

Total Comments: 38**In Favor: 0****Opposed: 37****Undecided: 1**

Filing Support	Commenter	Source	Comments
No			
	Alesia D Chaney	Mail	***See attached letter for comment***
	David Jorgensen	E-mail	<p>Folks it is completely crazy that our natural gas price we pay has risen on average 7 or 8 percent every year. Now I know some folks with some big bucks seem to think it is great business where just for the asking you get to increase your profits 7 percent or more each year. I have one question for you. What percent raise did you get each year?. So if we have to live with 1 or 2 percent raise then they should also or eventually nobody will be able to afford it.</p> <p>I think the amount increase every year is insane thus I suspect if you follow the money there will be dishonesty found.</p> <p>It does not seem possibly for a business to do this poorly that they need this much extra every year.</p> <p>David Jorgensen 419 S. 595th Ave Yakima WA 98908 Cascade Natural Gas</p> <p>I would approve a max of 2 percent each year. Thanks</p>

Case: 170929

Title: CNG 2017 GRC

PI Coordinator: Andrew Roberts

Staff Lead: Betty Erdahl

Public Comments by Case

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	Gary Hagen	E-mail	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>Natural gas prices have remained effectively flat for the past 12 months (https://www.eia.gov/dnav/ng/hist/rngwhhdd.htm), and Forbes projects that the combination of fracking and horizontal drilling will send gas prices through the floor, https://www.forbes.com/sites/judeclemente/2017/09/24/why-u-s-natural-gas-prices-will-remain-low/#3284e1723783 and gas supplies through the roof, for the forecastable future. So why is a rate hike necessary? Apparently it is not. Not based on cost of natural gas.</p> <p>Best regards, Gary Hagen Cascade customer @ 4314 NW Commons Drive Pasco WA 99301</p>

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	Judy Steele	E-mail	<p>All of the increase examples use talk of a customer using 58 therms per month. I am in a household of two adults only and on my most recent bill, which covers the time period of 9/30/17 to 10/27/17, we used 74 therms. This certainly wasn't the coldest 30 day period of our normal weather cycle! It is our opinion that they are purposely downplaying average service usage so that customers won't realize how much the dollar increase will be. And they are not apparently assuming that many people have a household of 3 to 7 people, whereas my comparisons are on the household of only two people who are not home 24-seven.</p> <p>Therefore I am questioning how much this is really going to cost in the form of increased gas prices. Seems like it's going to be a little bit too much if my thinking is correct.</p> <p>Sent from my iPad Judy Steele. 601 Honeysuckle Dr., Mount Vernon, WA, 98273 360-424-6531</p>

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	Richard and Sheri Bowyer	E-mail	<p>WUTC.....This is a comment on the proposed rate increase by Cascade Nat. Gas Co. for residential services.</p> <p>While their rate increase proposal seems relatively small, it is just another cut in the process of "death by a thousand cuts" for people like my wife and myself. We are seniors, living on fixed incomes, and everything seems to be just getting more and more expensive. The example used in the promotional material of 54 therms a month average is way below our average use. As we age we prefer a warm house in the colder months, and we heat water, cook, and dry clothes with gas, so our "average" is higher---which means higher bills with ANY rate increase. My biggest complaint is however, that this rate increase seems designed to simply keep the rate of return to their shareholders at or about 10%, per their promotional material. Of course if I'm a share holder this is always good, not so much so if I have to pony up yet more money for the same amount of product.</p> <p>I believe that this rate increase, if allowed at all, ought to be lowered. The share holders can settle for a slightly smaller dividend check, perhaps the president of Cascade Natural Gas company can settle for a slightly smaller bonus check (the last time I inquired, I was told that his yearly pay was in the \$450,000/yr range), and fixed-income seniors-like ourselves- won't have to endure yet another "cut" and figure out what else we can reduce spending on, to meet this higher bill.</p> <p>Thank you for "listening", and giving us the opportunity to comment.</p> <p>Richard and Sheri Bowyer, Mount Vernon, Washington</p>

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	Michael Hazel	E-mail	<p>Good morning-</p> <p>With my latest gas bill I received notice of Cascade Natural Gas’s proposed rate increase. I have reservations for a number of reasons that I will list here for your consideration.</p> <p>First, in their notice, CNG states, “The average residential customers... will pay \$2.09 more per month...”. This is clearly a duplicitous attempt to mislead customers and bury their concurrent proposal (captured in their chart) to increase the basic service charge by \$2.00/month. Since CNG did not see fit to address the proposed increase service charge in its communication to customers, then it stands to reason it is not a critical piece of their plan to address any purported budget issue, and this portion of the proposed cost hike - at a minimum - should be rejected.</p> <p>Second, given that wages and and inflation have been stagnant for nearly a decade, it defies logic that CNG’s capital costs have increased substantively in recent years. Any assertion to the contrary should be viewed with skepticism by WUTC.</p> <p>Third, your records will show that the last time CNG proposed and was granted a rate hike, gas and oil prices were substantially higher (oil at ~\$100/barrel) and projected to remain at those levels. However, shortly after implementing that substantial rate increase, oil and gas prices fell through the floor. As a result, the rate increase CNG needed in order to “earn a fair return on its investments” at far higher commodity prices resulted in a MUCH FAIRER return on its investments, and also should have created a significant cushion for investment and maintenance of its infrastructure. Any justification for this current proposed increase should first address how CNG managed its unforeseen windfall.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p> <p>Michael Hazel 509-628-6889</p> <p>Sent from my iPhone</p>

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	Martin H. Spani	E-mail	<p>We STRONGLY object to the proposed rate hike for Cascade Natural Gas for the Residential 503 rate hike. It is 4.26% HIGHER than the Commercial rate proposed. This is totally out of question and will be a burden to every Senior citizen here in Skagit County.</p> <p>Thanks</p>
	Gail Adair	E-mail	<p>I am opposed to the basic service charge rate increase for my commercial building which is a church building in the amount from 10/mo to 15/mo. This represents a whopping 50% increase in their basic service charge!!!. We do NOT have inflation at the rate of 50% and this is an unacceptable rate increase request to say the least.</p> <p>I do not know how on earth the WUTC could justify this rate increase request from Cascade Natural Gas. Please do not accept this rate increase on behalf of all micro businesses struggling in Washington State. Thank you.</p> <p>Sincerely, Gail Adair</p> <p>509-707-3238</p>

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	Tom and Rainbow Goetzl	E-mail	<p>We strongly object to the distribution of rate increases proposed by Cascade Natural Gas. Why should residential rates go up 2,940 times as much as commercial rates? (Percentage change for the former is +4.41%; for the latter it is +0.0015%) And, the rates proposed for Industrial will actually DEcrease by 0.07%!</p> <p>Why is this cost burden shifted to individuals and away from businesses? Businesses can pass their rate increases on to their customers; residential users can not pass them on (To whom? Family members?) When businesses' rates increase, they then have a powerful incentive for those businesses to become more energy efficient. Those that do so best will then enjoy an advantage over those who don't.</p> <p>So too, rather than lower rates for excess use, those rates should increase. That will more effectively motivate industrial users to conserve energy. The same logic applies to Large Volume users, Interruptible Users and Transportation.</p> <p>The goal of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission should be twofold: (1) to distribute necessary increases equitably, and (2) to create incentives for energy efficiencies. This proposal does neither.</p> <p>We would appreciate a response. Thank you.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Tom and Rainbow Goetzl Bellingham</p>

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	Kyle Renninger	E-mail	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am a CNG customer in Bellingham. I am strongly opposed to any profit or revenue increase for CNG and their shareholders on the backs of residential customers.</p> <p>I am also opposed to giving non-residential customers discounts on rates. These companies are also receiving much lower federal tax rates from the government, and therefore do not deserve lower rates. The public has not received tax breaks so we therefore should not have to shoulder this increase.</p> <p>Please do not raise rates on residents. We are struggling to get by as it is. Corporations recently received huge tax breaks, they can afford to help shoulder the cost of this increase as they will be flush with cash.</p> <p>Instead, I would like the UTC to lower rates for residents. CNG shareholders should accept a lower rate of return on their investment.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>-Kyle Renninger Bellingham</p>

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	Linda and Frank White	E-mail	As a senior citizen I am writing to express concern on the large increase that CNG is asking from residential customers. 4.41% is way above the increase that I am seeing for 2017 (about 3%) and double the increase in Social Security for 2018 (2%). We don't qualify for low income assistance but these increases are certainly hard on our budget. Linda and Frank White
	Helen Breedlove	Mail	***SEE ATTACHED LETTER FOR COMMENTS***
	Joyce O'Neal	Mail	***See attached letters for comments received on 2-28-18 and 3-14-18***
	John H and Ida A. VanderMolen	Mail	***SEE ATTACHED LETTER FOR COMMENT***
	Richard Conoboy	E-mail	The gas company is asking for a proposed 2.71% rate hike, which is about \$5.9 million dollars. But the details reveal that 2.71% is the rate hike overall, but it is not distributed equally among different categories of users. Residential rates will be subject to an actual rate increase of 4.41%. Residential users are helping to subsidize commercial and industrial rates, which are much lower. Proposed Rate Increase Residential.... 4.41% Commercial.....0015% Industrial.....-.07% Why are the citizens subsidizing commercial and industrial industries? This only encourages more industrial and commercial growth, which is bad for the environment, while continuing to favor the regressive taxing method in Washington State. Richard Conoboy 164 S. 46th St. Bellingham, WA 98229

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	Victor Keys	E-mail	To whom it may concern, I'm writing to express my concern if CNG's proposed date increase. In light of the massive tax cut they've received how can this be justified. Other utilities in the same business around the country are providing reductions in rates. Respectfully, Victor Keys Sent from my iPhone

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	Jim Drummond	E-mail	<p>WUTC Staff,</p> <p>A brief review of the proposed Rate Increase schedule in the Subject Case begs the following questions:</p> <p>a) The rate increase for Residential users is higher than for Industrial, Large Volume and Interruptible users.</p> <p>b) How does the utility justify these differences in rates? Will they submit financial records in support of the proposed rate increases?</p> <p>I am of the opinion that the proposed rate increases should be equitably applied across all user classes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Yours sincerely</p> <p style="text-align: center;">James D. Drummond</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7121 SW Dunraven Lane, Port Orchard, WA 98367 360 443 6567</p>
	Michael S. Cochrane	In person	Customer spoke at the 4/4/17 public comment hearing in Kennewick.
	Michael Allison	Web	Very disappointed as a retiree the continual rate increases Cascade Natural Gas keeps requesting! Didn't we just have a rate increase not that long ago? I think the company needs to re-evaluate "increased costs associated with the distribution system" or soon others like myself will be changing how they heat their my home & water, as well as cook! Greed!

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	David I Feldberg	Web	<p>This is NOT a 2.71 % increase in gas rates.....It starts off by increasing the basic charge of 4.00 to 6.00 which is a 50% increase and thats all across the board with commercial and Industrial which is higher yet. This is a scam rate increase. 250,000 residential users go from \$4.00 to \$6.00 basic rate each month means \$500.000.00 extra for each and every month for cascade natural gas. In one year their net profit increases to \$6,000,000.00 for residential only and not commercial and industrial. Then they want additional monies for therms per month. They seem to have a licence to rob the public. Do NOT give them this price increase of what they want. This is just plain greed.</p> <p>David Feldberg 4308 Cordero Dr. Bellingham, Wa. 98229</p>
	Joseph Ackerson	Web	<p>I understand the need to adjust natural gas rates with the rising (or falling) of the price of the commodity, however, I oppose the increase in the basic service charge for several reasons. First, because all households pay it, regardless of use, it has a disproportionate impact on those with low incomes. Second, it does not incentivize conservation. If Cascade Natural Gas needs to raise the price of gas to pay for the rising price of the commodity, they should simply raise the price of gas per therm and/or unit of measure. This allows those who need to decrease their bill for economic reasons to lower their gas usage and gives them some control over their utility bills. It also provides an incentive to users to use less of a non-renewable natural resource. Increasing the basic charge is like charging each person a set amount upon entering a grocery store and then charging them differing amounts based on their purchases at checkout. I urge the commission to not increase the basic service charge. Thank-you for taking my comments into consideration.</p>
	Robert Tourtelot	Web	<p>I object strongly to the proposal to raise Residential rates 2940 times the rate increase for Comercial users and give a rate decrease to Industrial users. This is simply wrong at many different levels. Commercial and Industrial users can pass their costs on to customer, like me. Then i can make a choice if I want to support those activities with my dollars. I can see no rational argument for this structure of rate increase that has any relevance to climate change, energy conservation, or other ares of social concern. No to the residential rate increase</p>

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	Karen McCraw	Web	No more price hikes for awhile please.
	Suzanne Huggins	Web	(written by CP staff, KM) I'm on a fixed income, and every dollar that goes up for me I just can't do it anymore. Everything is increasing, and my income is not. It may not seem like a lot of increase but when you only have Social Security to live on its just not enough.
	Harold Thornbrough	Web	Rate increases hurt those who are on fixed incomes, lower waged jobs, seniors on Social Security, & families with multiple children who are already struggling with higher housing costs & state taxes as well as the cost of food. These folks do not see a raise in income to help with the cost of living. The operating costs of Corporations who already are making huge profits should not be passed on to the consumer when it comes to necessities like utilities.
	Donna R. Larson	Web	Not for increase. Everything is going up except people's income. Customer fee plus increase is more than the \$2 average in example.
	Lloyd E Wilson	Web	I am a senior living in a senior complex on a fixed income. Increase utilities rates are hard for me to pay because my SS check does not go up. I don't get a raise, therefore I have to rob from paying one bill to pay another. Why can you raise your rates, but my SS check does not go up. I am not in favor of increase. Taken over the phone. MMS 2/27/18

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	Joye Christen	Web	3/7/2018 12:50 p.m. Elizabeth Eskridge Commission staff in Consumer Protection writing comments for Joye Christen as the customer does not have a computer and is not in favor of Cascade Natural Gas Rate proposal of 5.9 million dollar increase in Natural Gas rates comments the following: 86 year old and lives on fixed income, social security is decreasing as Medicare is increasing and the cost of living is going up. How much more is a senior expected pay for an increase by the company to the tune of \$2.09 per month when her income is fixed and does not increase and is unable to work to increase to increase income.
	Tom	Web	The rates keep rising for residential customers, and barely changing for commercial customers. 1. that's unfair, 2. it hardly helps conservation. commercial customers are n a better position to implement real measures to save energy. Let them pass on the costs to deal with the market place.
	Mary Easley	Web	We are on a fixed income. Please do not allow these companies to continue raising rates.
	Theo Louis Jansen	Web	The price of natural gas has dropped and continues to decline. Their infrastructure is in place to deliver the gas without any issues. They are only interested in additional profits and higher payback for their investors. They are doing fine now. They don't need more of my fixed income retirement money.
	David Alwood	Web	I believe NG prices to distributors have fallen, increasing CNG profits, making utility increase to end users unnecessary.
	Greg Lacrosse	Web	Phone comment (SC) I don't think the company needs to increase the rates quite so much when it can save probably thousands of dollars every bill cycle by not putting in all the informational flyers with bills. I typically receive anywhere to 2 - 4 pieces of additional information typically printed on heavy bond paper. This waste lots of money and trees.

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	Arleyn Earl	Web	We have too much natural gas, we export it around the world, exports are increasing. My gas lines were installed 1950s and are more than paid for. Well with natural gas are capped waiting for the prices to rise. To raise my costs 6.9 % are not called for. I would expect a rate decrease as a long time single house user, that used gas when the price out of the ground was much more than today. Thanks for hearing me. A. Earl
	Jeffrey D. Ruff	Web	I am opposed to the basic service charge increase. A 50% basic service charges increase is not necessary. I however am not concerned about the increase to the delivery charge. Taken over the phone on 2/15/18, by MS.
	Shelley Altenhofen	Web	The proposed rate changes for residential, commercial, and industrial customers are way too high (Skagit County, Washington) and justification for this need has not been demonstrated.
	Stephanie Meehan	Web	I am strongly against increase. Recommended increase is 4.41% for residential but reducing rates for businesses. They are sticking it to the working class.

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	Commander Neil R. Wollam, USN (Ret.)	E-mail	<p>Having carefully reviewed the Mailed Notice of Proposed Rate Increase I have Residential comments as follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They have shown the Rate Change of 4.41% (which seems excessive) without some amplification on Capital Investments and Operating/Maintaining. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why not tell us what their 10 largest NEEDED Capital Investments are? 2. By not mentioning Service Charge, although shown, they are trying to pass a 50% Service Charge Increase in addition to the Rate Increase, so the average residential customer won't be paying \$2.09 more per month but \$4.09 more. 3. Operating/Maintaining-Who is paying for the "FREE" fiberglass Pipeline Marker post near our mailbox and new protective solid post near my gas meter, both of which have been installed in last year? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since 1979 our property did quite well without both, but I understand why they were installed. <p>Commander Neil R. Wollam, USN (Ret.) Port Orchard</p>