Consumer News... For You! November 2023

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Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor Consumer News... For You! November

NIPSCO Gas Rates

2023

<u>Northern Indiana Public Service Co.</u> (NIPSCO) has filed a new base rate case for its natural gas utility. The request would raise annual revenues by nearly \$161.9 million (16.29%). It would also raise the monthly residential customer service charge from \$16.25 to \$25.50.

The OUCC is expected to file its recommendations on Jan. 31, 2024. In the meantime, written <u>consumer comments</u> are invited through Jan. 24, 2024. A Commission order is expected in summer 2024.

I&M Rates

The OUCC continues to invite <u>written consumer comments</u> on <u>Indiana Michigan Power's</u> (I&M) rate request through Nov. 8. Public field hearings were conducted last month in Fort Wayne and South Bend.

The OUCC's attorneys and technical experts are analyzing I&M's \$116 million request and are scheduled to file testimony with the IURC on Nov. 15. A commission order is expected next spring.

AES Indiana Rates

The OUCC is <u>recommending</u> a significant reduction to AES Indiana's rate request. In June, the utility proposed a \$134.2 million annual revenue increase. This includes raising the monthly customer service charge from \$16.75 to \$25.00.

The OUCC's testimony, filed on Oct. 12, recommends limiting the increase to \$19.1 million. 14 OUCC witnesses based their recommendations on a 3 ½- month review of AES Indiana's evidence, and included more than 1,500 written consumer comments with their testimony.

Rebuttal testimony from AES Indiana is due Nov. 8 with an evidentiary hearing scheduled to start on Dec. 4.

Additional Cases

- All filings and hearings are complete in the <u>CenterPoint Electric TDSIC</u> case. A final order is expected in December.
- <u>Consumer comments</u> are invited through Dec.14 on <u>NIPSCO's proposal</u> to build and operate a new 400-megawatt natural gas-fired power plant.
- NIPSCO customers will receive bill credits following a <u>supplemental order</u> in the utility's recent electric rate case. The OUCC and industrial customers objected to NIPSCO's timing for implementing its new rates.

- The OUCC has filed its proposed order for the IURC's consideration in the Indiana American Water rate case. Our office recommended limiting the originally requested \$86.7 million (31.1%) increase to a \$18.6 million (6.6%). A final order from the IURC is not expected until later this winter.
- <u>Consumer comments</u> are invited regarding the <u>Marysville-Otisco-Nabb</u> water rate case through Jan. 5. The OUCC anticipates filing on January 12.
- Consumer parties, including the OUCC, have filed their <u>brief</u> with the Indiana Court of Appeals on Community Utilities of Indiana's rate order.

Winter is Coming

Winter is approaching and it's time to prepare your home for winter heating season. Getting a furnace tune-up, changing the filter, and making sure rugs and furniture are not blocking your vents are 3 of the steps you can take now.

Indiana's major natural gas utilities are projecting December heating bills to be 13 to 25 percent lower than one year ago, due to significant decreases in wholesale gas costs:

- <u>Citizens Gas</u>
- <u>CenterPoint North</u>
- <u>CenterPoint South</u>
- <u>NIPSCO</u>

However, it is important for all consumers to prepare, stay current on any payment arrangements, and request an arrangement sooner rather than later if you need one. If you need financial assistance, the state's <u>211 helpline</u> is available around the clock. It can provide information on <u>Indiana's Energy</u> <u>Assistance Program</u> and additional resources.



Join our team! Apply for our open positions.

"Working at the OUCC has provided excellent professional growth opportunities, rivaling my previous jobs outside of state employment." - Mark, CPA

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Interested in joining the OUCC team? We have openings for an accountant and an engineer.

Our Mission

To represent all Indiana consumers to ensure quality, reliable utility services at the most reasonable prices possible through dedicated advocacy, consumer education, & creative problem solving.

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