

SIXTH FLOOR, 900 HOWE STREET, BOX 250
VANCOUVER, B.C. V6Z 2N3 CANADA
web site: <http://www.bcuc.com>



**BRITISH COLUMBIA
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**ORDER
NUMBER** G-53-04

TELEPHONE: (604) 660-4700
BC TOLL FREE: 1-800-663-1385
FACSIMILE: (604) 660-1102

**IN THE MATTER OF
the Utilities Commission Act, R.S.B.C. 1996, Chapter 473**

and

**FortisBC Inc.
(formerly known as Aquila Networks Canada (British Columbia) Ltd.)
An Application to Replace Residential Rate Discount**

BEFORE: L.F. Kelsey, Commissioner)
K.L. Hall, Commissioner) June 7, 2004

O R D E R

WHEREAS:

- A. On May 21, 2004, Aquila Networks Canada (British Columbia) Ltd. ("Aquila") applied to the Commission for approval to amend its Electric Tariff, Terms and Conditions of Service, to replace the 10 percent discount given to residential customers for prompt payment with a 1.5 percent late payment charge; and
- B. On June 1, 2004 Aquila changed its name to FortisBC Inc. ("FortisBC"); and
- C. FortisBC states that the proposed rate will be compliant with all applicable laws and more consistent with its other rate categories and sound public utility practice; and
- D. Recent judicial decisions suggest that the appropriateness of certain late payment arrangements may be challenged; and
- E. The impact of the change is revenue-neutral and the use of a 1.5 percent late payment charge on overdue accounts is a standard practice of other utilities under Commission jurisdiction; and
- F. The Commission requires that a regulatory process to deal with the Application be established.

NOW THEREFORE the Commission orders as follows:

1. A written public hearing process will be undertaken to review the FortisBC Application.

Regulatory Timetable

Registration as an Intervenor	June 18, 2004
Information Requests to FortisBC	June 30, 2004
Information Responses by FortisBC	July 9, 2004
Intervenor Written Submissions	July 23, 2004
FortisBC Written Reply	July 30, 2004

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2. FortisBC is to publish, as soon as possible, in display-ad format, the Notice of Written Hearing, attached as Appendix A to the Order, in such appropriate local news publications in the service area so as to properly provide adequate notice to customers.
3. The Application and supporting material will be made available for inspection at public libraries in Castlegar, Creston, Grand Forks, Kelowna, Oliver, Penticton and Trail, at the Head Office of FortisBC at 1290 Esplanade, Trail, B.C. V1R 4L4 and at the British Columbia Utilities Commission, Sixth Floor, 900 Howe Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2N3.
4. Intervenors and Interested Parties should inform the Commission and FortisBC, in writing, by June 18, 2004 of their intention to intervene and/or participate actively in the public process.

DATED at the City of Vancouver, in the Province of British Columbia, this 7th day of June 2004.

BY ORDER

Original signed by:

L.F. Kelsey
Commissioner

Attachment



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FORTISBC INC.
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS AQUILA NETWORKS CANADA (BRITISH COLUMBIA) LTD.)
Application for Approval to Replace Residential Rate Discount

NOTICE OF WRITTEN HEARING

THE APPLICATION

On May 21, 2004, Aquila Networks Canada (British Columbia) Ltd. ("Aquila") applied to the Commission for approval to amend its Electric Tariff, Residential Rate Schedules, to replace the 10 percent discount given to residential customers for prompt payment with a 1.5 percent late payment charge. On June 1, 2004 Aquila changed its name to FortisBC Inc. The current bi-monthly customer charge of \$21.19, before the 10 percent discount, would be reduced to \$19.35 and the current energy rate of 6.659 cents per kW.h would be reduced to 6.08 cents per kW.h. Both of these charges are proposed to be subject to a late payment charge of 1.5 percent each month if the bill is not paid by the stated due date.

THE REGULATORY PROCESS

The Commission has established a regulatory process with the following timetable:

Registration as an Intervenor	June 18, 2004
Information Requests to FortisBC	June 30, 2004
Information Responses by FortisBC	July 9, 2004
Intervenor Written Submissions	July 23, 2004
FortisBC Written Reply	July 30, 2004

PUBLIC INSPECTION OF THE APPLICATION

The Application and supporting material will be made available for inspection at public Libraries in Castlegar, Creston, Grand Forks, Kelowna, Oliver, Penticton and Trail, at the Head Office of FortisBC at 1290 Esplanade, Trail, B.C. V1R 4L4 and at the British Columbia Utilities Commission, Sixth Floor, 900 Howe Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2N3

REGISTERING TO PARTICIPATE

Persons who are interested in the Application and who intend to participate in the public review process should register as an intervenor with the Commission, in writing, by June 18, 2004 and outline the nature of their interest. Intervenor will receive copies of the Application, all correspondence and filed documentation.

Persons not expecting to actively participate in the process, but who have an interest in the Application must register by June 18, 2004. Interested parties will receive a copy of the Application, on request, and will receive copies of all Orders issued.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like to participate but are uncertain how to proceed, please contact Mr. Robert J. Pellatt, Commission Secretary or Mr. Barry McKinlay, Manager, Rates and Finance, as follows:

Telephone: (604) 660-4700
Facsimile: (604) 660-1102

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E-mail: commission.secretary@bcuc.com