



STATE OF WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

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July 9, 2021

Mark L. Johnson
Executive Director and Secretary
Utilities and Transportation Commission
P.O. Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

Re: Cascade Natural Gas Customer Service Quality report
Docket UG-061721

Dear Mr. Johnson:

On March 17, 2021, Cascade Natural Gas (CNG or Cascade) submitted its annual customer service quality report for the 12-month period ending December 31, 2020.

Final Order 06 in docket UG-061721 established CNG's customer service reporting program. The program was part of the settlement agreement reached during the MDU Resources merger. Order 06 requires CNG to report certain metrics annually. Order 06 and the settlement agreement did not set performance targets.

Consumer Complaints

Cascade is to report the number of complaints it receives from consumers as well as complaints it receives from the commission. The number of complaints Cascade received from customers decreased in 2020. CNG indicated that the decline is likely due to disconnections for non-payment being suspended in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Number of complaints	2017	2018	2019	2020
Received by Cascade	269	267	323	175
Filed with the Commission	7	8	3	7

Natural Gas Emergency Response Time

The average time from a customer call to the arrival of field technicians in response to a natural gas emergency was 31 minutes and 13 seconds, which is a significant reduction from the 43 minutes and 8 seconds reported for 2019.

Service Appointments

Cascade reports zero missed service appointments for 2020.

Disconnections for Non-payment

The percent of customers disconnected for non-payment was 0.14 percent for residential customers, and 0.11 percent for commercial customers. The percent of customers disconnected for non-payment is significantly lower in this report than prior reports. The decline is likely due to the moratorium on disconnections for non-payment that was issued in Governor Proclamation 20-23 on March 24, 2020.

Calls Answered by Live Representative

Cascade also reports the percent of calls answered by a live representative within specific time frames. The percent of calls answered in 40, 50, and 60 seconds is lower than prior results. CNG noted that its call volume was up approximately nine percent. Staff believe that it is likely the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on these results. Nevertheless, the decline is a concern and Staff will continue to monitor in future reports.

Percent of calls answered by a live representative					
Time	2016 Percent	2017 Percent	2018 Percent	2019 Percent	2020 Percent
60 Seconds	86.63	89.9	75.34	78.98	63.89
50 Seconds	85.29	88.78	74.02	77.54	62.51
40 Seconds	83.71	87.4	72.61	75.97	61.07
Total Calls	276,725	274,452	295,602	236,334	257,335

Mark L. Johnson
July 9, 2021
Page 3

Conclusion

Commission staff reviewed the compliance filing and believe CNG is in compliance with the customer service quality program as adopted in Order 06 in docket UG-061721. Staff will continue to monitor Cascade's customer service quality reports, including call center performance.

Sincerely,

Andrew Roberts
Regulatory Analyst, Consumer Protection