

June 16th, 2021

Hydro One
P.O. BOX 5700
Markham, ON L3R 1C8

To whom it may concern:

We are submitting this letter on behalf of Essex County businesses and residents in the Harrow and Colchester area. In support of this community, we would like to express our concern with the current state of our region's power supply. Throughout the past few years, power fluctuations and blackouts have been common occurrences in this region. Since 2020, our power grid has had increased supply issues ranging from brief to long durations or back-to-back outages.

These fluctuations and disruptions in service impact our community both directly and indirectly. As a result of these outages, households in this community have encountered unnecessary financial costs such as loss of food due to spoiling or thawing and power surges which damage appliances and igniters. Power outages also affect vulnerable members' health and wellbeing in this community especially during extreme temperatures found during some summer and winter months. During this pandemic, many of the residents in Harrow and Colchester work from home or have children at home due to virtual schooling; this means that they need reliable electricity.

This community, like many others, has felt the loss of revenue due to COVID-19. These outages force businesses such as banks, shops, and gyms to close, sending employees and customers home, further impacting the local economy in the Harrow/ Colchester area. Factories located in this area, such as EnerQuest Services and Refac Industrial Contractors, face significant financial losses due to ruined or damaged equipment. In addition, power outages have halted or delayed production resulting in increased costs to business owners in this locality. In one local business, a power surge resulted in extensive damage to a laser machine, forcing the business to contract out laser cutting until the equipment can be repaired or replaced. Unfortunately, the company that repairs this machine is based out of U.S. and has shipping limitations due to the current COVID restrictions.

Unfortunately, as discussed above, these frequent outages are causing an enormous impact on this region. We are writing to inquire about the plan that Hydro One has in place to resolve these issues and appreciate any insight you can provide. Is there the possibility of some sort of credit or reimbursement that businesses could be entitled to, to help negate the financial burdens of such occurrences? If there is any additional information you need, or if we as a chamber can help, please let us know. We appreciate your efforts and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

The Harrow & Colchester South Chamber of Commerce