

HYDRO-QUÉBEC POSTAL METERS (1983-1986)

by Jean Guy Dalpé

After many years of almost total use of postal meters to mail bills to its customers, Hydro-Québec stopped the practice and replaced the meters with a standard permit printed in black on the envelopes. Then, in June 1983 (possibly in May), the company placed in service a HASLER Postal meter which printed a dater to the left of the permit. It appears that there were two reasons behind this change — to count the number of envelopes sent out and, especially, to date the mail.

The dater is characterized by the name of the originating post office, MONTREAL/P.Q., placed between two concentric circles. From 9 to 19 August 1983 this dater was replaced by another HASLER dater which printed only the date. On 18 August 1983 a PITNEY-BOWES dater (a single circle with just the date inside) made its appearance. This machine continued in use until October, when it was replaced by a

succession of daters (see illustrations). Starting in September 1984 the daters were accompanied by various slogans promoting the benefits of electricity.

In January 1986 a new procedure was noted. In addition to printing the dater and the slogan, the machines were now also used to print the permit. This practice was quickly abandoned when in April 1986 they reverted to the use of the simple black permit pre-printed on the envelope.

It seems that during this three year period Hydro-Québec, with the help of HASLER, was carrying out analyses of the costs of mailing out its bills, costs based on the amount of ink used (between the different types of daters, accompanied or not by the slogan and the permit). The table which follows lists the different combinations noted, with the appropriate time-frame.

DATERS



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

SLOGANS

Tout bien calculé
l'électricité
ça nous sort
moins *électrificateurs*

1

LES VERSEMENTS
ÉGAUX:
UNE FORMULE
PRATIQUE

2

Un réseau
stable
l'électrificateurs

3

L'électricité,
source
de confort

4

Faites-le
sûrement
à
l'électricité

5

Offre
de brochure
GRATUITE
à l'intérieur

6

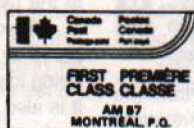
VOTRE
COMPTEUR
un instrument
de précision

7

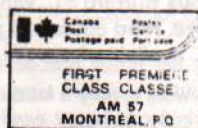
PERMITS



A



B



C

Dater-Slogan

Earliest Date

Latest Date

Permit

1-0	21 VI 83
2-0	9 VIII 83
3-0	18 VIII 83
2-0	13 X 83
7-0	26 X 83
5-0	14 V 84
6-0	10 VIII 84
6-1	13 IX 84
6-2	8 XI 84
6-3	10 XII 84
6-4	7 II 85
4-5.1	1 V 85
4-5.2	??
6-5	22 V 85
7-5.1	6 VI 85
7-5.2	23 VII 85
4-4	23 VIII 85
7-4	23 VIII 85
4-6	13 I 86
2-6	14 I 86
4-6	5 II 86
4-0	27 II 86
7-0	6 III 86
4-7	13 III 86

8 VIII 83	A
19 VIII 83	A
??	B
14 X 83	B
25 IV 84	B
27 VIII 84	B
20 VIII 84	B
18 X 84	B*
7 XII 84	B
??	B
21 III 85	B
12 VII 85	B
1 VIII 85	A
4 VI 85	B
21 VII 85	B
19 VIII 85	A
10 XII 85	B
10 XII 85	A
6 II 86	A
29 I 86	C
17 II 86	C
16 VI 86	C**
7 IV 86	C
9 IV 86	C

* Exists without the date

** Exists with 6 in place of the year in 1986

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