

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto plain language group challenges business and government

TORONTO, October 2, 2012: International Plain Language Day will be celebrated around the world on October 13. In Toronto, a group of plain language professionals will hold a special event for anyone who has ever received a bill that is hard to read or information they can't understand.

The public is invited to drop by the ING Direct Café at Yonge and Shuter Streets on October 13 from 2 to 4 pm to:

- See examples of plain language and how it can make everyday items like utility bills, government notices and bank statements simpler and easier to read
- Join the first ever Toronto Plain Language Challenge. The Toronto group plans to hand out awards for the best and worst examples of business and government materials. They will invite members of the public to nominate documents for these awards over the next year. Details will be released at the event
- Chat with plain language experts to learn more about plain language.

Plain language is an international movement that took off in the early 1990s. Around the world, businesses and governments are recognizing the need to communicate with the public in a simple, straight-forward way. Plain language is now a top focus in many sectors, including health, legal, banking, insurance and education.

“People have a right to know exactly what a business or government is telling them when they get something in the mail,” says Sally McBeth, a plain language expert and leader of the Toronto group.

“Complex language creates a barrier for readers,” she adds. “What we want to see instead is transparency and simplicity. That should be the hallmark of every communication a business or government has with consumers.”

For more information on International Plain Language Day, go to <http://www.iplday.org>.

Contacts

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Attachments

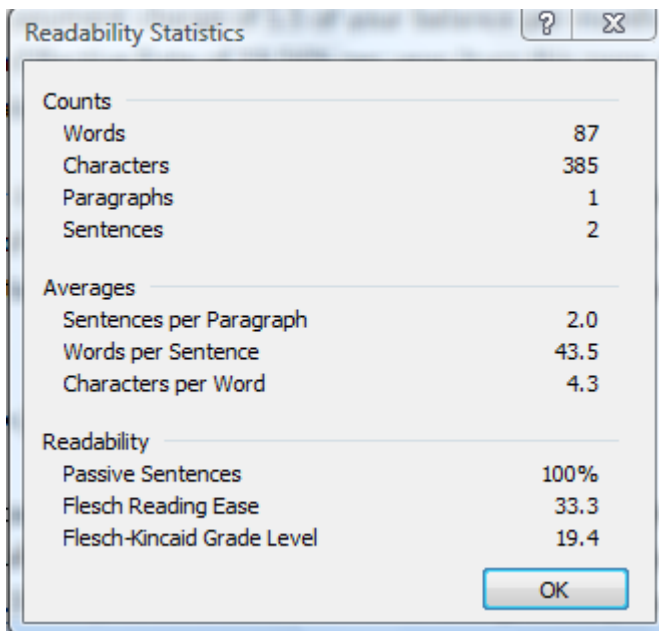
Enbridge late payment clause, before and after

City of Toronto flyer, before and after

International Plain Language Day Challenge

From a monthly Enbridge bill:

An OEB-approved late payment charge equal to 1.5% per month or 18% per annum (for an effective rate of 19.56% per annum) multiplied by a total of all unpaid Enbridge Gas Distribution charges will be added to your bill if full payment is not received by the late payment effective date below. A late payment charge, calculated and assessed in the same manner, will also be added to your bill if full payment for all other charges on your bill is not received by 03 JUL 12.



The image shows a screenshot of a 'Readability Statistics' dialog box. The dialog box has a title bar with a question mark and a close button. It contains three sections: 'Counts', 'Averages', and 'Readability'. Each section lists a metric and its corresponding value.

Counts	
Words	87
Characters	385
Paragraphs	1
Sentences	2

Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	2.0
Words per Sentence	43.5
Characters per Word	4.3

Readability	
Passive Sentences	100%
Flesch Reading Ease	33.3
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	19.4

At the bottom right of the dialog box is an 'OK' button.

Makeover:

About late payment charges

If we do not receive your payment for the total amount due by July 3, 2012, we will add a late payment charge to your next bill. The charge will be 1.5% a month, multiplied by the total you owe us. For example, if you owed \$100, the late payment charge would be \$1.50. We will keep charging 1.5% a month on all of the money you owe, including the interest, for as long as you do not pay. Over a year, that would equal a compounded interest rate of 19.56%. This interest rate is approved by the Ontario Energy Board, which regulates the province's natural gas sector.

Readability Statistics



Counts

Words	108
Characters	459
Paragraphs	1
Sentences	6

Averages

Sentences per Paragraph	6.0
Words per Sentence	18.0
Characters per Word	4.0

Readability

Passive Sentences	16%
Flesch Reading Ease	60.0
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	9.3

OK

**Investigation of Basement Flooding and Control of Stormwater
Runoff Quality – Areas 17, 18 and 19
(Allen Road/Dufferin Street and Highway 401 area)
Municipal Class Environmental Assessment**

Please join us at our first Public Information Centres to learn about the causes of flooding, the impacts of stormwater runoff, and the options that will be considered to address these problems. Study area map on the reverse page. Information for all three basement flooding areas will be available at two Public Information Centres.

You will have an opportunity to view display boards and speak one-on-one with project staff. Details are as follows:

Date: Wednesday, July 4, 2012
Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Earl Bales Community Centre – Banquet Room
4169 Bathurst Street (south of Sheppard Ave W)



OR

Date: Thursday, July 5, 2012
Time: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Location: Barbara Frum Library – 3rd floor Room B
20 Covington Road (Bathurst St, north of Lawrence Ave W)



Background

The City of Toronto has historically been subjected to wet weather flow events, which have caused recurring surface and basement flooding, and have adversely impacted water quality in Toronto's waterways. In response, the City of Toronto is undertaking a Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) study for Basement Flooding Areas 17, 18 and 19 (see map). The study will identify the causes of flooding and develop solutions to reduce the risk of future flooding in the basement flooding areas. Solutions to improve stormwater runoff quality will also be developed.

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Readability Statistics

Counts

Words	161
Characters	857
Paragraphs	3
Sentences	9

Averages

Sentences per Paragraph	3.0
Words per Sentence	17.8
Characters per Word	5.2

Readability

Passive Sentences	44%
Flesch Reading Ease	39.4
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	12.2

OK




**Are you worried about basement flooding?
Join us at a free information session.**

Basement flooding happens in many homes in areas around the Allen, Dufferin Street, and the 401. Runoff from storms also washes pollutants into our water. The City of Toronto is studying what causes these problems and how to prevent them.


The study is called the Class Environmental Assessment for Basement Flooding, Areas 17, 18, and 19. Look on the map on the back of this flyer to see if you are in the study area.

Come to a free session to learn more about flooding and storm-water runoff and to talk to project staff. Public consultation is an important part of this study. You can come to either of these two sessions:

Date: Wednesday, July 4, 2012
Time: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
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 (Banquet Room)
 4169 Bathurst Street
 (south of Sheppard Avenue West)



Date: Thursday, July 5, 2012
Time: 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Location: Barbara Frum Library
 (3rd floor, Room B)
 20 Covington road
 (off Bathurst Street, north of Lawrence Avenue West)



We want to hear from you:

Visit the project website for more information.
Please contact us if you want us to mail you updates.

Public Consultation Unit
City of Toronto
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Toronto, ON M5V 3C6

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Visit: www.toronto.ca/involved/projects



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The screenshot shows a 'Readability Statistics' dialog box with the following data:

Counts	
Words	130
Characters	597
Paragraphs	4
Sentences	9

Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	3.0
Words per Sentence	13.4
Characters per Word	4.5

Readability	
Passive Sentences	11%
Flesch Reading Ease	62.4
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	7.8

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