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May 17, 2001

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS AND ELECTRONIC MAIL

Carole J. Washburn, Executive Secretary  
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
1300 S Evergreen Park Drive SW  
PO Box 47250  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

Re: NWIGU Comments in Docket No. UG-990294

Dear Ms. Washburn:

The Northwest Industrial Gas Users ("NWIGU") respectfully submit these initial comments on the rulemaking in Docket No. UG-990294. On March 14, 2001, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission ("WUTC" or "Commission") repealed current sections, and adopted new sections, in WAC Chapter 480-90 with the exception of WAC § 480-90-056 ("Refusal of Service") and WAC § 480-90-116 ("Responsibility for Delinquent Accounts"). The Commission also directed the Secretary to file a Supplemental Notice of Inquiry ("CR-102") to the Code Reviser in order to review WAC § 480-90-056 and to address issues related to the proposed WAC § 480-90-123 ("Refusal of Service"). The Commission has invited the filing of initial comments by May 18, 2001.

NWIGU is a nonprofit association comprised of thirty-one industrial users of natural gas with major facilities in the states of Washington, Oregon and Idaho. Some NWIGU members own gas facilities that directly connect their plants to the interstate pipeline. Many of our members take service from local distribution companies ("LDCs") in Washington. Therefore, NWIGU has a direct and substantial interest in these proceedings.

NWIGU recommends the Commission extend the applicability of WAC § 480-90-123(3) beyond residential applicants or customers. Utilities should not be allowed to refuse service to any applicants or customers because of outstanding debts from a prior customer located on the same premises. Limiting WAC § 480-90-123(3) to residential applicants or customers creates an inequitable obligation on all other customers.

Please forward any additional information regarding this docket to:

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NWIGU looks forward to continuing to play an active role in the WUTC's deliberations in this rulemaking and working with WUTC staff and other parties to provide constructive assistance in addressing this topic.

Respectfully Submitted,

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