



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Public Utility Commission

201 High St SE Suite 100

Salem, OR 97301-3398

Mailing Address: PO Box 1088

Salem, OR 97308-1088

503-373-7394

May 10, 2023



BY EMAIL

CASCADE NATURAL GAS

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RE: Advice No. O23-04-02

Staff of the Oregon Public Utility Commission reviewed the sheets in the filing docketed as ADV 1498. A receipted copy of the acknowledged sheets in your advice filing is attached.

/s/ Nolan Moser

Nolan Moser

Chief Administrative Law Judge

Public Utility Commission of Oregon

503-689-3622



8113 W. GRANDRIDGE BLVD., KENNEWICK, WASHINGTON 99336-7166
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April 21, 2023

CNG/O23-04-02

Oregon Public Utility Commission
Attn: Filing Center
201 High Street S.E., Suite 100
Salem, OR 97301-3398

Re: Advice No. O23-04-02, Cascade Housekeeping Filing

In accordance with ORS 757.259 and OAR 860-027-0300, Cascade Natural Gas Corporation ("Cascade" or "Company") submits to the Oregon Public Utility Commission ("Commission") the following revisions to its Tariff P.U.C. OR. No. 10, stated to become effective with service on and after June 1, 2023:

Second Revision of Sheet No. 3.1
Second Revision of Sheet No. 4.1
First Revision of Sheet No. 5.1
First Revision of Sheet No. 5.3
First Revision of Sheet No. 5.4

First Revision of Sheet No. 5.5
Second Revision of Sheet No. 5.6
Second Revision of Sheet No. 5.7
Second Revision of Sheet No. 5.8
Tenth Revision of Sheet No. 200.1

Also, the Company withdraws the following sheets in their entirety:

Second Revision of Sheet No. 4.3
First Revision of Sheet No. 4.4

The purpose of this filing is to make the following housekeeping changes to it Tariff:

- Second Revision of Sheet No. 3.1 – Rule 3, Establishing Service requires that a residential applicant establish identity and demonstrate creditworthiness prior to becoming a customer. In compliance with the terms in Order No. 19-088 issued in UG 347, the Company agreed to a two-year moratorium (April 1, 2019, through April 1, 2021) on collecting residential deposits, and at that time, the Company removed the language in Rule 3 detailing how a residential applicant was to establish credit. In UG-390, the moratorium was extended until April 1, 2023. Since the moratorium is over and Rule 3 states the need for a residential applicant to establish credit, language is added to clarify that establishing credit will conform to OAR 860-021-0200 if the Company resumes making this a requirement, which it has not as of the date of this filing.

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- Second Revision of Sheet No. 4.1 – Language is added to clarify that the Company will not charge low-income residential customers a deposit in accordance with OAR 860-021-0205(1).
- Second Revision of Sheet No. 4.3 and First Revision of Sheet No. 4.4 - Sheets 4.3 and 4.4 are removed from Rule 4, Customer Deposits and Other Security as all content was deleted from the tariff in CNGC Advice No. O19-03-01.
- First Revision of Sheet No. 5.1 – Language is added to align Rule 5, Discontinuation of Service with OAR 860-021-0305.
- First Revision of Sheet No. 5.3 – References to a 15-day disconnection notice are revised to 20-day per OAR 860-021-0405(3) & (5). Also, language is added to clarify that a 20-day notice may be sent electronically per OAR 860-021-0405(5).
- First Revision of Sheet No. 5.4 – Language is added to allow five-day disconnection notices to be electronically transmitted as allowed in OAR 860-021-0405(8).
- First Revision of Sheet No. 5.5 – In compliance with OAR 860-021-0410(1), language is added to allow a customer to apply for a medical certificate by self-certifying that discontinuation of service would endanger their health.
- Second Revision of Sheet No. 5.6 – Language is revised to clarify the notice requirements for medical certificate applicants (OAR 860-021-0410).
- Second Revision of Sheet No. 5.7 – Reference to 15-day notice is revised to 20-day notice per OAR 860-021-0405(5).
- Second Revision of Sheet No. 5.8 – Revisions are made to note the limitations of charging field visit charges (OAR 860-021-0420) and late payment charges (OAR 860-021-0126) to low-income residential customers. Also, language is added to define a reconnection charge (OAR 860-021-0330).
- Tenth Revision of Sheet No. 200.1 – Sheet 200.1 is revised to remove definitions of the listed charges as the definitions are found in the rule cited next to the charge.

If you have any questions regarding this filing, please contact Jennifer Gross at (509)975-9473.

Sincerely,

/s/ Lori A. Blattner

Lori A. Blattner
Director, Regulatory Affairs
Cascade Natural Gas Corporation
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Attachments

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**RULE 3
ESTABLISHING SERVICE**

REQUIREMENTS FOR ESTABLISHING SERVICES

To establish service with the Company, an applicant must do the following:

1. Provide the Company with: a) the date service is to begin; b) whether the premise has previously received service from the Company; c) the purpose for which the gas is to be used; d) whether the applicant owns or rents the premise; e) the applicable rate schedule; and f) any other information that the Company deems necessary;
2. Establish Identity in accordance with the requirement in Section A below in this Rule; and
3. Establish Credit in accordance with the requirements found in Section B below in this Rule.

By establishing service, a customer agrees to be bound by all the terms and conditions of service as established in the Company Tariff as periodically revised and approved by the Public Utility Commission of Oregon.

A. ESTABLISHING IDENTITY

To establish an account, each applicant, including an applicant for co-customer, is required to provide documentation verifying his/her identity. Cascade may require: a) the name of person responsible; b) name on the account if different; c) birthdate; d) Social Security Number; e) valid Oregon driver’s license; f) service address; g) billing address if different; h) telephone numbers where applicant can be reached; and l) other information as deemed necessary by the Company.

If the applicant does not wish to provide his/her Social Security Number or valid driver’s license, he/she may provide a valid State or Federal picture identification; a combination of a birth certificate and current school or employer picture identification; the name of another person that can verify the applicant’s identity; or other information deemed sufficient by the utility.

Once an account is established, at the customer’s request, Cascade will restrict access of the account by other individuals through the use of a password.

B. ESTABLISHING CREDIT

Residential Customers: A residential customer may be required to establish credit in accordance with OAR 860-021-0200.

(N)
(N)

Non-residential customers: A non-residential customer who cannot meet the requirements put forth below must pay a deposit or provide other security in accordance with the terms and conditions in Rule 4.

(T)

(continued)

RULE 4

CUSTOMER DEPOSITS AND OTHER SECURITY

GENERAL

The Company may require a deposit or other form of security from an applicant or non-residential customer for reasons set forth in Rule 3 and this Rule.

Paying a deposit or providing some other form of security does not excuse a customer from complying with Cascade's tariffs or other regulations on file with the Commission, such as the obligation to pay bills promptly.

RESIDENTIAL DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS

The Company will not charge a deposit to a customer that is verified to be low-income per OAR 860-021-0180.

NONRESIDENTIAL DEPOSIT REQUIREMENTS

1. Deposit Requirement - Nonresidential (Seasonal and Non-Seasonal Service). A deposit may be required equal to one-sixth the estimated annual usage at the service address if an applicant or customer:
 - a. Does not satisfy the credit-screening criteria set forth in Rule 3.
 - b. Owes a bill that is overdue by thirty (30) days or more;
 - c. Was previously exempted from paying a deposit based upon false information given at the time of application;
 - d. Is involved in a bankruptcy action, liquidation, bulk sale or financial reorganization;
 - e. Is adding incremental demand at a premise with an existing service account; or
 - f. The non-residential customer is past due on commitments to creditor such as real estate mortgages or lease agreements, commercial loans, other utility bills and trade accounts.

DEPOSIT PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL SERVICE

1. An applicant for nonresidential service who is required to pay a deposit shall pay the deposit in full prior to receiving service. An applicant for nonresidential service may also fulfill the deposit requirement with an irrevocable letter of credit, surety bond (performance bond) or some other form of guarantee acceptable to the Company.
2. An existing nonresidential customer is considered to be an applicant for purposes of satisfying the deposit requirement. An existing nonresidential customer, if required to pay or supplement a deposit, is required to pay the full amount within 10 days of the date of the notice from the Company that such a deposit is required. This notice will also serve as the notice of disconnection required under OAR 860-021-0505.
3. If service is disconnected for nonpayment of a deposit, the customer disconnected will be required to pay the full amount of the deposit, plus any applicable reconnection fee, disconnect visit charge, late payment fee and past due account balance before service is restored.

(continued)

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**RULE 5
DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

GROUNDS FOR DISCONNECTING GAS SERVICE

Gas service may be disconnected:

- a) When the applicant or customer fails to pay a deposit or make payments in accordance with the terms of a deposit payment arrangement as outlined in Rule 4;
- b) When the applicant or customer provides false identification to establish service, continue service, or verify identity;
- c) When the customer fails to pay Oregon tariff or price-listed charges due for services rendered.
- d) When the customer fails to abide by the terms of a time-payment agreement;
- e) When the customer requests Cascade disconnect service or close an account or when a co-customer fails to reapply for service within 20 calendar days after a joint account is closed by the other co-customer, so long as the Company has provided a notice of pending disconnection; (T)
- f) When the customer does not cooperate in providing access to the meter;
- g) When facilities provided are unsafe or do not comply with state and municipal codes governing service or the utility's rules and regulations;
- h) When there is evidence of meter-tampering, diverting service, or other theft of service;
- i) When dangerous or emergency conditions exist at the service premises under OAR 860-021-0315; (T)
- j) When a customer fails to disclose reasonably accurate customer load information which results in damage to utility equipment; or (N)
(N)
- k) When the Commission approves the disconnection of service. (T)

VOLUNTARY DISCONNECTION

Every customer who is about to vacate any premise supplied with gas service, or who for any reason wishes to have such service discontinued, shall give five days' notice to the Company in advance of specified date of discontinuance of service. Until the Company has such notice, the customer shall be held responsible for all service rendered.

(continued)

**RULE 5
DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

NOTICE OF PENDING DISCONNECTION OF RESIDENTIAL SERVICE (continued)

- a. If the disconnection is for nonpayment of services rendered, including failure to abide by a time payment agreement, the notice must also state:
 - 1. The amount to be paid to avoid disconnection;
 - 2. An explanation of the time payment agreement provisions of OAR 860-021-0415;
 - 3. An explanation of the medical certificate provisions of OAR 860-021-0410; and
 - 4. The name and telephone number of the appropriate unit of the Department of Human Services or other agencies that may be able to provide financial assistance.

At least 20 days before Cascade disconnects a residential customer for nonpayment of services rendered, Cascade will mail or electronically send written notice to the customer. A 20-day notice is not required when involuntary disconnection is for:

(C)
(C)
(T)

- a) Providing false identification to establish service, continue service, or verify identity;
 - b) Meter tampering diverting service, or other theft; or
 - c) The existence of unsafe conditions.
- 4. A notice of disconnection may not be sent prior to the due date for payment of a bill.
 - 5. Cascade may serve the 20-day notice of disconnection in person, electronically, or by first class mail to the last known address of the customer. Service is complete on the date of personal or electronic delivery or the day after notification is postmarked.

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(C)

(continued)

**RULE 5
DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

NOTICE OF PENDING DISCONNECTION OF RESIDENTIAL SERVICE (continued)

- 6. At least five business days before the proposed disconnection date, Cascade must mail, electronically transmit, or deliver a written disconnection notice to the customer. (C)
 - a. The disconnection notice shall inform the person that service will be disconnected on or after a specific date and shall explain the alternatives and assistance that might be available.
 - b. If notification is made by delivery to the residence, Cascade shall attempt personal contact. If personal contact cannot be made with the customer or an adult resident, Cascade shall leave the notice in a conspicuous place at the residence.
- 7. On the day that Cascade expects to disconnect service and prior to disconnection, Cascade will make a good faith effort to personally contact the customer or an adult at the residence scheduled to be disconnected. (C)
 - a. If the contact is made, Cascade shall advise the person of the proposed disconnection;
 - b. If contact is not made, Cascade must leave a notice in a conspicuous place at the residence informing the customer that service has been, or is about to be, disconnected.
- 8. Where personal contact is made by the Company under this rule, and the circumstances are such that a reasonable person would conclude that the customer does not understand the consequences of disconnection, the Company must:
 - a. Notify the Department of Human Services and the Commission; and
 - b. Delay the proposed disconnection date for five additional business days.

(continued)

**RULE 5
DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

NOTICE OF PENDING DISCONNECTION OF RESIDENTIAL SERVICE (continued)

- 9. Where personal contact is made, the representative of the Company making contact shall be empowered to accept reasonable partial payment of the overdue balance in accordance with the time payment provisions.
- 10. Cascade must document its effort to provide notice and shall make the documentation available to the customer and the Commission upon request.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CERTIFICATE FOR RESIDENTIAL SERVICE

- 1. Cascade shall not disconnect residential service if the customer verbally certifies or has a qualified medical professional certify that disconnection would significantly endanger the physical health of the customer or a member of the customer's household. "Qualified medical professional" means a licensed physician, nurse-practitioner, or physician's assistant authorized to diagnose and treat the medical condition described without direct supervision by a physician. (C) (T)
- 2. An oral certification by either the residential customer or the qualified medical professional must be confirmed in writing within 30 days by the qualified medical professional prescribing medical care. Written certification must include: (C) (C)
 - a. The name of the person to whom the certificate applies and relationship to the customer;
 - b. A complete description of the health condition;
 - c. An explanation how the health of the person will be significantly endangered by the termination of service;
 - d. A statement indicating how long the health condition is expected to last;
 - e. A statement specifying the particular type of utility service required (e.g. gas for heating); and
 - f. The signature of the qualified medical professional prescribing medical care.
- 3. An emergency medical certificate shall be valid only for the length of time the health endangerment is certified to exist, but no longer than six months without renewal when the certificate is issued for a non-specific chronic illness or no longer than twelve months without renewal when the certificate is issued for a specific chronic illness. At least 20 days before the certificate's expiration date, Cascade will give the customer written notice of the date the certificate expires unless it is renewed with Cascade before that day arrives. (C)

(continued)

**RULE 5
DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CERTIFICATE FOR RESIDENTIAL SERVICE (continued)

4. A customer submitting a medical certificate is not excused from paying for gas service.
 - a. Customers are required to enter into a written time-payment agreement with Cascade where an overdue balance exists. Terms of the time-payment agreement shall be those set forth in this Rule 5 or other terms as agreed upon in writing between the parties.
 - b. Where financial hardship can be shown, a customer with a medical certificate shall be permitted to renegotiate the terms of a time-payment agreement with Cascade.
 - c. Time-payment arrangements in effect when a medical certificate terminates remain in effect for the balance then owing. If a customer fails to pay charges incurred after the certificate terminates, standard time-payment provisions (Rule 5) will apply to payment of the arrearage incurred after the medical certificate expires. The terms of the medical certificate time-payment plan continue to apply to the arrearage accrued during the disability.

5. If a medical certificate customer fails to enter into a written time-payment agreement within 20 days of filing the certificate or to abide by its terms, Cascade shall notify the Commission’s Consumer Services Section of its intent to disconnect service and the reason for the disconnection. Cascade may disconnect service after providing a notice 20 days in advance of disconnection for nonpayment, or five days before disconnection for failure to enter into a written time-payment agreement. The notice shall comply with the requirements of OAR 860-021-0405, except paragraph (2)(d)(C) shall not apply. A hearing may thereafter be held to determine whether Cascade should be permitted to disconnect service to the customer. (C)

6. Cascade may verify the accuracy of a medical certificate. If Cascade believes a customer does not qualify, or no longer qualifies for a medical certificate, Cascade may apply to the Commission for permission to disconnect the customer’s service. (C)

TIME-PAYMENT AGREEMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL SERVICE (NON-MEDICAL CERTIFICATE CUSTOMERS)

1. Cascade will not disconnect residential service for nonpayment if a customer enters into a written time-payment plan. Cascade will offer customers a choice of payment agreements. At a minimum, the customer may choose between a levelized payment plan and an equal payment arrearages plan.

(continued)

**RULE 5
DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

TIME-PAYMENT AGREEMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL SERVICE (NON-MEDICAL CERTIFICATE CUSTOMERS)
(continued)

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- 2. A customer who selects a levelized-payment plan will pay a down payment equal to the average annual bill including the account balance, divided by twelve, and a like payment each month for eleven months thereafter.
 - a. Cascade shall periodically review the monthly installment plan. If necessary, due to changing rates or variations in the amount of service used by the customer, the installment amount may be adjusted to bring the account into balance within the time period specified in the original agreement.
 - b. If a customer changes service address at any time during the period of a time-payment agreement, provided that payments are then current and the customer pays other tariff charges associated with the change in residence, Cascade shall recalculate the customer's deposit and/or monthly installment. The recalculated amount shall reflect the balance of the account at the previous service address and the average annual bill at the new service address for the months remaining in the original time-payment agreement. When installments on a time-payment agreement have not been kept current, a customer shall be required to pay all past-due installments, together with any other applicable charges before service is provided at the new residence.

- 3. A customer who selects an equal payment arrearages plan will pay a down payment equal to one-twelfth the amount owed for past gas service (including the overdue amount and any amounts owed for a current bill or a bill being prepared but not yet delivered to the customer). Each month, for the next eleven months, an amount equal to the down payment will be added to, and payable with, the current charges due for service. If a customer changes service address at any time during the period of an arrearage payment plan, the plan continues. However, the customer must pay any past-due charges and all other applicable charges before Cascade provides service at the new address.

- 4. Cascade and the customer may agree in writing to an alternate payment arrangement, provided Cascade first informs the customer of the availability of the payment terms set forth in this rule.

- 5. If a customer fails to abide by the time-payment agreement, Cascade may disconnect service after serving 20 days' notice.

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**RULE 5
DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE**

FIELD VISIT CHARGE

A Field Visit Charge as established in Schedule 200 may be charged whenever Cascade is required to visit a residential service address for the purpose of disconnecting or reconnecting service, but due to the customer's action, is unable to complete the reconnect or disconnect. A fee will not be assessed to a low-income residential customer as defined in OAR 860-021-0180 whose service is being reconnected the first time in a calendar year

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LATE PAYMENT CHARGE

A Late-Payment Charge as established in Schedule 200 may be applied to overdue account balances, both residential and nonresidential, at the time of preparing the subsequent month's bill. The Late-Payment Charge may not be applied to time-payment or equal-payment accounts that are current, accounts held by low-income residential customers as defined in OAR 860-021-0180, or accounts that have an overdue balance less than \$200. The Commission will determine the Late-Payment Charge by surveying prevailing market rates for late-payment charges of commercial enterprises. The Commission will notify Cascade by November 15 of each year what rate may be used to determine late-payment charges on overdue customer accounts during the following calendar year. The current late-payment rate and the conditions for its application to customer accounts shall be specified on the gas bill.

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RECONNECTION CHARGE

A reconnection charge may be required for reestablishment of service at the same address for the same person taking service, if service was disconnected at the customer's request or if it was disconnected involuntarily for reasons other than for Company initiated safety or maintenance. A fee will not be assessed to a low-income residential customer as defined in OAR 860-021-0180 whose service is being reconnected the first time in a calendar year

(N)
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(N)

**SCHEDULE 200
VARIOUS MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES**

APPLICABILITY

This schedule sets forth the provisions for various charges throughout these rules and regulations. The name and amount of the charges are listed below. The rules or rate schedules to which each charge applies are in parenthesis.

I. <u>Customer Deposit Interest Rate (Rule 4)</u>	4.5%	
II. <u>Reconnection Charge (Rule 5)</u>		
a. Standard, 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays	\$32.00	
b. After Hours between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m., Monday through Friday	\$50.00	
c. Same Business Day or on a Saturday, Sunday, or holidays	\$100.00	(D)
III. <u>Deposit for Meter Test - (Rule 8)</u>	\$50.00	
IV. <u>Field Visit Charge- (Rule 5)</u>	\$20.00	(D)
V. <u>Late Payment Charge – (Rule 5)</u>	2.2%	(D)
VI. <u>Returned Payment Fee - (Rule 6)</u>	\$25.00	(T)
VI. <u>Modifying an Existing Service Line – (Rule 9)</u>		(D)
a. Time of Construction Crew		
• An Individual Employee	\$70.00 per hour	
• Construction Crew	up to \$220.00 per hour	
b. Cost of Materials required to open and close service connection trench, including asphalt replacement, if any.		