Letter of Comment

In accordance with the Commission’s Rules of Practice and Procedure, to submit a letter of comment concerning an application currently before the Commission, please provide a completed form to commission.secretary@bcuc.com. If email is unavailable, please mail the form to the address above. By doing so, you acknowledge that all letters of comment are published with the author’s name as part of the public evidentiary record, both in print copy and on the Commission’s website. All personal contact information provided on this page is removed before posting to the website. Forms must be received by the Commission by the last filing date included in the proceeding’s regulatory timetable before final arguments.

Proceeding name: David Shipway

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party? No

Name (first and last): David Shipway

City: [Redacted] Province: BC

Email: [Redacted] Phone number: [Redacted]
Letter of Comment

Name (first and last)  David Shipway  Date:  6-Aug-16

Comment: Please specify the reasons for your interest in the proceeding, your views concerning the proceeding, any relevant information that supports or explains your views, the conclusion you support and any recommendations. The Commission may disallow comments that do not comply with the Rules of Practice and Procedure.

My primary concern is about the current stepped rate in Hydro billing, and how the results are punitive to small business.

I own and operate a wood manufacturing and residential design business that is also home-based. I have a large workshop full of electrical machinery and a kiln-drying room. My wife makes prepared foods for weekly markets in our kitchen, and this business involves substantial cold storage and cooking/baking. Since all the Hydro for our home and businesses run through one meter, our Hydro bills are HUGE, especially since most of the consumption is billed at the higher rate.

The step up to a higher rate seems aimed at the typical electrical consumption pattern of urban homeowners, and those who work away from home.

I would like to see some recognition by BC Hydro for home based business consumption of electricity. It is not practical in our situation to have multiple meters on our property to separate business use from domestic use, since there is no clear boundary between the two, and the infrastructure change costs are high. We are thus trapped into paying a very high price for our electrical consumption.

I do believe the BC government supports small business, and supports businesses operated at home. It is the most common entrepreneurial practice in rural BC now. But Hydro billing does not support making small businesses competitive.

I also know that BC Hydro offers electrical energy to large industries at a much reduced rate, which probably encourages wastefulness. Hydro even buys electricity from some select small producers at a higher price than it can sell it for, while anyone hoping to do a domestic solar rooftop and sell surplus into the grid can only expect to run their meter backwards.

I am not privy to the numbers, but I am sure that many businesses are paying less than the 12c/kWh that my family’s small businesses are now paying. Thus there is inequity built into Hydro rates that unduly punish small home-based business, while subsidizing large business. This is unfair.