

To: [BCUC](#)
Subject: Letter of Comment - Hemlock – Application to Change Terms and Conditions - Donna Marie Mackie
Date: Sunday, February 7, 2021 3:40:34 PM
Attachments: [Letter of Comment \(G-20-21\)Hemlock Utilities.odt](#)

Date Submitted: February 07, 2021

Proceeding name: Hemlock – Application to Change Terms and Conditions

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party: Yes, Interested Party

Name: Donna Marie Mackie

City: Burnaby

Province: British Columbia

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone number: [REDACTED]

Comment:
See attached file.

Has Attachment:
True

February 6, 2021

British Columbia Utilities Commission
Attention: Marija Tresoglavic, Acting Commission Secretary Commission

Re: Hemlock Valley Electrical Services Limited – Application to Change the Terms and Conditions of Electric Tariff B.C.U.C. No. 1 – Project No. 1599172

I have owned a cabin at Hemlock Valley [REDACTED] for 36 years. My three generational family feels so lucky to have the opportunity to go to this beautiful retreat outside the city, mostly on weekends.

But I have major concerns about this application from Hemlock Utilities Ltd.

The application says that the changes relate to the highlighted Item 19 (LIABILITY OF THE COMPANY RE SERVICE). I have no copy of the previous terms for comparison unless it is the first paragraph that seems to be a fair statement. I also do not have access to the terms and conditions used by other major utility providers in BC.

Reading Item 19 after the first paragraph, the only interpretation I can see is that the company will not take any responsibility for any negative outcomes of its service to the customer (me)! I can understand inevitable accidents, Acts of God, etc but the company must take responsibility for, at least, their negligence and wilful misconduct. Or does this mean that the responsibility is being forced on to the individual employee? This complete absolution of the company's responsibility is being extended to property and services provided by or shared with other utilities(probably owned by “Hemlock”) . Are these really the terms used by other utilities? I fear that as power outages are increasing in numbers and duration that the company wants to take no responsibility but protect itself at the expense of its customers. I am already replacing appliances and adding power surge protectors because of the numerous and unpredictable power surges. Why so many?

No! Item 19, as written, is not acceptable to me! Is it not possible to write the document in clear, concise terms that can be uniformly interpreted by all parties?

As I skimmed through the rest of the document, on the last page, I noticed “**Energy charge at 16.05 cents per kw.h**”. The current charge is actually 15.3 cents per kwh! Is this a request to increase the rate or a statement? In document G-66-12, the commission “denied Hemlock's request for automatic rate adjustment due to limited demonstrated ability to calculate regulated rates”. Regardless, the rates have continued to increase.

Oct 2013 – \$0.13

Apr 2014 – \$0.136

May 2015 – \$0.143

Dec 2018 – \$0.148

Jan 2020 – \$0.153

I have never seen a notice; rate just gets changed on the invoice—does the utility make application for increase to BCUC? Is approval based on financial reports? I understand that the company requires a reasonable return for ongoing costs and maintenance but I would like to see the justification, including a list of all potential extra charges passed on to customers.

As noted above, the service to me, the homeowner, is unreliable. There are so many power outages (both planned and unplanned), many lasting for hours and even days. Does routine maintenance actually happen? I do get notices occasionally that there will be an outage for maintenance but I know (from my electric clocks) that the power is out almost every week. Yes, there are weather issues and

issues with BC Hydro providing the power. I understand the communities of Harrison Mills and Lake Errock have ongoing communication with BC Hydro to deal with more reliable power. I would hope that Mr Berezan is participating in these discussions because Hemlock Electrical uses this same single source. Is there a record of the power outages and their causes? Last year, huge generators were added at the Sasquatch Resort (also a customer of the utility). Now, when the power goes out, the resort continues to run. That is great but I feel that there is less incentive now for the company to be concerned about the power outages for the rest of the community. Does Hemlock Electrical pay for those generators and their operation?

In summary, I disagree with this "coincidental" rate increase until it is justified by the utility.

Thanks for considering my comments.

Marie Mackie

