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British Columbia Utilities Commission

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

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party?

Name (first and last)

City Province

Email Phone number

BCUC Log # _____
RECEIVED
OCT 28 2016
Routing 50648

Letter of Comment

Name (first and last)

Richard Vulliamy

Date:

17 October 2015

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 wish to add my comments to these proceedings because I believe that the two-tiered rate structure for residential consumers should be adjusted.

In principle, I am supportive of the two tiered rate structure imposed on residents consuming BC Hydro's electricity; however, I believe very strongly that the threshold from step one to step two has been set far too low for those families that have chosen to heat their homes with electricity.

My family lives in a single detached home [REDACTED]. The house we purchased in 2010 was built in 1944. Although most of the houses of a similar vintage in our neighbourhood have been demolished and replaced by new and larger structures, we decided to keep the original house. To do so, we spent in excess of \$250,000 to renovate and modernize the structure. Today, our house is 2300 square feet (including the basement) with upgraded windows, doors and insulation. We do not have a swimming pool, hot tub or AC. We cook and heat hot water with gas; however, in order to make our basement more liveable we converted from a gas furnace to electric heat, and therein lies the problem.

An analysis of our electrical billing for the 12 months, September 4, 2015 to September 2, 2016 shows a similar pattern to the previous year and the year previous to that. Despite every effort to minimize our consumption of electricity, we exceed the threshold determined by BC Hydro for the so-called conservation rate in every month except July and August. Specifically, our household consumption of electricity for two months, November 5, 2015 to January 5, 2016, was 5318 kW.h which was more than 4X the two months, July 6, 2016 to September 2, 2016, of 1207 kW.h. Clearly, our decision to switch from a gas furnace to electric space heating is the primary factor in our electrical usage. Not surprisingly, we experience the greatest usage in the middle of winter and are therefore charged a premium for the heat we require. In the months on either side of January we see a gradual decline in electrical consumption but we just barely squeak below that threshold in the middle of summer.

As I stated at the beginning of this letter, I am supportive of a two tiered rate structure; however, I believe that there should be some consideration for those customers who have chosen to heat their homes with electricity. If that is too difficult to incorporate into the current billing structure, then I would propose a higher threshold for determining generally the Conservation Rate.