

Windsor-Essex chamber fights hidden costs on gas bills



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Matt Marchand is pictured in this 2014 file photo. TYLER BROWNBIDGE / WINDSOR STAR

The Windsor-Essex Chamber has joined the call for the Ontario Energy Board to ensure all charges

under the upcoming Cap and Trade component of monthly natural gas utility bills are listed.

The new cost will be introduced in January, but presently is to remain hidden under another line item — the delivery charge — currently on the monthly bills for both business and homeowners.

Chambers across Ontario — including Windsor — are also upset the extent of the costs remain unknown on top of being tucked away.

The new Cap and Trade charges are being introduced at the start of the new year as part of the provincial government's emission reduction efforts.

"It's an issue of transparency when it comes to the additional cost being added to the business community and residents at large," said Matt Marchand, CEO for the local chamber.

The chambers are not protesting the new program, but just want clarity for consumers so they know exactly what they are being charged under Cap and Trade on each monthly bill.

In other jurisdictions in Canada where the cap and trade has already been introduced, there is a separate line item on utility gas bills, Marchand said.

"We don't know what the numbers will be (across Ontario) and that's why we are asking for them," he said.

A letter was sent Friday to the provincial energy board by Ontario Chamber president Allan O'Dette on behalf of 135 chambers requesting the decision be reversed and the cost of cap and trade be fully disclosed in utility bills.