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VANCOUVER, BC V6Z 2N3 CANADA
web site: <http://www.bcuc.com>

**BRITISH COLUMBIA
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**ORDER
NUMBER G-46-12**

TELEPHONE: (604) 660-4700
BC TOLL FREE: 1-800-663-1385
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**IN THE MATTER OF
the Utilities Commission Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, Chapter 473**

and

**An Application by the FortisBC Energy Utilities
(comprising FortisBC Energy Inc., FortisBC Energy (Whistler) Inc., and FortisBC Energy (Vancouver Island) Inc.)
for Approval of Common Rates, Amalgamation and Rate Design**

BEFORE: A.A. Rhodes, Panel Chair/Commissioner
C.A. Brown, Commissioner
D.A. Cote, Commissioner April 17, 2012
L. O'Hara, Commissioner
R.D. Revel, Commissioner

O R D E R

WHEREAS:

- A. On April 11, 2012, the FortisBC Energy Utilities (FEU or the Companies) filed an Application with the British Columbia Utilities Commission (Commission) seeking, among other things:
- A Commission determination and report pursuant to section 53 of the *Utilities Commission Act* (the Act) that the amalgamation of the FEU is beneficial in the public interest,
 - referral of the Commission report to the Lieutenant Governor in Council in support of an Order for approval to amalgamate effective January 1, 2014; and
 - The necessary approvals pursuant to sections 59 to 61 of the Act to adopt common or "postage stamp" rates and uniform services across all areas served by the FEU following amalgamation;
- B. The FEU propose a Preliminary Timetable attached as Appendix "A" that includes a Workshop to review the Application be held on Monday, April 30, 2012, commencing at 9:00 a.m., at the Commission Hearing Room on the 12th Floor, 1125 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC;
- C. The Companies also propose that a Procedural Conference be held on Friday, June 15, 2012, at the Commission Hearing Room on the 12th Floor, 1125 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC, commencing at 9:00 a.m.;
- D. The FEU propose that the issue of the appropriate hearing process be addressed at the Procedural Conference;

- E. The FEU propose a Draft Regulatory Timetable, attached as Appendix “B” including a second round of Information Requests and timetables for a Written Hearing, for discussion at the Procedural Conference; and
- F. The Commission considers that establishing a preliminary Regulatory Timetable, including a Workshop to review the Application and a Procedural Conference to determine the appropriate regulatory process for the remaining review of the Application is warranted.

NOW THEREFORE the Commission orders as follows:

- 1. A Workshop to review the Application will be held on Monday, April 30, 2012, commencing at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Hearing Room on the 12th Floor, 1125 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC.
- 2. A preliminary Regulatory Timetable as set out in Appendix “A” to this Order is established.
- 3. A Procedural Conference will be held on Friday, June 15, 2012, commencing at 9:00 a.m. in the Commission Hearing Room on the 12th Floor, 1125 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC.
- 4. The Procedural Conference will address matters such as:
 - a. identification of principle issues arising from or related to the Application;
 - b. process options for review of the Application, including;
 - written hearing
 - oral public hearing
 - or, as appropriate, some combination of the above
 - c. timetable (information requests, responses, intervener evidence, rebuttal evidence etc.), and, in particular, the draft timetable attached as Appendix “B” to this Order;
 - d. location(s) of the proceedings;
 - e. other matters that will assist the Commission to efficiently review all aspects of the Application.

After the Procedural Conference, the Commission will issue a further Procedural Order and Regulatory Timetable for its review of the Application.

- 5. The FEU will publish, as soon as possible, in display-ad format, the Notice attached as Appendix “C” to this Order, in the Vancouver Sun, the Province, and such other appropriate local news publications as may properly provide adequate notice to customers served in the affected service areas.
- 6. The FEU will provide a Bill Insert, in the format of the draft attached as Appendix “D” to this Order, and with all required information on the estimated total bill impact and the date the impact will be realized added, to all residential and commercial customers at the earliest opportunity.

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7. The Application, together with any supporting materials, will be made available for inspection at four FortisBC Energy Utilities offices: 16705 Fraser Highway, Surrey, BC, V4N 0E8; 320 Garbally Road, Victoria, BC, V8T 2K1; 1975 Springfield Road, Kelowna, BC, V1Y 7V7; 3901 Nahanni Drive, Fort Nelson, BC, V0C 1R0, and at the British Columbia Utilities Commission, Sixth Floor, 900 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC, V6Z 2N3 and will also be available on the FortisBC Energy Utilities website at www.fortisbc.com and on the BCUC website at www.bcuc.com.
8. Interveners or Interested Parties should register with the Commission, in writing or by electronic submission, by June 14, 2012, but should note the earlier deadline for Intervener Information Requests contained in the Preliminary Regulatory Timetable attached as Appendix "A." Interveners should specifically state the nature of their interest in the Application and identify generally the nature of the issues that they may intend to pursue during the proceeding and the nature and extent of their anticipated involvement in the review process.

DATED at the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, this 17th day of April 2012.

BY ORDER

Original signed by:

A.A. Rhodes
Panel Chair/Commissioner

Attachments

An Application by the FortisBC Energy Utilities
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for Approval of Common Rates, Amalgamation and Rate Design

PRELIMINARY REGULATORY TIMETABLE

ACTION	DATE (2012)
Workshop (commencing at 9:00 a.m.)	Monday, April 30
Commission Information Request No. 1 to FEU	Monday, May 07
Intervener Information Request No. 1 to FEU	Friday, May 11
FEU Response to Information Requests No. 1	Friday, June 01
Registration of Interveners and Interested Parties	Thursday, June 14
Procedural Conference (Timetable and Process - commencing at 9:00 a.m.)	Friday, June 15

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**DRAFT REGULATORY TIMETABLE
for Discussion at the Procedural Conference**

ACTION	DATE (2012)
Commission and Intervener Information Request No. 2 to FEU	Thursday, June 21
FEU Response to Information Requests No. 2	Thursday, July 12
TIMETABLE FOR WRITTEN HEARING WITHOUT INTERVENER EVIDENCE	
FEU Final Submission	Thursday, August 02
Intervener Final Submissions	Thursday, August 23
FEU Reply Submission	Thursday, September 06
TIMETABLE FOR WRITTEN HEARING WITH INTERVENER EVIDENCE	
Intervener Evidence Filed	Thursday, July 19
Commission and FEU Information Requests to Interveners	Thursday, August 09
Intervener Response to Information Requests	Thursday, August 23
FEU Final Submission	Thursday, September 13
Intervener Final Submissions	Thursday, October 04
FEU Reply Submission	Thursday, October 25
TIMETABLE FOR ORAL HEARING WITHOUT INTERVENER EVIDENCE	
Oral Hearing	Monday, August 06
FEU Final Submission	Monday, September 3
Intervener Final Submission	Monday, September 24
FEU Reply Submission	Monday, October 15
TIMETABLE FOR ORAL HEARING WITH INTERVENER EVIDENCE	
Oral Hearing	Monday, September 10
FEU Final Submission	Monday, October 8
Intervener Final Submissions	Monday, October 29
FEU Reply Submission	Monday, November 19



PUBLIC NOTICE

BRITISH COLUMBIA UTILITIES COMMISSION

FORTISBC ENERGY UTILITIES INTEND TO AMALGAMATE NATURAL GAS SERVICE IN BC AND IMPLEMENT COMMON RATES

On April 11, 2012, the FortisBC Energy Utilities applied to the British Columbia Utilities Commission to amalgamate their natural gas utilities across the province and to implement common rates and services across their service areas starting January 1, 2014. Currently, FortisBC Energy Utilities is made up of three separate natural gas companies, operating in six service areas. The companies have their own services, service agreements (tariffs) and rates. If approved, the application would combine the three companies into one, under a single tariff, with common rates for the various regions.

This Application has different implications for customers in each service area. If approved, customers in the Vancouver Island and Whistler service areas will see rate decreases, while customers in the Lower Mainland, Columbia, Inland, and Fort Nelson service areas will see an overall rate increase.

PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS

The Commission is initiating a review of FortisBC Energy Utilities' Application. To view the timetable for this hearing and the Application go to www.bcuc.com select "Current Applications" under "Quick Links" and scroll to "FEU Common Rates, Amalgamation and Rate Design."

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

If you wish to participate actively in the review process, you may register as an Intervener or an Interested Party with the Commission Secretary in writing, using the contact information at the end of this notice. All submissions and/or correspondence received from active participants or the general public relating to the Application will be placed on the public record and posted to the Commission's website.

If you wish to attend the Public Workshop or the Procedural Conference please register with the Commission Secretary using the contact information at the end of this Notice.

	Workshop FortisBC Energy will explain the Application and answer questions	Procedural Conference The Commission will consider the regulatory process to review the Application
Date:	Monday, April 30, 2012	Friday, June 15, 2012
Time:	9:00 am	9:00 am
Location:	Commission Hearing Room 12 th Floor, 1125 Howe Street Vancouver, BC	

VIEW THE APPLICATION

The Application and all supporting documentation are available on the Commission's website on the Current Applications page (www.bcuc.com) and on the FortisBC website (www.fortisbc.com).

If you would like to review the material in hard copy, it is available at the locations below:

<p>British Columbia Utilities Commission Sixth Floor, 900 Howe Street Vancouver, BC V6Z 2N3 Commission.Secretary@bcuc.com Fax: 604-660-1102</p>	<p>FortisBC Energy Utilities Inc. – Head Office 16705 Fraser Highway Surrey, BC V4N 0E8</p> <p>FortisBC Energy Utilities Inc. – Victoria Office 320 Garbally Road Victoria, BC V8T 2K1</p> <p>FortisBC Energy Utilities Inc. – Kelowna Office 1975 Springfield Road Kelowna, BC V1Y 7V7</p> <p>FortisBC Energy Utilities Inc. – Fort Nelson Office 3901 Nahanni Drive Fort Nelson, BC V0C 1R0</p>
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FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER

For more information please contact Ms. Alanna Gillis, Acting Commission Secretary using the Commission contact information above.

Proposed FortisBC Rate Changes will Impact Your Bill

On April 11, 2012, FortisBC Energy Utilities Inc. applied to the BC Utilities Commission to amalgamate their natural gas utilities across the province and to implement common rates and services across their service areas starting January 1, 2014. Currently, FortisBC Energy Utilities is made up of three separate natural gas companies, consisting of six service areas.

The companies have their own services, service agreements (tariffs) and rates. If approved, the application would combine the three companies into one, under a single tariff, with common rates for the various regions.

Natural Gas and propane service areas



Residential Customer Impact

Service Area	Estimated Total Bill Impact* (%)	Full Impact Realized By
Lower Mainland		
Columbia		
Inland		
Whistler		
Vancouver Island		
Fort Nelson		

* Includes the cost of gas



The BC Utilities Commission (Commission) is an independent regulatory agency of the provincial government that operates under and administers the Utilities Commission Act. The Commission's primary responsibility is the regulation of British Columbia's natural gas and electricity utilities.

FortisBC recently submitted its **Application for Common Rates, Amalgamation and Rate Design** to the Commission. If approved, all FortisBC customers will be charged the same rate, regardless of where they live.

For more information on the proposed changes and how to participate in the BC Utilities Commission public hearing process for this application, please download the Commission User Guide at: www.bcuc.com/UserGuide.aspx

If you would like to give input on FortisBC's application there are different ways to get involved.

Ways to get involved:

1. Register for Full or Simplified Intervention
2. Register as an Interested Party
3. Attend the Public Hearing as an Observer
4. Submit a Letter of Comment

Participants who wish to take part in the process must register with the Commission. You can register online at: www.bcuc.com/Registration.aspx.

You can register by email, fax, or mail by sending a letter containing your name, contact information, and who you represent to:

Commission Secretary
British Columbia Utilities Commission
900 Howe Street, 6th Floor
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2N3
Regarding: FortisBC Energy Application for Common Rates, Amalgamation and Rate Design

Email: Commission.Secretary@bcuc.com
Fax: 604 660-1102

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Natural Gas and propane service areas



Commercial Customer Impact

Service Area	Estimated Total Bill Impact* (%)	Full Impact Realized By
Lower Mainland		
Columbia		
Inland		
Whistler		
Vancouver Island		
Fort Nelson		

* Includes the cost of gas



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