Payment Plan: Currently your “Amount Owing” is withdrawn on the due date of your bill, every two months. It will now be withdrawn on the monthly due date.

Equal Payment Plan: You will have your pre-established monthly amount withdrawn on the date of the month that you have preselected. You will now receive statements on a monthly basis versus bi-monthly (no additional payments, just more frequent statements).

I'm signed up to MyAccount but still receive a bill.

Your account can qualify for the \$10 donation to NEO Kids Foundation and to be entered into the weekly draw for a \$200 on-bill credit by going paperless. Simply log into your MyAccount and select E-Bill to no longer receive a paper copy of your bill in the mail.

What if I don't want to receive a monthly bill?

There is no opportunity to "opt out" of monthly billing. It is mandatory. However, you can register for paperless billing options, such as E-billing, which entirely eliminates the paper bill currently sent to your address. From now through April 30th, 2017, for every account that converts to paperless billing, GSU will donate \$10 to NEO Kids Foundation; the benefit to you (the customer) is your account will be entered into the draw for a \$200.00 on-bill credit.

Why choose NEO Kids Foundation?

Every hour, a child and their family leave the north to get care elsewhere. These donations will help ensure that children and their families will receive the care they need in Northern Ontario, a place that is comfortable and close to home.

Funds raised through NEO Kids Foundation will be directed solely to helping young patients through services, equipment and research.

Health Sciences North aims to build a facility designed and suited for children's specific needs. The facility will provide pediatric services, clinics, diagnostics, and other services in one location. NEO Kids will include more clinical space for existing services, in addition to added capacity for new services and clinics. The facility will include a parent's resource center, a Child Advocacy Centre for children who've suffered physical/sexual abuse, as well as on-site diagnostics and a pharmacy. With these donations, we can make this a reality for Northern Ontario Children and their families.

Will I receive a donation receipt?

No. Greater Sudbury Utilities is making the donation, based on the number of accounts who register for paperless billing.

I want to further help NEO Kids Foundation. How can I do that?

Lots of ways!

Have you gone paperless yet? For every customer account that converts to paperless billing, GSU will donate \$10 to the NEO Kids Foundation.

You can also make a direct donation or volunteer in support of NEO Kids. More information is available on the foundation website: <http://www.neokidsfoundation.ca/>

How do the weekly draws work?

Once registered for paperless billing through MyAccount, that account will be eligible to win. A draw for the \$200.00 on-bill credit will be done each week, beginning November 7, 2016. The draw will

be cumulative – all customers who have registered for paperless billing since September 4th will remain eligible in the draw, for the length of the campaign, as long as they have not won. The campaign will run from October 31st, 2016 to April 30th, 2017.

How will GSU pay for the extra costs associated with monthly billing cycles?

GSU has forecasted a budget increase of approximately \$446,000 to accommodate the OEB mandated switch to monthly billing. The increase can be attributed to increased postage and stationary. The costs will be split between Greater Sudbury Hydro and the City of Greater Sudbury.

Hydro	Water/ Wastewater	Total
\$268,000	\$178,000	\$446,000

Currently our enrolment in paperless billing is approximately 5,400 customers or 7.5%. GSU is aiming to reduce these expenses by boosting enrollment of paperless billing. Based on the 2017 estimates to issue monthly paper bills, GSU anticipates to save \$11 for every customer that enrolls in paperless billing.

Will Minimum for Winter (MFW) be affected by monthly billing?

No, Minimum for Winter (MFW) will not be affected by monthly billing. MFW customers will continue to be billed as per usual.

NOTE: Minimum for Winter is a billing cycle specifically for people who are asked by the City to run their water in the winter to avoid freezing.