



October 6, 2022

Sent via email

Letter L-39-22

Re: FortisBC Energy Inc. – Complaint filed by A.R. – British Columbia Utilities Commission Decision

Dear [REDACTED],

The British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) writes regarding your complaint, submitted on March 3, 2022, concerning the accuracy of FortisBC Energy Inc. (FEI)'s meter readings on your gas account. You stated within your complaint that the meter housing had condensation within the glass making a reading "impossible". Further, you alleged that your billing was also impacted with increased consumption due to the condensation build up on your meter causing FEI to misinterpret your consumption amount (Complaint).

When the BCUC reviews complaints, it uses the criteria of whether the utility reasonably responded to the customer's concern(s) and whether the utility followed its approved Tariff and the *Utilities Commission Act* (UCA). As an administrative tribunal, the BCUC follows its own process for a number of procedures, including complaints. The BCUC is not a mediator of disputes; rather, it is an independent regulatory agency of the Provincial Government that operates under and administers the UCA.

Based on our review of your Complaint and related correspondence provided in this matter, the BCUC are satisfied that FEI have reasonably responded to your concerns and acted in accordance with the Tariff and the UCA.

Review Process

In reviewing FEI's responses, under the BCUC Customer Complaints Guide¹, the BCUC has, amongst other things, referred to FEI's approved Tariff which contains the terms and conditions of service between FEI and its customers to ensure FEI's actions were in accordance with the approved Tariff.

The current version of FEI's Tariff was approved by Order G-135-18, which came into effect January 1, 2018. FEI's Tariff is set through a formal BCUC proceeding. In the Tariff, rates for each class or type of customer (residential, commercial, industrial) and terms and conditions are designed through a public consultation process to cover the cost of supplying customers in that class.

¹ [BCUC Customer Complaints Guide](#)

Complaint

A.R.'s position

On March 3, 2022, the BCUC received your email stating your concerns about FEI. Within your complaint you allege that your invoices were unreasonably high due to the meter readings being inaccurate. You submitted the reason for this was the meter housing would fill full of water when it rained making the numbers showing your consumption "impossible" to read.

Between March 9 to July 11, 2022, you submitted numerous correspondence regarding your Complaint. Within your correspondence you state your request to have the meter registering your gas consumption be exchanged. Further stating your concern that the glass section of the meter would fill up with water "every time it rained" and the impact this may have on the meter's ability to provide accurate readings.

Further in your Complaint you stated that, in its correspondence to you, Measurement Canada stated, "[a]fter reviewing the test results of meter [REDACTED], which was tested on a Measurement Canada Certified prover, the dispute was founded. The meter had an error that was under registering (not showing all the gas that passed through the meter)."

FEI's position

FEI responded to your Complaint by stating it had spoken with you regarding your concerns and that the meter in question had been submitted to Measurement Canada for assessment and a new meter had been put in place. Subsequently, FEI stated that after Measurement Canada's inspection of the meter, it was confirmed that the billed consumption was accurate to the Meter's reported measurement. However, Measurement Canada's report confirmed the meter was "under registering consumption".

Further, FEI stated that your bills would not be impacted by the outcome of Measurement Canada's report, and it placed a hold on any late payment fees to previously billed amounts until the Complaint outcome was determined.

Determination

With regard to the meter accuracy at your property, the BCUC notes FEI replaced the meter at your premises with a new unit. The removed meter was sent to Measurement Canada to test it for accuracy. The testing results found that that meter was not recording all the consumption flowing through it. As such, the consumption you were billed for would have been less than your actual consumption. No further action is required by FEI.

With regard to your request to have your meter replaced, the BCUC notes that this action has been completed.

The BCUC finds that FEI's actions have been consistent with its duties and responsibilities as set out in its Tariff and the UCA.

Accordingly, your file is now closed.

Office of the Ombudsperson

If you have concerns about how the BCUC handled your complaint, you may wish to contact the Office of the Ombudsperson. The Office of the Ombudsperson receives enquiries and complaints about the practices and services of public agencies within its jurisdiction. Their role is to impartially investigate complaints to determine whether public agencies have acted fairly and reasonably, and whether their actions and decisions were consistent with relevant legislation, policies and procedures.

If you decide to file a complaint with the Ombudsperson, they will review the BCUC's process to ensure it was fair. Though this may not result in a different outcome for you, the office could request that the BCUC reopen its investigation.

Provided is a link to the Office of the Ombudsperson's website: <https://www.bcombudsperson.ca>.

You can also call their office toll-free at: 1-800-567-3247. An employee at the office will be able to assist you and inform you of your options.

Thank you again for contacting the BCUC.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

Sara Hardgrave
Acting Commission Secretary

DD/db
Enclosure

cc: FortisBC Energy Inc.