

**BEFORE
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO**

In the Matter of the Application of Ohio)	
Edison Company, The Cleveland Electric)	
Illuminating Company, and the Toledo)	Case No. 22-714-EL-UNC
Edison Company for Approval of a Change)	
in Bill Format)	

**OHIO EDISON COMPANY, THE CLEVELAND ELECTRIC ILLUMINATING
COMPANY, AND THE TOLEDO EDISON COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR
APPROVAL OF A CHANGE IN BILL FORMAT**

Pursuant to Rule 4901:1-10-22 and 4901:1-10-33 of the Ohio Administrative Code, Ohio Edison Company, The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, and The Toledo Edison Company (collectively, the “Companies”) submit this application for Commission approval of a modification to their bill format.

The Companies propose to add a Quick Response (“QR”) code to the contact information section at the top of the bill for all customers. To the left of the QR code, the Companies would amend the existing language regarding electronic bill payment options to read, “[t]o enroll in eBill or pay your bill online, scan the QR code on the right of this bill from your mobile device or go to www.firstenergycorp.com.” In addition, the Companies would add a definition of “QR (Quick Response) Code” to the bill’s Explanation of Terms section:

QR (Quick Response) Code - A square, black-and-white image that can be read by a mobile device using a barcode scanner or camera to direct you to our website at http://www.firstenergycorp.com/log_in.html.

A customer scanning the QR code will be taken to the MyAccount login page on the FirstEnergy Corp. website, where customers may pay their bill, access their account information, or use other available features. For customers who either do not wish to register or login through MyAccount

prior to making payments, the QR code also offers a guest-pay option.

The QR code will give customers another tool for contactless interaction with the Companies and provide increased convenience. This bill format enhancement addresses the rapidly growing “going digital” trend.¹ Even prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, research suggested that customers prefer having a variety of self-service options to make payments, with QR codes being one of the preferred tools.² When COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions required contactless interaction, there was a significant increase in businesses’ use of digital technology to interact with customers.³ The proposed bill format change to add the QR code will increase the Companies’ use of digital technology, to the benefit of customers.

The inclusion of this QR code is designed to enhance the customer experience. It provides a “contactless” and time-saving method for customers to pay bills. In addition to this increased flexibility, it provides a convenient way for customers to enroll in an online account, or log in to an existing one, and view account information or access various features available through the MyAccount page such as account alerts and the ability to report service interruptions. And it offers a guest-pay option for customers who do not wish to register or login through MyAccount.

The direct navigation to the MyAccount login page eliminates the chance of customers receiving a “404-Not Found” error, or of being misrouted to unintended or malicious websites. The QR code contains no user-specific information, so an unauthorized user cannot use the QR code to access a customer’s account. Further, the QR code will not collect or store any user-specific information. When accessing MyAccount after using the QR code, the established

¹ See *Utility Consumer Billing Report 2018*, KUBRA, Nov. 2018, at 2.

² *Id.* at 2, 4.

³ See *How Covid has Changed the Channels of Engagement, 2020*, Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Council Report, Nov. 2020. The CMO Council explains that surveys conducted in October 2020 reflect that the pandemic caused virtualization of the customer ecosystem, forcing companies to modify, scale and improve digital channels of engagement to ensure customer satisfaction.

security features on the Company website will maintain a secure digital environment for customers by providing data encryption for any personal information the user may transmit.

The proposed addition of the QR code will not require any other changes to the Companies' bill format, nor will there be any changes made to the terms and conditions of service. Customers will not be required to utilize the QR code; it will simply be available as a means of added convenience, should a customer so choose.

Upon Commission approval of the addition of a QR code, the Companies will educate customers about the QR code and how to use it, prior to implementing the change. In addition to the proposed explanations and definition on the bill described above, this education will be done through both bill messages and informational posts on the Companies' social media platforms, which will occur for two consecutive billing cycles.

A sample bill showing the proposed format changes is attached as Exhibit A. The Companies would make identical changes to bills for all classes of customers. The Companies intend to implement the new bill format with Commission approval of the application in this matter or otherwise in accordance with O.A.C. 4901:1-10-22(D) and 4901:1-10-33(F).

CONCLUSION

WHEREFORE, the Companies respectfully request that the Commission approve this Application to add a QR code to the Companies' billing format for all customers.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Kristen M. Fling

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(Counsel of Record)

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Messages (Continued)

approximately \$3.10 on the monthly bill of a typical residential customer using 750 kWh and taking generation service from the company's Standard Service Offer.

Explanation of Terms

- Bypassable Generation and Transmission Related Component** - Charges for purchasing power and delivering it through the transmission system. These charges are avoided when switching to a Certified Retail Electric Service provider.
- Cost Recovery Charges** - Recovers previously incurred costs, including PUCO-approved Phase-In Recovery Charges OE collects from all customers on behalf of OE Funding, LLC which owns the right to impose and collect such charges.
- Customer Charge** - Monthly charge that offsets costs for billing, meter reading, equipment, and service line maintenance.
- Distribution Related Component** - Charge for moving electricity over distribution lines to a service location.
- Economic Development Component** - Charges related to economic development support.
- Estimated Reading** - On the months we do not read a meter, we calculate the bill based on past electrical usage.
- KWH (Kilowatt Hour)** - A unit of measure for electricity usage equal to 1,000 watts used for one hour.
- Late Payment Charge** - A charge added to the bill on balances owed after the Due Date.
- Price to Compare (PTC)** - The utility's price per KWH for bypassable generation and transmission; can be compared with the price offered by another supplier.
- QR (Quick Response) Code** - A square, black-and-white image that can be read by a mobile device using a barcode scanner or camera to direct you to our website at http://www.firstenergycorp.com/log_in.html.
- Residential Distribution Credit** - A distribution credit for a qualifying rate applied to all usage over 500 KWH during the winter billing period.
- Residential Non-Standard Credit** - A generation credit for a qualifying rate applied to all usage over 500 KWH during the winter billing period.

Important Information

If you have billing questions or complaints about your Ohio Edison account or for a written explanation of the Price to Compare:

Call Customer Service at 1-800-633-4766 Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Call Payment Options at 1-800-686-3421 Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Visit our website at <http://www.firstenergycorp.com>

Write to us at Ohio Edison, 76 S. Main St., A-RPC, Akron, OH 44308-1890.

Customers with hearing or speech impairments can contact the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) at 711.

We welcome the opportunity to work with you and will try to answer your questions. If your complaint is not resolved after you have called your electric utility, or for general utility information, residential and business customers may contact the public utilities commission of Ohio (PUCO) for assistance at 1-800-686-7826 (toll free) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.puco.ohio.gov>. Hearing or speech impaired customers may contact the PUCO via 7-1-1 (Ohio relay service).

The Ohio consumers' counsel (OCC) represents residential utility customers in matters before the PUCO. The OCC can be contacted at 1-877-742-5622 (toll-free) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.pickocc.org>.

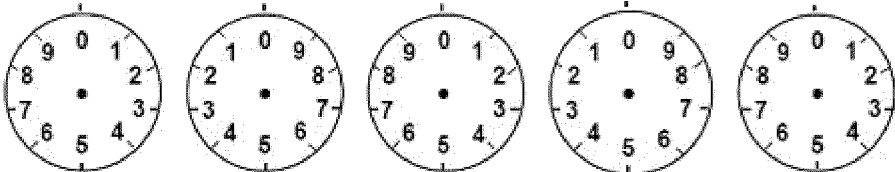
For Energy Assistance: Contact the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) at 1-800-282-0880 (TDD/TTY 1-800-686-1557) Monday -Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

For your protection, all of our employees wear Photo I.D. badges.

Electronic Check Conversion - Your check authorizes us either to make a one-time electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your account or process as a check. If you have questions about this program, call 1-866-283-8081.

To provide a customer meter reading, use the dials provided and enter the reading on-line at www.firstenergycorp.com/aboutyourbill or by calling 1-800-633-4766. Say "Meter Reading" when asked "Which of these can I help you with today?" Have the date you took the reading available.

Provide reading by telephone or on-line only: DO NOT MAIL



Draw hands on the dials exactly as they appear on your electric meter. When reading your meter, if the hand falls between two numbers, always report the lower number.

If you have a **DIGITAL METER** write the numbers here:

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities
Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

7/22/2022 8:55:55 AM

in

Case No(s). 22-0714-EL-UNC

Summary: Application OHIO EDISON COMPANY, THE CLEVELAND ELECTRIC ILLUMINATING COMPANY, AND THE TOLEDO EDISON COMPANY'S APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF A CHANGE IN BILL FORMAT electronically filed by Ms. Kristen M. Fling on behalf of Ohio Edison Company and The Toledo Edison Company and The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company