



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

December 10, 2013

### ***LAKE ERIE – NIAGARA RIVER ICE BOOM***

BURLINGTON, ONTARIO ----- Placement of the 22 spans of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom is about to start.

Each winter since 1964, the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom has been installed near the outlet of Lake Erie to reduce the amount of ice entering the Niagara River. As a result of the boom, ice jams in the river and damage to shoreline property has been minimized while water flow for hydro-electric power production has been maintained.

Use of the ice boom is authorized by the International Joint Commission. Ownership as well as the cost of operating and maintaining the boom is shared equally by the New York Power Authority and Ontario Power Generation. Installation, operation and removal of the boom is done by the New York Power Authority and monitored on behalf of the International Joint Commission by its International Niagara Board of Control.

Under the Commission's 1999 Supplementary Order of Approval, placement of the spans may begin when the Lake Erie water temperature at Buffalo reaches 4°C (39°F) or on December 16, whichever comes first. The Lake Erie water temperature was 4°C (39°F) on Sunday, December 8. Installation of the ice boom is planned to begin on Thursday, December 12 but could happen earlier if favourable conditions permit.

The 2.7-kilometre (1.7-mile) long boom is installed at the outlet of Lake Erie, at the entrance to the Niagara River, to strengthen the natural ice arch that forms almost every year. The ice boom has substantially reduced the severity, number and duration of ice runs from Lake Erie into the Niagara River.

Severe storms with westerly winds may overcome the stability of the ice arch and force large masses of ice against the boom. The boom is designed so that when this occurs, it submerges and allows the ice to override it until the pressure is relieved. Once the storm subsides, the boom resurfaces and restrains ice which otherwise would flow down the river. The ice boom does not inhibit the flow of water out of the lake into the Niagara River.

The International Joint Commission's International Niagara Board of Control will monitor the operation of the boom and ice conditions throughout the winter.

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For more information contact Chuck Southam, Canadian Secretary  
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