



For Immediate Release

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South Eastern Indiana Natural Gas rate case: Consumer comments invited

If you would like to comment on South Eastern Indiana Natural Gas Company's proposed rate increase, here's your chance.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC), the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), is reviewing the utility's request and is scheduled to file testimony on March 28, 2018.

Along with its legal and technical review, the OUCC is inviting written consumer comments through March 21, 2018.

In testimony and exhibits, the utility states that it is seeking new rates due to increased operating and maintenance costs.

Current rates for South Eastern Indiana Natural Gas Company – a privately owned utility providing service in Ripley and Dearborn counties – received IURC approval in 2012. The utility's pending request would raise its flat, monthly customer charge from \$11.00 to \$13.00 for residential customers and from \$11.00 to \$24.00 for small commercial customers. The impact on specific bills will vary by usage, with the utility requesting an overall rate increase of 17.8 percent.

The proposed increase in this case would only apply to the utility's base distribution rates, which currently comprise approximately 65 percent of a typical residential natural gas customer's monthly heating bill. Base distribution rates cover "non-gas" expenses such as capital improvements and the costs of operations and maintenance. Wholesale natural gas supply costs, which currently make up 35 percent of a customer's bill, are recovered on a dollar-for-dollar basis through the state's gas cost adjustment (GCA) process. South Eastern Indiana Natural Gas files its GCA requests, which require OUCC review and IURC approval, every three months. The pending rate case will not affect the GCA process.

Consumers who wish to submit written comments for the case record may do so via the OUCC's Website at www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm, or by mail, email or fax:

- Mail: Consumer Services Staff
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 South
Indianapolis, IN 46204
- email: uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov
- Fax: (317) 232-5923

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments no later than March 21, 2018 so that it can: 1) Consider them in preparing its testimony and 2) File them with the Commission to be included in the case's formal evidentiary record.

Comments should include the consumer's **name**, **mailing address**, and a reference to "**IURC Cause No. 45027**." Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

An IURC evidentiary hearing is scheduled to start on June 7, 2018 at the PNC Center (101 W. Washington St.) in Indianapolis. While evidentiary hearings are open to the public, participation is typically limited to attorney and Commission questioning of technical witnesses. A final decision in the case is expected later this year.

Updates on this case are being posted on the OUCC's website at www.in.gov/oucc/2689.htm.

(IURC Cause No. 45027)

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) represents Indiana consumer interests before state and federal bodies that regulate utilities. As a state agency, the OUCC's mission is to represent all Indiana consumers to ensure quality, reliable utility services at the most reasonable prices possible through dedicated advocacy, consumer education, and creative problem solving. Visit us at www.IN.gov/OUCC, www.twitter.com/IndianaOUCC, or www.facebook.com/IndianaOUCC. Sign up for our monthly newsletter at www.IN.gov/OUCC/2356.htm.