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Investigation of 3 per cent Increase in Electricity Rates

The New Brunswick Energy and Utilities Board has begun its investigation into the 3 per cent increase in electricity rates for customers of NB Power Distribution and Customer Service Corporation.

The Minister of Energy directed the Board under Section 24(1) of the Energy and Utilities Board Act to investigate the increase that will come into effect April 1, 2008.

“The Board is committed to ensuring that investigation is held in an open and transparent manner,” said Board Chairman Raymond Gorman.

As part of its investigation, the Board will require the company to appear at a session open to the public to justify the necessity for this increase in rates. The hearing will be on May 28th.

The Board has directed the utility to file evidence justifying the increase by April 30th. This evidence will be available publicly and the Board will provide an opportunity for interested persons to make their views known to the Board.

In order to expedite the investigation, the Board has also ordered the company to provide preliminary information supporting the increase by March 28th.

“The Board believes that this investigation must be both thorough and efficient and our goal is report to the Minister within 90 days,” said Gorman.

This is the first investigation of its kind conducted by the Energy and Utilities Board. The investigation differs from a review of a rate application and as such the process will be streamlined, while at the same time, being both open and transparent. The scope of this investigation does not include cost allocation and rate design issues.

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