

April 16, 2020

Small businesses can apply for bill relief from BC Hydro

Average daily electricity load from some commercial sectors down nearly 30 per cent

VANCOUVER: BC Hydro has received over 3,000 applications from its small business customers for its COVID-19 Relief Fund after it began accepting applications on Wednesday.

Under the program, BC Hydro small business customers that have closed as a result of COVID-19 can apply to have their electricity costs waived for up to three months.

To be eligible for the COVID-19 Relief Fund, business customers must be on BC Hydro's Small General Service Rate and have temporarily closed or ceased operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. BC Hydro estimates that around 40,000 small businesses in the province will be eligible for the program.

Last week, BC Hydro began accepting applications for its COVID-19 Relief Fund from its residential customers that have lost employment or their income due to COVID-19. Since then, more than 57,000 British Columbians have applied for the program so far. BC Hydro estimates this to amount to approximately \$16 million in credits.

Customers have until June 30, 2020 to submit their application.

Since COVID-19 measures were widely implemented, BC Hydro has seen average daily electricity load from some sectors of its commercial customers decline by up to 30 per cent.

This includes:

- 30 per cent in recreation facilities
- 29 per cent in the restaurant sector
- 27 per cent in hotels
- 16 per cent in offices

Overall, commercial electricity load in the province was down around 13 per cent during the first two weeks of April compared to the three-year average for the same two-week period.

BC Hydro residential and business customers can apply online for the COVID-19 Relief Fund at bchydro.com/covid19relief.