



# talk about

# Bill 50

June 2009

**B**ill 50, the *Electric Statutes Amendment Act, 2009*, was given first reading in the legislature on June 1, 2009.

So that Albertans can learn more about this bill and the need for electricity transmission infrastructure, the next step in the legislative process will happen this fall.

Bill 50 amends three existing pieces of legislation: *the Alberta Utilities Commission Act*, the *Electric Utilities Act* and the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*.

The amendments proposed in Bill 50 will enhance the approval process for critical transmission infrastructure projects, addressing the major challenge of how to add critical new facilities to meet the needs of Albertans and the province's economy.

The existing regulatory process will continue to address public concerns as to where transmission facilities are sited.

Follow the progress of this bill at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

## **How does Bill 50 relate to Bill 19 (the *Land Assembly Project Area Act*)?**

The *Land Assembly Project Area Act* addresses public infrastructure projects, like transportation and utilities corridors, which must involve a roadway or component that transports people or goods. The *Land Assembly Project Area Act* cannot be used solely for the siting of individual power lines.

The Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) is responsible for making decisions on the siting of transmission facilities, including determining the specific location of the critical transmission infrastructure projects. Bill 50 does not change that. An open and transparent public process will be used—just like it is today.

Transportation and utilities corridors have been in place since the 1970s. Future corridors may be used in part for routing transmission lines to limit the overall impact of public infrastructure.

## **How does Bill 50 relate to the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act* (formerly known as Bill 46)?**

The *Alberta Utilities Commission Act* split the former Energy Utilities Board into two bodies: the Energy Resources Conservation Board (ERCB) and the AUC. The AUC is responsible for regulating electricity facilities and ensuring customers receive reliable service at reasonable rates. This includes responsibility for siting transmission lines and towers.

The *Alberta Utilities Commission Act* continues to ensure the rights of Alberta landowners are protected during the regulatory process.

The AUC process provides assurance of full public notification for any new transmission project. It allows directly and adversely affected Albertans to bring their concerns before the AUC.

Under Bill 50, the Government of Alberta will be responsible for identifying the need for critical infrastructure projects. This is no different than government being responsible for planning of other public infrastructure like roads, schools and hospitals.

Bill 50 does not change the commitment to public hearings or to having directly and adversely affected Albertans share their concerns when it comes to the siting process. Landowner issues will be heard, impacts will be mitigated to the extent possible and landowners will receive fair compensation.

## **How does Bill 50 relate to “deregulation” and my electricity bill?**

In Alberta, transmission facilities are owned by investor and municipally-owned utility companies and regulated by the AUC. That did not change in the late 1990s or in the early 2000s when Alberta's electricity wholesale and retail markets were restructured.

Transmission rates, as seen on customers bills, are and will continue to be, regulated by the AUC.

All consumers pay for transmission service, based on the amount of electricity they use. The costs for new transmission will be gradually added to bills as projects are put into service. It is estimated that the average residential consumer will see an increase of approximately \$8.00 per month for transmission on their electricity bills.