



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

RIB Rate Report on Residential two-tier electricity rates

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party?

No

Name (first and last)

Susan Starling

City

Province

BC

Email

Phone number

Letter of Comment

Name (first and last)

Susan Starling

Date: August 16, 2016

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.

I'm writing this because this issue has really upset me a for a long time and I have long thought there needed to be a change in billing procedure to make it fair to all customers. The customers who have been paying huge increases are those who have no access to natural gas for heat. We are forced to heat with power and so most of our bills are in the second tier which is a punishing rate for something we are powerless to change. As seniors on a pension this sky high cost is causing havoc with our finances.

I have been complaining since March of 2012 to Fortis about increasing power bills. I increased my complaints in January of 2016 to almost monthly protests at the cost to heat our single-wide mobile home, with highest northern insulation package and new low energy appliances, including the electric furnace. At that time, Fortis said they had no choice in how much to bill us as the BCUC mandated they charge the two-tier system whether we had access to natural gas for heat or not.

Since January of 2016 I have been complaining to complaints@bcuc.com as well. It should not be such a problem to make an adjustment to accommodate customers with no access to natural gas.

So I feel this is outrageous and it's been going on way too long. The money unfairly taken from us due to this billing structure should be returned to everyone affected by this system. The following quote is taken from an email I sent to Fortis complaining about our bill so you can see real dollar figures in how much we're billed for such a small area to heat. We are currently paying \$360 a month on the equal payment plan. And we are using less power than we did in 2011. Our power bill is approaching our mortgage for crying out loud.

"In 2011 I was paying \$158.91 equal payment plan. In 2012 it was \$260. In 2013 it was \$322. It dropped briefly to \$285 in 2014, but promptly went back up again to \$323 in March of 2015 where it has remained. So since 2011 my bill has DOUBLED!!!! No, nothing has changed as far as my usage in all this time. We have a single wide mobile home. I feel very strongly that we are being billed completely unfairly. This has to stop."

Please change this unfair billing method as soon as possible. You are damaging the finances of too many people who have no recourse to mitigate the expense. I would also like to point out that without a heads up from a neighbour, I would have had no idea that you were looking for comments by people affected by this billing system. And I've been complaining steadily for 8 months. Surely you should have at least emailed a request for comment from people actively complaining about this 2 tier billing method.

Susan Starling, [REDACTED]