

The Credit and Collection Policy sets out the standards of Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. (“Distributor”) with respect to customer bill payment deadlines, late payment and interest charges, collection charges and customer deposits. The following Frequently Asked Questions outlines our policy.

When is my payment due?

The customer must make payment of any outstanding accounts to Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. on the due date as identified on the bill. Typically, the due date is 19 days from the date of bill production.

How is my payment applied to my account?

Where a payment is made at a financial institution acceptable to the Distributor, the payment will be deemed to be made when stamped/acknowledged by the financial institution. The Distributor will be notified of Credit card payments made by web or telephone instantly. A third party service charge will apply. All other payments are dated the current day of receipt.

A partial payment will be applied first to any outstanding deposit amount, second to any outstanding arrears and finally, to the current bill amount.

When are late payment/interest charges applied to my account?

Late payment/interest charges will apply to any arrears unpaid after the due date of the bill at a rate approved by the Ontario Energy Board.

What other Service Charges can be applied to my account?

The following actions will result in applicable service charges being added to your account.

Returned Cheques or Returned Pre-Authorized Payments

Any cheque or pre-authorized payment charged back by the bank for any reason shall be corrected immediately by the customer. Any returned payment will be reversed on the customer’s account and a returned payment fee will be charged to the account. The Distributor will attempt to make contact with the customer to obtain payment for any returned payment, including all associated Service Charges. Should such an attempt fail, collection procedures will be initiated.

Collection and/or Disconnection of Electrical Service

Where a customer’s account is in arrears and where the Ontario Energy Board’s Retail Settlement Code permits the Distributor to collect or disconnect the customer’s service, the Distributor will issue a Reminder Notice, seven (7) calendar days after the billing due date on the customer’s bill, unless payment has been received or acceptable payment arrangements have been made.

This Reminder Notice provides notification to the customer of the proposed disconnect date, ten (10) calendar days from the issuance of the Reminder Notice, if payment or acceptable arrangements are not received.

Prior to disconnecting the service, any Security Deposit held on the account will be applied to the arrears. If the Security Deposit is insufficient to cover arrears or there is not a Security Deposit held on the account, a 48 Hour Collection Notice will be hand delivered to the service address which will provide notification to the customer of the proposed disconnect date. At this time, a Collection Service Charge will be applied to the account.

*Where a Security Deposit has been applied to a customer's account, the customer may be requested to repay the Security Deposit and be allowed to repay in 6 monthly installments.

Full cash, debit, money order, certified cheque, confirmed bank payment or credit card payment must be received at the Distributor's office on or before the scheduled disconnect date. Failure to do so may result in disconnection, along with Disconnection and Reconnection Service Charges.

Reconnection of Electrical Service

Where the customer's service has been disconnected to arrears, the customer must pay to the Distributor, the full amount of the arrears plus disconnect and reconnect charges. Full cash, debit, money order, certified cheque, confirmed bank payment or credit card payment must be received by the Distributor before the Distributor will restore the customer's electric service. Applicable Security Deposits may also be required for reconnection of service.

If the customer request the service to be reconnected after normal hours of work, full payment must be provided to the Distributor's Service Technician on duty (with money order, certified cheque, credit card or bank payment confirmation) prior to reconnection and an "After Hours" service charge will apply. Customer must be present during reconnection.

Arrears Management Program

Any residential electricity customer, who is unable to pay his or her outstanding charges, has the opportunity to enter into an Arrears Management Program. Please call the Customer Service Department at 1-877-270-3938 for details.

Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. Requires Security Deposits From Their Customers

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) has amended its Distribution System Code for electricity distributors to include requirements for customer security deposits to ensure that customers received consistent and equitable treatment. The Distribution System Code outlines the maximum amounts of security deposits and the length of time that Distributors can hold them.

When is a Security Deposit collected?

A Security Deposit may be collected when a customer initially applies for service or when a customer fails to maintain a good payment history.

If I am a new customer and have no payment history with Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc., is there a way that I can avoid paying a security deposit?

Yes. If you were a customer with another electricity or natural gas utility in Canada, you can provide Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. with a reference letter that confirms you have had a good payment history.

When does Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. require a Security Deposit from a current customer?

Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. will require a security deposit from a customer if more than one (1) of the following circumstance have occurred:

- More than one (1) payment or pre-authorized payment has been returned for any reason.
- A representative of Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. has personally visited a customer's residence to attempt to collect and outstanding payment (48 Hour Notice Collection Card).
- If the customer has been disconnected for non-payment.

How many years of good payment history must I have in order to be exempt from paying a security deposit or to have my security deposit refunded?

- 1 year for residential customers
- 5 years for non-residential customers in the less than 50 kw demand rate class.
- 7 years for non-residential customers in all other rate classes.

(As long as no more than one of the circumstances listed above has occurred.)

If I am required to provide a security deposit, how much is it and how is it paid?

The security deposit is calculated by multiplying a factor of 2.5 times the customer's average monthly bill during the most recent 12 consecutive months within the past two years.

Residential customers can pay the security deposit by cash, debit, certified cheque, money order or credit card. Non-residential customers can pay by cash, debit, certified cheque, money order, credit card or an automatically renewing, irrevocable letter of credit.

Residential and Non-residential customers may pay a security deposit in equal installments over a six-month period.

Do I receive interest on a paid security deposit?

Yes. Interest shall accrue monthly on Security Deposits commencing on receipt of the total deposit required. The interest rate is the Bank of Canada's Prime Business Rate less 2%. (The rate is updated quarterly). The interest accrued shall be paid out at least once every twelve (12) months, or on return of the Security Deposit, closure of an account, or if the security deposit must be applied to a customer's account due to non-payment, whichever comes first.

If I am moving or closing my account for any reason, when is my security deposit refunded?

Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. may return the security deposit at any time within a six (6) week processing period. The deposit will be retained to apply against any balance owing on the final bill.

If I have a security deposit currently held by Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. and I have achieved good payment history, when can I expect my security deposit returned?

Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. is required to undertake an annual review of security deposits to determine if a deposit should be refunded due to a customer having maintained good payment history. Any refund of deposit will be applied to the customer's account.