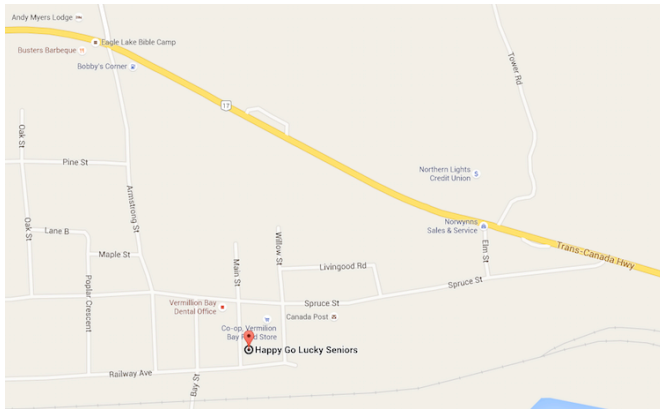


# DoKURA NEWS

FALL 2015

## AGM Oct 8, 2015

The Annual General Meeting for the District of Kenora Unincorporated Areas Ratepayers Association will be held Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2015 at the Happy Go Lucky Seniors Centre in Vermilion Bay. The meeting begins at 6:30 pm.



## PROVINCIAL LAND TAX REFORM CONTINUES

The Ontario Budget 2015 contained some significant provisions for the Provincial Land Tax system. Following a series of meetings in 2014 with representatives from municipalities, local roads and service boards and various local cottage and property owners groups, the Ministry of Finance issued a report in December 2014: Provincial Land Tax Review: A Summary of Stakeholder Consultations.

As a result of the report, the government instituted a two-year tax rate increase for PLT properties. Residential rates were raised \$10 per \$100,000 of assessed value for 2015, with a further \$40 increase set for 2016. Commercial and industrial rates were raised by \$15 and \$65 per \$100,000. As well, the minimum tax of \$6, unchanged since 1954, will increase to \$50 for all properties in 2016. Overall the measures will increase PLT revenues from \$11 million in 2013 to \$21 million by 2016. With assessment increases adding a further \$3 million to the total.

Copies of the report are available at the Ministry's PLT Reform website:  
<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/consultations/landtaxreform/index.html>

This summer the Ministry began a second series of consultation meetings as part of the ongoing PLT review. These were open to the general public and the Ministry encouraged questions and suggestions directly from property owners rather than representatives. Meetings were also scheduled, where possible, in PLT areas rather than nearby municipalities as municipal involvement is no longer part of the PLT Reform process. Two meetings were held in the Kenora District, Aug. 20 in Pellatt Township and Aug. 26 in Wabigoon.

One point DoKURA brought up in the 2014 meetings was the need to end the two-tier residential tax rate in Unincorporated Areas. The 2015/2016 tax rate increases partially address that as the tax rate difference will be cut in half by 2016, from 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the school zone PLT rate to 1/3<sup>rd</sup> for properties not in school tax areas.

As part of the second phase of the PLT reform consultations the DoKURA board has requested to meet again with Ministry of Finance officials and they have been invited to send a representative to meet with the board prior to the AGM.

This PLT reform process is expected last another year or more and DoKURA expects to be involved in more meetings on this subject and would like to hear from any and all property owners in the Unincorporated Areas of the District with their thoughts on this subject. The best way to reach us is via the Internet. Just put your thoughts down on paper and send them along to;

[dokuraorg@hotmail.com](mailto:dokuraorg@hotmail.com)

## DoKURA

LOOKING OUT FOR THE INTERESTS OF THE RESIDENTS  
FROM THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS IN THE DISTRICT  
OF KENORA

# HYDRO CHANGES COMING

The Ontario Energy Board, which regulates electrical and gas utilities in the province, enacted several new policies this year that will impact Hydro One rates, the service provider for Unincorporated Areas.

Among the changes are monthly bills for all customers, moving Seasonal Class customers into the R2 (Low Density) and R1 (Medium Density) residential classes, a flat monthly service fee, and a requirement that all bills be based on actual meter readings by the end of 2016. Hydro One has applied for an exemption from the last requirement until 2020, as it has still not completed the installation and connection of Smart meters, which allow remote readings to be taken, for 170,000 of its rural customers. It has also requested it be allowed to retain its Seasonal class

The introduction of a fixed rate for service delivery beginning Jan. 1, 2016 will have a major impact across for those who use a lot of electricity (electric heat for instance) and those who use their properties seasonally. Current delivery charges are a combination of flat monthly charges and volume, or per kwh charges and can range from \$25 to over \$300 a month depending on power use. Monthly delivery charges represent about half of a total electricity bill.

Based on current rates and costs, the proposed Hydro One fixed monthly charge for the R2 class will be about \$90 a month including the Rural and Remote Rate Protection subsidy for people whose homes qualify as their primary residence. For former Seasonal customers moved into the R2 class the charge will be about \$119. The delivery charge will continue to be separate from charges paid for electricity itself.

If Hydro One is successful in its appeal to keep the Seasonal class, its flat-fee rate would be \$60 monthly, while the R2 fee would be \$98.

## NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

The District of Kenora Unincorporated Areas Ratepayers Association (DoKURA) tries to send copies of it's newsletter to more than one individual on the various Local Roads Boards, Road Associations, Services Boards, Fire Departments and other organized community groups it has mailing addresses for. Unfortunately, we are not able to identify everyone who might like a copy, so PLEASE help us out. If you are the only individual in your organization receiving this publication, we hope you will make copies available to others. If you would like extra copies sent to you for distribution, let our Secretary know. We'll be happy to send you the number required.

That goes for this issue too. If you would like additional copies, by mail or email, please call our Secretary, Bob Stewart at 807-548-2344 or send him an email at [dokuraorg@hotmail.com](mailto:dokuraorg@hotmail.com) and he'll be happy to send them along.

Our newsletter is also posted on our Web site – [www.dokura.com](http://www.dokura.com) – so if you have people in your area who would rather read it that way, please refer them to the website.

## DoKURA's DIRECTORS

The following is a list of the current Directors of DoKURA. Please feel free to contact them if you have any comments on what they are doing or you have any concerns on local issues that you would like to see DoKURA become involved in. You can reach them by mail at DoKURA, PO Box 1245 Keewatin Post Office, Kenora, Ontario, P0X 1C0 or by email at [dokuraorg@hotmail.com](mailto:dokuraorg@hotmail.com)

Past President	Bill Blower	Lac Seul
President	Jack McKenzie	Lake of the Woods South
		Oxdrift
Vice President	Gord Dingman	LotW South
Secretary	Bob Stewart	LotW South
Treasurer	Irene Kember	Oxdrift
Director	Ray Leray	LotW North
Director	Barry Baltessen	LotW North
Director	Ken Pride	Oxdrift
Director	Phyllis Hannon	Lac Seul
Director	Mark Sobchuk	Lac Seul
Director	Bill Deschamps	

## DoKURA FUNDING

Readers familiar with the operation of DoKURA are well aware that all of the activities of the organization carries out are through the efforts of the volunteers who serve the Association.

There is a constant need for funds to cover the cost of sending representatives to meetings with various levels of government to promote and/or defend issues of local concern. That's where you come in, as an individual or community group.

DoKURA has no formal membership fee, rather membership is open to all in the Unincorporated Areas of the Kenora District. It receives no government funding for operating costs. What DoKURA does, however, is ask for voluntary donations from individuals or community groups.

Please consider sending us a donation. No amount is too small.