



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Switzerland County Natural Gas Co. rate case: Consumer comments invited**

If you would like to comment on Switzerland County Natural Gas Company's requested rate increase, here's your opportunity.

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 November 2, 2018.

Along with its legal and technical review, the OUCC is inviting written consumer comments through October 26, 2018.

Switzerland County Natural Gas Co. is a privately owned utility providing service to about 680 customers in Switzerland and Jefferson Counties. Its pending request would raise its annual non-gas-cost operating revenues by approximately \$83,700. The impact on a customer's bill would vary based on usage; however, the utility's request would increase the flat, monthly residential customer charge from \$10.86 to \$13.00.

The utility's current base rates were approved in 2013. According to its testimony, Switzerland County Natural Gas is seeking the increase due to higher operating and maintenance costs.

The proposed increase in this case would only apply to the utility's base distribution rate, which comprises 50 to 55 percent of a typical Switzerland County Natural Gas residential customer's monthly heating bill. Base distribution rates cover "non-gas" costs such as operating and maintenance expenses, and capital infrastructure improvements. The rest of a typical monthly heating bill pays for the natural gas itself, which the utility recovers on a dollar-for-dollar basis subject to OUCC review and IURC approval every six months.

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](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm), by email at [uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov](mailto:uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov), or by mail at:

Consumer Services Staff  
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor  
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 South  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments no later than October 26, 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.

**(Continued)**

Comments should include the consumer's **name, mailing address**, and a reference to **"IURC Cause No. 45117."** Please do not include account numbers and other sensitive information. 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 for December 21, 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 in 2019.

Updates on this case are being posted on the OUCC's website at [www.in.gov/oucc/2622.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2622.htm). The OUCC is also including case updates in its monthly electronic newsletter; consumers can subscribe by emailing [uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov](mailto:uccinfo@oucc.IN.gov).

(IURC Cause No. 45117)

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.

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