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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	Residential two-tier electricity rates
Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party?	No

Name (first and last)	Marion Stolze		
City	[redacted]	Province	BC
Email	[redacted]	Phone number	[redacted]

BCUC Log #
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OCT 28 2010
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Letter of Comment

Name (first and last) Marion Stolze Date: October 20, 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 am interested in the proceeding as a customer ... a long term customer who, like others living in my area, have no option but to use the only electricity service available to my home. There is no element of choice. No competition. In my view, the proceeding is long over due. We experienced a significant , and impacting increase in the cost of our electricity after the two tier billing system was introduced. I have read both reports. I was not aware of the survey. One could argue statistics, but I prefer to simply tell you of the impact.

As a family, we have always been aware of the value of our precious resources. But we did what we could to avoid the higher tier cost but find it impossible. Our house is a normal, three bedroom bi-level ((below the average value of a house in our city), with a three year old roof, and good windows. We do not have a pool, irrigation system, or central air conditioning. There are three of us living here usually - some of the time only two of us. Thank goodness our furnace and hot water tank are gas operated! As a retiree home owner living on one fixed pension, I have had to find the extra money I now pay for electricity from somewhere else in the monthly budget: I canceled my membership in a local fitness center ($42) and dropped movie channels and two other packages on my Shaw Cable feed ($40). I also took the bulbs out of our two outside lights, (that provided some security), and invested in switching to the new energy saving light bulbs. Last winter, I also purchased a used gas fireplace and had it installed.

I would also like to point out that I voluntarily assist an aging retiree, who lives in a very small one bedroom apartment in a well built building. She keeps everything off, except essential electric heat, rises late, goes to bed early, and sits in the dark watching her TV. Part (granted not a large part) of her electricity bill is always over the threshold amount.

I don't mind paying a reasonable price for what I use, and accepting reasonable price increases, but this system is unfair. If there was an option to change provider, I would do so immediately. One could also get into discussion about volume discounts, as opposed to volume penalties - but I won't because I would like to think that the original intent of the two tier system was truly to encourage conservation. I am not sure from the reports that this goal was achieved. I also recognizes price increases are necessary from time to time to maintain infrastructure etc. The outcome of the two tier structure, however, has negatively impacted me and my household. I hear the same from my friends and acquaintances... by the way none of whom heard of the survey - and all of us would dearly have liked an opportunity to complete it!

Both reports indicate the status quo. Depressing! I thank you for requesting the reports. I do, however, hope that you will decide to revisit the system, particularly to make it fair for those of us in "the lower middle" bracket of income and usage, who have fixed incomes! As usual there is no relief for those of us who struggle to continue to maintain our homes, but who don't ever qualify for any form of income assistance, or lower rates. Do the math! The cost of all services and necessities has gone up percentage-wise, but electricity costs take the top prize!

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the reports.

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