



Information Sheet for Cascade Natural Gas General Rate Case Docket UG-210755

Prepared by Public Counsel Unit, Attorney General's Office
800 Fifth Avenue • Suite 2000 • TB-14 • Seattle, WA 98104
utility@atg.wa.gov • www.atg.wa.gov

Q: How much was Cascade's rate request?

On September 30, 2021, Cascade Natural Gas filed a request with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) to increase base rates for natural gas service. The Company proposed a rate increase totaling \$13.7 (5.12 percent). This request includes a rate of return of 6.93 percent and 9.40 percent return on shareholder equity. Cascade has not requested to increase the monthly basic charge. The proposed rate, if approved, would increase residential rates by 5.34 percent. As a result, the average residential customer using 54 therms per month would pay \$2.89 more per month under Cascade's request.

Q: What would the requested rate increase pay for?

The main drivers for the request are to pay for capital investment in Cascade's natural gas distribution system, as well as increased wages for Cascade's employees.

Q: Who are the parties in this case?

The UTC considers the recommendations of every party, and no party's recommendation is considered binding. The following parties are participating in this proceeding:

- Cascade Natural Gas
- UTC Staff*
- Washington Attorney General's Office, Public Counsel Unit (residential and small business customer advocate)
- The Energy Project (low-income customer advocate)
- Alliance of Western Energy Consumers (large industrial customer advocate)

*In formal UTC proceedings, regulatory Staff participates like any other party and UTC Commissioners make the decision. The Commissioners, the presiding administrative law judge, and the Commissioners' policy and accounting advisors do not discuss the merits of the proceeding with any party, including UTC Staff, without giving notice and an opportunity for all parties to participate.

Q: Has a settlement been proposed for this case?

Yes. Cascade and UTC Staff have reached a settlement to resolve all issues in this case. The settling parties filed the proposed settlement with the UTC on March 22, 2022. The Alliance of Western Energy Consumers, The Energy Project, and Public Counsel oppose the settlement. The settling parties have agreed to an overall increase of \$10.7 million.

Q: If the UTC approves the settlement, what impact would it have on residential customers using 54 therms per month?

Under current rates, an average residential customer using 54 therms per month has a monthly bill of \$54.08. Under the proposed settlement agreement, that customer's bill would increase by \$2.25.

Q: What is Public Counsel's position on the settlement?

Public Counsel opposes the settlement because the proposed increase remains too high and is not in the public interest. Public Counsel's analysis shows that Cascade only has a \$2.6 million shortfall, and the settlement provides a rate increase that is over \$8 million more than Cascade requires to cover its costs. Because the settlement provides Cascade with excessive rates, Public Counsel recommends that the UTC reject the settlement.





Q: When will there be a decision?

The UTC must approve the settlement for it to take effect. The UTC will decide whether it approves, approves with modifications, or rejects the settlement. The UTC will hold a hearing on the proposed settlement on June 1-2, 2022 and will issue its decision in time for the new rates to go into effect no later than September 1, 2022.

Q. How can customers comment to the UTC about this case?

The UTC is holding a virtual public hearing to take comments on May 25, 2022, at 6 p.m. You can participate via the zoom link below or by phone.

Zoom: <https://utc-wa-gov.zoom.us>; Meeting ID: 929 6591 0126; Password: 860071

Phone: (253) 215-8782; Meeting ID: 929 6591 0126; Password: 860071

The public can additionally submit comments in the following ways:

- Via UTC web form at: utc.wa.gov/consumers/ (click on "Submit a Comment" link at the bottom of the web page)
- By e-mail at: comments@utc.wa.gov
- By mail at: **UTC, P.O. Box 47250, Olympia, WA 98504-7250**
- By phone: **1-888-333-WUTC (9882)**

Please include your name and mailing address, the name of the company, and the related Docket Number (UG-210755). For more information, see <http://www.utc.wa.gov/>, or call 1-800-562-6150.

Q. Who is Public Counsel?

The Public Counsel Unit of the Washington Attorney General's Office represents residential and small business customers of state-regulated electric, natural gas, water, telecommunications, and transportation companies. Public Counsel advocates on behalf of customers before the UTC and courts regarding utility rates, mergers, business practices, service quality, energy efficiency, and policy matters. You can contact Public Counsel by email at: utility@atg.wa.gov, or by mail at: Attorney General's Office, Public Counsel Unit, 800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000, Seattle, WA 98104.