



PRESS RELEASE

SURVEY FINDS BROAD SUPPORT FOR NEW MEASURES TO REDUCE ENERGY BILLS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS

MAY 19, 2020, Vancouver, BC – The COVID-19 crisis has negatively impacted the ability of British Columbians to pay their household energy bills, according to a new poll commissioned by Ecotrust Canada. The survey also found widespread support for the extension of COVID-19 crisis programs and the creation of a new program to reduce energy bills for British Columbians facing hardship beyond the pandemic.

Survey findings:

- More than one in five British Columbians (21%) either cannot pay their energy bills, or have had a harder time paying their energy bills as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.
- More than two-thirds (70%) of British Columbians would support the extension of a ban on utility service disconnection to at least the end of 2020.
- Three-quarters (75%) of British Columbians would support an extension of the BC Hydro one-time credit to cover up to six months of bills for customers facing a loss of income due to COVID-19.
- More than two-thirds (69%) of British Columbians would support the creation of a new program that reduces, or offsets, energy bills for people facing financial hardship beyond the COVID-19 crisis.
- Fewer than one in ten British Columbians were opposed to any of the above measures.

The online survey was conducted by Insights West from May 13-17 with a sample of 824 participants and a margin of error of +/-3.4%, 19 times out of 20. Detailed results are [included with this release](#).

Graham Anderson, Director of Community Energy at Ecotrust Canada: *“With nearly 400,000 British Columbians out of work due to the COVID-19 crisis, more people are facing challenges in paying their household energy bills. As we move into Phase II of the province’s restart plan, it’s time to also consider new measures that can provide sustained support for impacted households across the province.”*

About Ecotrust Canada

Ecotrust Canada is an enterprising charity that works with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities toward building an economy that provides for a healthy and resilient natural environment; sustainable and abundant energy, food, and housing; prosperous and meaningful livelihoods; and vibrant and inclusive cultures. We call this approach [building an economy that provides for life](#). Our on-the-ground work and systems approach is entrepreneurial, partnership-based, and relentlessly practical. ecotrust.ca

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