

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

IN THE MATTER OF THE REGULATION
OF THE PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT
CLAUSES, UNCOLLECTIBLE EXPENSE RIDER,
OR PERCENTAGE OF INCOME PAYMENT PLAN
RIDER OF:

BRAINARD GAS CORPORATION,
NORTHEAST OHIO NATURAL GAS CORP.,
OHIO CUMBERLAND GAS COMPANY,
ORWELL NATURAL GAS COMPANY,
PIEDMONT GAS COMPANY,
SUBURBAN NATURAL GAS COMPANY,

CASE No. 17-206-GA-GCR
CASE No. 17-209-GA-GCR
CASE No. 17-211-GA-GCR
CASE No. 17-212-GA-GCR
CASE No. 17-213-GA-GCR
CASE No. 17-216-GA-GCR

NORTHEAST OHIO NATURAL GAS CORP.,
ORWELL NATURAL GAS COMPANY,
PIEDMONT GAS COMPANY,
SUBURBAN NATURAL GAS COMPANY,

CASE No. 17-309-GA-UEX
CASE No. 17-312-GA-UEX
CASE No. 17-313-GA-UEX
CASE No. 17-316-GA-UEX

NORTHEAST OHIO NATURAL GAS CORP.,
SUBURBAN NATURAL GAS COMPANY,

CASE No. 17-409-GA-PIP
CASE No. 17-416-GA-PIP

AND RELATED MATTERS.

ENTRY

Entered in the Journal on April 25, 2018

I. SUMMARY

{¶ 1} The Commission closes gas cost recovery, uncollectible expense, and percentage of income payment plan cases in which there were no audits in 2017.

II. DISCUSSION

{¶ 2} Brainard Gas Corporation (Brainard), Northeast Ohio Natural Gas Corporation (Northeast), Ohio Cumberland Gas Company (Cumberland), Orwell Natural Gas Company (Orwell), Piedmont Gas Company (Piedmont), and Suburban Natural Gas Company (Suburban) are natural gas companies as defined in R.C. 4905.03

and public utilities under R.C. 4905.02 and, as such, are subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission.

{¶ 3} Initially, the Commission notes that, for purposes of administrative efficiency, the above-captioned cases have been consolidated into one Entry.

{¶ 4} R.C. 4905.302(C), Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-07, and Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-08 require that the Commission periodically conduct audits and hold hearings related to the gas cost recovery (GCR) rates utilized by the regulated natural gas companies. Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-07(A) provides that, unless otherwise ordered by the Commission, the GCR audits shall be conducted annually. For gas companies with less than 15,000 customers, the Commission conducts GCR audits every two years.

{¶ 5} Ohio Adm.Code 4901:1-14-04 requires natural gas companies to file quarterly GCR reports with the Commission and permits companies to revise the expected gas cost component of the GCR report on a monthly basis.

{¶ 6} In January 2017, the Commission opened GCR dockets in Case Nos. 17-206-GA-GCR, 17-209-GA-GCR, 17-211-GA-GCR, 17-212-GA-GCR, 17-213-GA-GCR, and 17-216-GA-GCR for Brainard, Northeast, Cumberland, Orwell, Piedmont, and Suburban, respectively. While the Commission did not audit those companies' GCR in 2017, these dockets were initiated in order to receive the involved companies' quarterly and monthly GCR reports, detailing adjustments made for purchasing gas to the costs recovered from customers.

{¶ 7} The Commission finds that the sole purpose of the cases listed in Paragraph 6 was for the filing of the involved companies' 2017 GCR reports. Therefore, at this time, we find that the cases listed in Paragraph 6 should be closed of record and the audits for those companies' 2017 GCR mechanisms should be conducted in subsequent cases during 2018.

{¶ 8} R.C. 4929.11 authorizes the Commission to allow any automatic adjustment mechanism or device in a natural gas company's rate schedules that allows a company's rates or charges for a regulated service or goods to fluctuate automatically with changes in the specified cost or costs.

{¶ 9} Consistent with R.C. 4929.11, the Commission authorized the recovery of uncollectible expenses (UEX) for Northeast, Orwell, Piedmont, and Suburban through riders. In approving the UEX riders for Northeast, Orwell, Piedmont, and Suburban, the Commission required that the riders be audited in the course of the GCR audits of Northeast, Orwell, Piedmont, and Suburban.

{¶ 10} As noted above, the Commission did not initiate audits concerning the GCR rates for Northeast, Orwell, Piedmont, and Suburban. Consequently, the UEX riders for Northeast, Orwell, Piedmont, and Suburban also were not audited during 2017 and, therefore, Case Nos. 17-309-GA-UEX, 17-312-GA-UEX, 17-313-GA-UEX, and 17-316-GA-UEX do not need to remain open and they should be closed of record. Audits for these companies' UEX riders should be conducted in subsequent cases during 2018, in sequence with their 2018 GCR audits.

{¶ 11} The Commission also authorized the recovery of Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) arrearages associated with providing natural gas service through a PIPP rider. *In re Recovery Method for Percentage of Income Payment Plan Arrearages*, Case No. 87-244-GE-UNC, Finding and Order (Aug. 4, 1987). These riders are to be audited in the course of the GCR audits.

{¶ 12} The Commission did not initiate an audit concerning the PIPP rider for Northeast and Suburban. Therefore, Case Nos. 17-409-GA-PIP and 17-416-GA-PIP do not need to remain open and should be closed of record. Audits for these companies' PIPP riders should be conducted in subsequent cases during 2018, in sequence with their 2018 GCR audits.

III. ORDER

{¶ 13} It is, therefore,

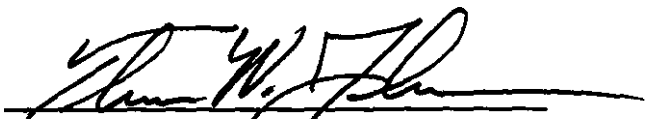
{¶ 14} ORDERED, That Case Nos. 17-206-GA-GCR, 17-209-GA-GCR, 17-211-GA-GCR, 17-212-GA-GCR, 17-213-GA-GCR, 17-216-GA-GCR, 17-309-GA-UEX, 17-312-GA-UEX, 17-313-GA-UEX, 17-316-GA-UEX, 17-409-GA-PIP and 17-416-GA-PIP be closed as a matter of record. It is, further,

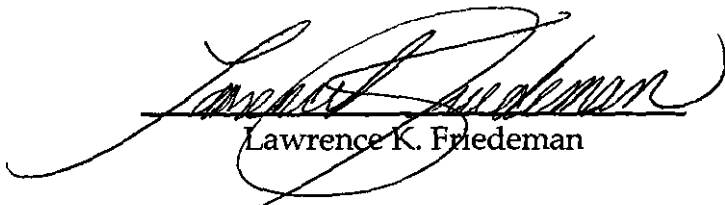
{¶ 15} ORDERED, That a copy of this Entry be served upon all parties of record in these cases.

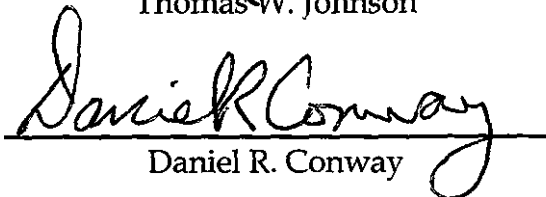
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO


Asim Z. Haque, Chairman


M. Beth Trombold

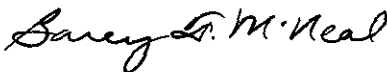

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