



July 12, 2023

Public Utility Commission of Oregon
Attn: Charles Lockwood, PUC Staff
201 High St. SE, #100
Salem, OR 97301

Regarding: ADV 1502 / Advice 23-04, NW Natural revising Smart Energy to Include Renewable Natural Gas

Dear Commissioners,

Columbia Memorial Hospital has been serving families in the North Coast/Lower Columbia region since 1880. As the fastest growing rural hospital in the state of Oregon, we are deeply committed to improving the health and well-being of our community. We are always seeking new ways to innovate and advance our level of care and service, a philosophy that is driving our upcoming expansion in downtown Astoria. As we look to the future of our community, we see the need for resiliency and climate-focused advancements that ensure we can continue providing state-of-the-art healthcare services for the next 140 years.

As in other locations throughout the state, Oregon's North Coast will continue to face new challenges related to climate change. Utility partners, government, business, and industry must come to the table to collaborate and generate innovative solutions to this complicated problem. NW Natural's Smart Energy Program is already helping over 84,000 customers lessen their environmental impact in homes and businesses and the proposed addition of renewable natural gas (RNG) will do even more.

- Diversifying this program by offering RNG as an additional option to choose from will generate new participation, further important conversations and education regarding emissions reduction, and allow NW Natural to further build out its company-wide emphasis on implementing sustainable ways to meet the demands of the region's growing population.
- By capturing methane emissions from places like landfills and wastewater treatment facilities, NW Natural can recondition it and allow Smart Energy Program customers to have renewable natural gas used in their home and business consumption.
- Doing so creates an additional carbon mitigating resources in this already established program and allows an opt-in for those who can afford it.



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Thank you for your consideration in adopting this proposal from NW Natural.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Kujala".

Mark Kujala
Executive Director
Columbia Memorial Hospital Foundation