**SECTION VII**

**PART 12 - CUSTOMER BILLING AND PAYMENTS**

A Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental Aggregator which elects the Company’s consolidated billing options 12.3(a) and/or 12.3(b) will provide the Company with the details of any new rate design at least forty-five (45) days prior to the date the first bill must be rendered using this rate design. Subsequent to the receipt of such rate design the Company will indicate to the Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental Aggregator if additional time is required to accommodate such rate design. The Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental

Aggregator will notify the Company of its rate(s) each month, by the 20th of each month, or first business day

prior to the 20th if the 20th is weekend day or legal holiday, prior to the billing cycle during which the rate is to

be effective. The Company shall use the last rate provided under such option if the Retail Natural Gas Supplier

or Governmental Aggregator does not provide necessary rate information by the timeline set out herein. All rate information received by the Company from the Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental Aggregator is confidential. Company shall provide the Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental Aggregator an electronic pre-bill for each rate change or addition prior to the commencement of the Company’s Cycle 21 billings.

The Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental Aggregator which elects the Rate Ready billing option is responsible for making the customer whole if it submits an account on the wrong rate or Aggregation Pool,

or fails to provide timely rate information to the Company. The Company may, at its option, make the

adjustment for the Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental Aggregator, at an agreed-upon fee.

* 1. Consolidated Billing Taxes

Retail Natural Gas Suppliers’ or Governmental Aggregators’ rates shall exclude all sales taxes. The

Company will calculate state and local taxes and add the amount to the gas supply charges.

If the Customer claims to be tax exempt, the Customer has the sole and complete responsibility for the

provision to Retail Natural Gas Supplier or Governmental Aggregator of all necessary documentation

regarding the Customer’s tax-exempt status. The Company assumes no responsibility or risk for any

misapplication of tax-exempt status to any Customer. The Retail Natural Gas Supplier, Governmental

Aggregator or Customer shall hold Company harmless for any assessments, interest, penalties, or risk of

any kind whatsoever, related to any misapplication of tax-exempt status to any Customer.

* 1. Budget Payment Plan

The Company will make its Budget Payment Plan available to customers that elect to participate in Columbia’s Customer CHOICESM Program. For the purposes of this rule, full payment of a budget amount due shall not be construed as a partial payment.

For consolidated billing purposes, Budget Payment Plan estimates will be calculated based on the Retail Natural Gas Supplier’s or Governmental Aggregators elected consolidated billing option(s):

Rate Ready

Budget Payment Plan estimates for customers billed under the Rate Ready option are comprised of (1) an estimate of costs to be paid by the customer for gas supplied by the Retail Natural Gas Suppliers or Governmental Aggregators during the budget period; and (2) all non-gas cost charges to be billed by Columbia during that same period.