



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

BCUC Residential Inclining Block Rate

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party?

No

Name (first and last)

Nicky Ballingall

City

Province

BC

Email

Phone number

Letter of Comment

Name (first and last)

Nicky Ballingall

Date: November 21, 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 writing in support of North Island MLA Claire Travena's challenge of **BC Hydro's Two-Tier Hydro Rates**, in that they **disproportionately affect and discriminate against northern, rural and remote BC residents**.

When we moved to a rural northern community from the Lower Mainland in spring 2016, we purchased an energy-efficient home. This is our first home with a smart meter and throughout the recent Oct/Nov billing period I have been reviewing the available meter information to monitor our electricity use to ensure we remained below the 2nd Tier threshold. From the smart meter information, I can tell that our primary energy driver is our heating.

During the billing period we have done the following things:

1. Further reduced the day-time thermostat setting to 16 deg C (21 deg C is the ideal temperature recommended by BC Hydro);
2. Reduced the night-time thermostat setting to 13 deg C (16 deg C is the ideal temperature recommended by BC Hydro);
3. Delayed startup of the heating cycling by ½ hour in the morning;
4. Starting the night-time setting earlier in the evening by one hour.

During our years living in the Lower Mainland, I was unaware that there even were two tiers to the hydro rate as we had never reached the second tier. Now that we reside in a remote community, I am eminently aware. This billing period (Oct/Nov 2016), despite monitoring and carrying out numerous energy-saving techniques, we were unable to keep our consumption levels at the lower rate charge. As winter approaches, and with nothing more that we can do to reduce our usage, the colder weather will lead to even more significant increases in our hydro bill.

While I applaud the two-tier system in that it encourages energy conservation, it is not a "level playing field" across BC. The two-tier system has a disproportionate negative impact on residents for whom hydro is the only real available heating option. Further it makes one feel annoyed in that northern/rural communities are effectively subsidizing the hydro costs for clients who have other alternatives for heating.

I request that the "Step 2" hydro rate point be significantly increased for remote communities, or where heating alternatives other than hydro are not available.



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