



LETTER L-55-12

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VIA EMAIL

September 28, 2012

bchydroregulatorygroup@bchydro.com

Ms. Janet Fraser
Chief Regulatory Officer
British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
16th Floor, 333 Dunsmuir Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 5R3

Dear Ms. Fraser:

Re: British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
Customer Complaint – Wise, J. - Billing

This letter is in response to British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority's (BC Hydro) letter dated September 20, 2012, requesting permission from the British Columbia Utilities Commission (Commission) to waive consumption of 2,514 kilowatt hours (kWh) on Mr. Jeremy Wise's account.

In the letter, BC Hydro states Mr. Wise contacted the company on multiple occasions between 2009 and 2011 to discuss his concerns about a higher than normal bill in February 2009 and the accuracy of his meter. On two occasions, Mr. Wise requested BC Hydro conduct an investigation of the meter. However, the company's meter investigation and exchange procedures were not correctly followed and Mr. Wise's meter was removed before it could be investigated and/or tested by Measurement Canada.

BC Hydro states that as a result of this error, the company is unable to confirm the accuracy of the meter and resolve Mr. Wise's concerns. BC Hydro further states it believes it is appropriate under these circumstances to revise the billing for the disputed period, December 11, 2008 to February 10, 2009, to reflect an estimate of consumption based on historical consumption. BC Hydro proposes to revise the actual registered consumption from 8,342 kWh to an estimate of 5,828 kWh, waiving charges of \$189.35 before taxes and levies, as the company cannot confirm the accuracy of the meter readings used for the original billing. BC Hydro's estimate of 5,828 kWh is based on consumption data from 2006 to 2012 over the December to February billing period (excluding the disputed period).

BC Hydro's acknowledged deviation from the established procedures deprived the customer of the opportunity to formally dispute the accuracy of the meter under section 4.3 of the *Electric Tariff* (Tariff). As a result, the Commission finds the proposed revised billing appropriate. The Commission further is of the view that it is reasonable to apply the provisions in subsection 5.8(6) of the Tariff to the waived charges and to provide a reimbursement to the customer with interest paid at a rate equal to BC Hydro's weighted average cost of debt, calculated for BC Hydro's most recent fiscal year.

Pursuant to section 63 of the *Utilities Commission Act*, BC Hydro is unable to waive charges for registered consumption without consent of the Commission. By this letter, the Commission gives consent to BC Hydro to waive consumption of 2,514 kWh (\$189.35 before taxes and levies) between December 11, 2008 and February 10, 2009, on Mr. Wise's account.

Yours truly,

Erica Hamilton

LS/cms