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April 26, 2019

Ms. Luly Massaro, Clerk
Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, RI 02888

**Re: *Docket No. 4898- The Narragansett Bay Commission
Tariff Advice Filing***

Dear Ms. Massaro:

Enclosed please find an original and nine copies of the following documents:

1. The Narragansett Bay Commission's Response to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission's Hearing Record Requests.
2. The Narragansett Bay Commission's Response to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission's Post-Hearing Data Request.

Please note that an electronic copy of this document has been provided to the service list.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Joseph A. Keough, Jr.

JAK/kf

cc: Docket 4898 Service List (*via electronic mail*)

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
DOCKET NO. 4898
Response Of The
Narragansett Bay Commission
To The Rhode Island
Public Utilities Commission's
Record Requests from
Hearing on April 16, 2019

PUC RR-1 Please identify the number of NBC's customers who:

- a. Have signed up for an account since NBC went live with its new billing software;
- b. Have made online payments since NBC went live with its new billing software; and,
- c. Have signed up for recurring payments since NBC went live with its new billing software

Response:

- a. 8,651.
- b. NBC has received 31,703 online payments as follows:
February: 7,516
March: 11,501
April: 9,954 (month to date)
- c. 4,233.

Prepared by: Clara Casimiro

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PUC RR-2: Please identify the number of bills NBC has issued each month since it went live with its new billing software that only charge a flat fee and have no charge for consumption.

Response: NBC billed 451 accounts in February for flat fee charges only.
NBC billed 8,650 accounts in March for flat fee charges only.

Prepared by: Clara Casimiro

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- PUC RR-3:** Please identify the number of NBC's customers who:
- a. Currently have billing arrangements with the NBC; and,
 - b. That NBC bills under the terms of a budget.

Response:

- a. There are 269 accounts currently on arrangements with NBC.
- b. There are no customers currently set up with a budget.

Prepared by: Clara Casimiro

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PUC RR-4: Please consult with Advanced Utilities and determine whether it is feasible to “true-up” smaller numbers of accounts if NBC were able to split the 10,406 accounts for which NBC only receives actual consumption data on a quarterly basis into smaller cycles and books for billing purposes.

Response: NBC consulted with Advanced Utilities with respect to this inquiry and the processing time would still be prohibitive even if NBC split up the billing of the 10,406 accounts. The time needed to process all 10,406 accounts at once takes approximately 80 hours. If NBC split this billing into four individual weekly cycles the processing time would be 20 hours for each cycle. This is still a prohibitive amount of time, and would entail the other problems referenced at the hearing including:

- Running the “true-up” process will diminish system performance as system resources would be diverted to the cancel/rebill process and will adversely impact the system speed for other processes and users of the system.
- NBC runs system backups daily, and if the cancel/rebill process is running during the backup process, the backup may not capture the complete changes from the cancel/rebill process resulting in inconsistent data.
- Accounts can only be included in one batch at a time so no other activity can be performed on them during the cancel/rebill process. This would inhibit NBC from performing basic customer service functions on these accounts during the process such as processing of closing requests, updating of meter readings, ownership changes, etc.
- If for some reason the cancel/rebill batch is not successful, the process would have to be run again, further impairing system performance.

Thus, it is not feasible to “true-up” smaller numbers of accounts.

Prepared by: Brendon McLean and Clara Casimiro

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PUC RR-5 Please consult with Advanced Utilities and determine whether the billing software can be configured to adjust bills on a quarterly basis in the same way that budgeted bills are adjusted on a yearly basis.

Response: NBC consulted with Advanced Utilities and the billing software cannot be configured to adjust bills on a quarterly basis in the same way that budgeted bills are adjusted because it would require rewriting the base code of the software.

Although it may seem counterintuitive, in most utility billing software, payments and billings are completely separate functions. The information entered to create and calculate a bill is separate from the information used to record payments. Furthermore, if the billing information (i.e. consumption) has to be changed after it is entered, a new bill has to be created. This is true of the Advanced Utilities software. Budgets (for payments) and “true-ups” (for bills) are two different procedures with distinct processing and functionality requirements. Budgets deal with payments while “true- ups” deal with billing.

A budget “true-up” that re-calculates the amount due at the end of a budget year is simply a comparison of the amount paid to the amount due. The amount *billed* does not change because although the customer is making monthly payments based on the budget, there is only one *bill* calculated at the end of the year based on actual usage. Thus, only the amount *due* on the budget changes. Once this calculation is completed, the account reflects either a debit or credit balance. This is a simple calculation.

Quarterly “true-ups” of estimated meter readings involves two billing transactions. The first transaction is to cancel the initial bills and the second is to create new bills based on actual readings. The processing time associated with canceling and rebilling is the time consuming part of the true-up process.

Prepared by: Brendon McLean

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that on April 26, 2019, I sent a copy of the within to all parties set forth on the attached Service List by electronic mail and copies to Luly Massaro, Commission Clerk, by electronic mail and regular mail.

Parties/Address	E-mail Distribution	Phone
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Post Hearing Data Request

PUC 4-1: Please provide a year-long illustration of a billing cycle under the existing and proposed tariff for an average residential customer whose meter is read on a quarterly basis, i.e., show the average residential customer's billing for each month of the year. Please include a breakdown of each monthly charge including the total charge, the service charge, and the consumption charge for each month and indicate the time-period for the actual meter reading that the consumption charge covers.

By way of illustration, please the following chart based on a customer whose meter is read on a quarterly basis:

Billing Month	Service Charge	Consumption Charge	Total Charge	Period of Cons. Based on Actual Meter Read
Jan	\$XXX.XX	\$XXX.XX	\$XXX.XX	Oct - Dec
Feb				
March				
Apr.				
May				
June				
July				
August				
Sept				
Oct				
Nov				
Dec				

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Response: Please see below.

Billing Month	Service Charge	Consumption Charge	Total Charge	Meter Reading Dates		Consumption Fee Calculation		
				From	To	Billed HCF	Rate*	Amount
January	\$ 18.78	\$ 64.62	\$ 83.40	9/16/2018	12/15/2018	18.3	\$ 3.531	\$ 64.62
February	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78					
March	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78					
April	\$ 18.78	\$ 66.22	\$ 85.00	12/16/2018	3/15/2019	3.05	\$ 3.531	\$ 10.77
May	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78			15.25	\$ 3.636	\$ 55.45
June	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78					
July	\$ 18.78	\$ 66.54	\$ 85.32	3/16/2019	6/15/2019	18.3	\$ 3.636	\$ 66.54
August	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78					
September	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78					
October	\$ 18.78	\$ 66.54	\$ 85.32	6/16/2019	9/15/2019	18.3	\$ 3.636	\$ 66.54
November	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78					
December	\$ 18.78	\$ -	\$ 18.78					

* new rates effective 1/1/19

Prepared by: Karen Giebink

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