



Manitoba Hydro Service Improvements for MHBA Members



Representatives from Manitoba Hydro and the MHBA met in Edmonton on March 31 with representatives from the City of Edmonton, EPCOR, ATCO, and Civil Force Solutions to tour residential construction sites and review residential construction installation and energization processes used in Edmonton.

Manitoba Hydro and the Manitoba Home Builder's Association (MHBA) have engaged in a very productive dialogue and collaboration over the past few months with the goal of achieving safer, and more timely, reliable, and predictable servicing for new home construction across the province.

The following is an update on our joint action plan to help address the needs of Manitoba's home building industry:

Manitoba Hydro and the MHBA are working in partnership to hit the following milestones to enhance servicing for new home construction in Manitoba:

1. **By July 1, 2025**, Manitoba Hydro will be providing energization within a maximum of five business days from a passed inspection. An empowered "single point of contact and a dedicated phone line" for residential construction connections has also been established and is now functional for MHBA members in our dedicated test group and will be available to all MHBA members by July 1 at the latest.

2. **By January 1, 2026**, Manitoba Hydro will continue to consistently provide energization within five business days of a passed inspection and will strive for continuous improvement on service delivery by implementing new tools and service improvements developed by Manitoba Hydro to address and minimize variances in service timelines. This will include, among other improvements, an online service portal making it easy for all MHBA builders to request connections and track the status of their requests.
3. **By December 31, 2026**, a form of Earlier Energization will be fully implemented and in place (in advance of the 2025 Code implementation that will occur in early 2027), that meets all safety and regulatory compliance requirements.

MHBA and Manitoba Hydro agree that our shared goals are that:

1. Residential Construction connections are a priority for Manitoba Hydro. Dedicated resources will be used for residential connections.
2. By utilizing Manitoba Hydro's electricity, builders can minimize or eliminate their use of fossil-fueled generators and heaters during the construction of a home.
3. Residential construction worksites will be made safer by improving site protection, theft protection, flood protection, illumination (earlier starts and longer workdays during shorter day seasons), indoor heating and cooling during construction by energizing earlier.
4. Builders can heat a house through drywall stage reliably, year-round regardless of season, and be able to run electric pumps, fans, and dehumidifiers to minimize the seasonal impacts on the home. Currently, in winter months, builders in Manitoba wait roughly six-weeks from date of energizing to the point that the basement soils are thawed enough to be workable. Being able to heat houses earlier in construction would be an enormous benefit to builders and their customers.
5. Manitoba Hydro servicing delays that impact building times for builders will be minimized/properly managed.
6. By providing accurate information to Manitoba Hydro ahead of time and utilizing the new processes and online tools that are coming, builders will be able to provide greater certainty to their customers on possession dates, reduce the time it takes to build a home, build a healthier home, and reduce costs for new homeowner that come from the uncertainty of when their house will be ready for possession.

Other benefits of shared success:

1. Manitoba's environment - minimizing/eliminating the use of fossil-fueled generators and heaters during residential construction will help reduce our industry's carbon footprint.
2. Manitoba Hydro –bringing customers online sooner, reducing duplication and overlap in processes, and enhancing efficiency that will help keep rates low for all Manitoba Hydro customers
3. Manitoba's economy – driving economic growth through improved productivity coupled with enhanced housing affordability.

Next Steps:

Priority Install Process:

1. Manitoba Hydro is developing a new “priority install process” to provide a single point of contact for MHBA builders and to help address connection services that have gone past the five-business day following a passed inspection timeframe for Winnipeg and surrounding areas, as well as Steinbach and Selkirk.
2. During the test phase, this new process and service from Manitoba Hydro will be exclusive to MHBA members only.
3. Manitoba Hydro is currently piloting this new process and service with the seven MHBA builders who participated in the “CJO5 test and learn” process until April 30th.
4. After April 30th, the priority install process, contact information, and builder requirements will be shared with all MHBA builder members assuming no adjustments need to be made based on the first month results. Details and specific timing on this wider rollout will be provided at that time.

Earlier Service Trenching:

1. The observations from the Edmonton site tours and discussions held on March 31 are currently being reviewed by Manitoba Hydro to identify ways that the meter box installation can be done earlier during home construction in Manitoba, while continuing to meet all code requirements and protecting worker and public safety, which is paramount.
2. Meetings with the seven “test builders” who participated in the CJO5 process are scheduled for April with a target of finalizing and implementing recommendations by the end of May 2025.

New Tools and Service Improvements:

1. As a result of the CJO5 test and learn process, Manitoba Hydro is developing new tools and service improvements which are targeted for implementation before the end of 2025.
2. These tools aim to improve communication and scheduling between MHBA builders and Manitoba Hydro through:
 1. Technology solutions including automated communications and a scheduling portal which will allow the builders to provide 20 business days’ notice of ready for servicing;
 2. Improved builder notification and scheduling with Manitoba Hydro to better coordinate service trenching and energization;
 3. Updating and Simplifying Manitoba Hydro’s Homebuilder Guide;
 4. Creating monthly “Builder Report Cards” for each MHBA builder to track builder compliance and individual reporting to see how they are performing relevant to other builders; and,
 5. Publishing service levels on Manitoba Hydro’s website. These are already being provided to MHBA members via our e-newsletter.

Ongoing Collaboration:

1. Monthly meetings are scheduled between Manitoba Hydro's Executive Team and MHBA to monitor and fine tune the implementation of these service improvements and identify potential pathways for a form of earlier energization to be adopted in Manitoba.

Manitoba Hydro will be providing the MHBA's Technical Research Committee with monthly updates on performance and projects and will be developing a monthly reporting template which will be shared with MHBA members via our e-newsletter