

**Total Comments: 6**

**In Favor: 0**

**Opposed: 6**

**Undecided: 0**

Filing Support	Commenter	Source	Comments
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Case: 160229

Title: Avista Gas GRC

PI Coordinator: Roberts, Andrew

Staff Lead: Joanna Huang

## Public Comments by Case

No			
	Steve Purcell	E-mail	<p>Avista,</p> <p>I just heard on my local news broadcast that Avista is asking for a natural gas rate increase for Washington State. I actually thought it had to be a mistake made by the news program. It wasn't a mistake.</p> <p>I pasted a chart of historical natural gas prices below this message. Natural gas averaged \$5.18 per Mmbtu in February 2014. It averaged \$2.76 per Mmbtu in February 2015. This month it is averaging \$1.98 per Mmbtu. How does something that has dropped over 60% qualify for a rate increase?</p> <p>Mr. Kouchi,</p> <p>Thank you for the response. Avista still hasn't responded. I deal with regulatory stuff sometimes in my job and am always amazed at how complicated it can be.</p> <p>One thing that stood out in your response is that the Purchased Gas Adjustment is done just once a year. I suspect this encourages Avista to hedge natural gas at least a year out. They report financial results quarterly. They have to come up with a natural gas cost at least 4 times a year. Could the Purchased Gas Adjustment be done quarterly? If they only had to hedge out 3 months, wouldn't it reduce their risk of getting too far on the wrong side of a hedge? Other companies with high natural gas costs tend to forecast energy costs for just the next quarter. The stock market punishes their share price if they miss this forecast by too much. This encourages these companies to hedge, but just out 3 months. I suspect Avista would face the same stock market scrutiny. Lowering the length of time for the Purchased Gas Agreement below 3 months probably wouldn't reduce how far out Avista would want to hedge.</p> <p>Avista must be pretty good at what they do. This week they announced a \$38,500,000 profit for the 4th quarter and a \$132,200,000 profit for full year 2015. I am a confirmed capitalist and believe businesses have to be profitable. I don't have a problem with a business being successful.</p> <p>When dealing with monopolies, the regulatory side of things becomes very tricky. It looks like your commission staff does a very good job accomplishing this difficult task. Your detailed response to my inquiry proves to me that the UTC cares about Washington State consumers. Thanks again for helping me understand this stuff.</p> <p>Steve Purcell</p>

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	Jeff Marshall	Web	With natural gas prices at generational lows, asking for a rate increase seems insulting. I suspect the need for cash has more to do with poor money management and less to do with wind damage. I hope they, like the rest of us, are forced to make do with less income. Turn them down for now. Thanks, Jeff Marshall
	Linda Snider	Web	I understand there will be natural gas rate hikes to take effect that have previously been approved. Because the market has tanked and natural gas rates are at an all time low, any chance we can get a rate cut instead of a rate hike?   thank you.
	Darlene White	Mail	<<customer letter saved as attachment under Notes tab>>  Ms is on a fixed income, cannot afford an increase. Thinks it is a "scam" because she switched to a gas furnace and the company has continued to increase gas rates ever since.
	Rebecca Madany	Web	I am not in favor of Avista Utilities raising rates. Even though they experienced higher costs due to storm damage, they are making so much more money due to the lower cost of natural gas, it should more than cover the storm damage. They also pay their chief executives enormously high salaries compared to Spokane utility public employees.
	Charmaine Gural	Web	I am tired of Avista trying to raise the base rate charge for gas. When I first starting using their natural gas service, there was no charge, and now the charge is up to \$8, regardless of my usage. In the summer I use a negligible amount of gas, yet am charged the base rate of \$8. I do understand that the price of gas fluctuates, but I see that in my gas rates, not the base rate. I also understand that the company needs to maintain its lines, etc, but it seems like they file for a base rate increase often. I have a relative working for this company, and he receives substantial bonuses, as do the other members of his team. While I appreciate their hard work, it makes it hard for me to understand why I should pay more for infrastructure while the company is paying large bonuses to employees.