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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](mailto: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

BC Hydro 2015 Rate Design Application

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party?

No

Name (first and last)

Darlene Green

City

[REDACTED]

Province

BC

Email

[REDACTED]

Phone number

[REDACTED]

# Letter of Comment

Name (first and last)

Darlene Green

Date:

March 7, 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.

Customer Service Specialist  
British Columbia Utilities Commission  
6th Floor, 900 Howe Street  
Box 250  
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2N3

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing today to complain respecting the upcoming BC Hydro rate increases, slated for April, 2016.

In researching the rates on the Hydro's website it became clear they do not set the rate and therefore contacting them would seem fruitless. As they have declared the following:

"The BCUC sets BC Hydro's residential and business rates as published in the official [Electric Tariff](#) issued by BC Hydro and approved by the BCUC. Rates are adjusted by the BCUC, so that BC Hydro is able to achieve a targeted rate of return"

it would be more appropriate to direct this complaint directly to the Utilities Commission.

The basis of the complaint is the overall mandatory averaging of rates based on a tier system that simply is not fair to all. It may look good on paper, it may work mathematically for the company, but it does not reflect the true use and needs of the residents of British Columbia.

We live in Sicamous BC. We do not have the availability of natural gas in our area (nor do many surrounding areas) and must rely solely on BC Hydro electricity for both heating and all other electrical needs. We do not have the luxury of having natural gas as a main source of heat, or for that matter as a backup system in the depths of the long winter months when the temperatures drop drastically at times in these small northern rural communities.

Having a tiered system that averages communities such as ours in with other communities and urban centers that have the option of natural gas service and/or the ability to choose the electrical company they wish to use is discriminatory and administratively self-serving for BC Hydro, the utility provider.

The Tier 1 rates for areas, like Sicamous BC, should not be set based on the rest of the province but rather there should be an evaluation and determination of a fair average of like communities that must rely on electricity to heat their homes throughout cold winter months.

Our use after all is far greater during the winter for heat, and if one is lucky enough to have air conditioning, higher in the summer months for cooling.

Being energy efficient is of course not to be forgotten and having just built an energy efficient new home for our retirement I can guarantee it is very important to us. It is however not as easy or fair to many fellow community members, living in homes that are 20 years or greater in age, to maintain their basic needs entirely within the skewed averaging figures contained which make up the lower rates applied to Tier 1.

Yes, they do have the ability at times to spend money on renovations or new equipment and apply for grants but these too are often out of their reach financially. Most are living on basic pensions, in an aging community, who at the end of the billing period must make a decision on what to pay first an outrageous and ever increasing BC Hydro heating bill or groceries.

Simply put the way the tier system is setup to work is unsustainable to the aging rural population of small rural BC communities that depend wholly on BC Hydro for the basic necessities of life such as staying warm (cool), cooking and lighting their homes.

Keeping in mind that these communities are also some of the lowest socio-economic areas of the province and are also home to many young families that struggle with unemployment, social assistance and / or low income minimum wage seasonal employment. The last stress any of us need is being bullied into mandatory rate increases for a basic life necessity.

Are the residents of our small communities being forced to go back to burning oil, coal or wood to heat their homes and cook their food? Are they being forced to go back to using coal oil lamps or candles to light their way thru the long winter months? If so this is by no means in keeping with the “green living” theories and hopes of lowering emissions and lowering our impact on global warming. I therefore request that you do not approve the upcoming across the board rate increases and that this matter be taken back to the table to come up with a more appropriate and fair system based on the actual needs and necessities of the aging and socio/economic struggling rural areas of service in BC.

Respectfully submitted

Darlene Green

██████████ British Columbia

