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BOB VRBANAC PHOTO

Worth the wait

Regional councillors, including Regional Chair Ken Seiling and Coun. Tom Galloway, centre, chair of the region's planning and works committee, give an enthusiastic thumbs up to the delivery of the first ION LRV Friday at the LRT operations centre in Waterloo. For more on the arrival of the new vehicle, turn to page 4.

Hydro disconnection threat riles local man

By BOB VRBANAC
Chronicle Staff

As the province brought in new legislation last week to prevent the disconnection of hydro services during the winter months, a local man said he was incensed when he received a premature threat to disrupt his service from his local hydro provider.

Waterloo resident Gary Berwick said it all started when he went away for a winter vacation and forgot to pay his last hydro bill before he left. When he got back he said he paid it and was about two-and-a-half weeks past due when he got a notice back from

Waterloo North Hydro.

"All of a sudden I got this letter in the mail box that said final notice," said Berwick. "There was a threat to disconnect our service by Feb. 26, in the dead of winter."

Berwick said the note came without the courtesy of any other previous contact from the local hydro provider. He said that he had been a longtime customer in good standing and never had any kind of issue with his billing since he moved to Waterloo in 1997.

Berwick sent his own note back, and sent a copy of his complaint to the Ontario Energy Board, which regulates the province's electricity sector.

"It should be noted that we are exemplary customers having always paid our bills promptly," said Berwick in his written response. "This is a first offence, if you call it that."

"That bill has been paid, but I categorically refuse to pay the trip charge for a totally offensive, arrogant and unnecessary action on their part. Unless you put a sanction on them and compensate me for this insult and abuse, I will consider legal action."

Berwick said he eventually got a call back from Albert Singh, chief financial officer of Waterloo North Hydro. The trip charge to put his account back in good standing was waived.

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