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December 13, 2012

NOTICE OF PROPOSAL TO AMEND A RULE

**CUSTOMER SERVICE AMENDMENTS TO THE NATURAL GAS
REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS**

BOARD FILE EB-2010-0280

**To: All Natural Gas Distributors
All Participants in Consultation Processes EB-2010-0280, EB-2007- 0722,
EB-2008-0313 and EB-2008-0150
All Other Interested Parties**

The Ontario Energy Board is giving notice under section 45 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* of proposed customer service-related amendments to the Natural Gas Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements Rule for Gas Utilities ("Gas RRR").

1.0 Background

The proposed amendments will require rate-regulated gas distributors to report on their application of the updated residential and eligible low-income customer service policies that they committed to in the EB-2010-0280 consultations.

In considering what type of information gas distributors should report, the Board sought to keep the new Gas RRR requirements at a reasonable level while also gathering adequate data to monitor and assess the impacts of the customer service policies of gas distributors. When designing the Gas RRR amendments proposed below, the Board also took into account the less prescriptive customer service regulatory regime adopted for the gas sector.

Board staff presented draft amendments at the October 18, 2012 meeting of the Low-income Energy Assistance Program (LEAP) Working Group. Participants at the meeting included the three rate-regulated gas distributors Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc. (“Enbridge”), Natural Resource Gas Limited (“NRG”), and Union Gas Limited (“Union”), ratepayer groups and social agencies. Comments provided by the LEAP Working Group were taken into account when preparing the proposed amendments.

2.0 Customer Service Policy Review Consultations

On October 14th, 2011, the Board issued amendments to the Gas Distribution Access Rule (“GDAR”) requiring rate-regulated gas distributors to implement and publish updated *residential* customer service policies. The updated residential customer service policies of gas distributors came into effect on April 1, 2012.

On September 6, 2012, the Board issued further amendments to GDAR requiring rate-regulated gas distributors to implement and publish the eligible low-income customer service policies that they had committed to during the consultation. These new eligible low-income customer service policies are required to come into effect by January 1, 2013.

The GDAR amendments were designed to ensure that rate-regulated gas distributors maintain appropriate policy standards and practices in certain prescribed areas of customer service for their residential, including their low-income, customers and to ensure that they publish, and comply with, those standards and practices.

In its September 6th, 2012 Notice, the Board also indicated that “developing effective customer service monitoring and associated regulatory reporting requirements is important to ensure that the residential and eligible low-income customer service policies in the gas sector are achieving their intended objectives.”

This Notice proposes the Board’s new customer service regulatory reporting requirements for comment, as set out below.

3.0 Proposed Gas RRR Amendments Related to the Residential Customer Service Policies

In order to help monitor and assess the impacts of the updated gas-sector customer service policies, the Board is proposing new RRR rules requiring gas distributors to collect and report data in the specific areas identified below.

The proposed Gas RRR requirements build upon the RRR Electricity Customer Service amendments issued by the Board, with adjustments to account for differences between the two sectors.

All the new data to be collected will be filed once a year with the Board, as part of each gas distributor's regularly scheduled RRR filing.

Where "year end" is referred to in the proposed amendment below, financial year end is meant.

3.1 Number of Residential and Low-Income Customer Accounts

It is important for the Board to know the total number of residential as well as the eligible low-income customer accounts in order to understand and analyze the data to be collected under the proposed performance measures, such as the number of disconnections, the number of arrears payment agreements, etc.

The Board therefore proposes amending the Gas RRR to require that the following information be filed annually:

- number of residential customer accounts at year end
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts at year end.

Customers that are receiving gas delivery from their gas distributor but are enrolled with gas marketers are intended to be included under the residential and eligible low-income customer accounts reported.

A clarification will be added to the Gas RRR stating that reporting on information regarding residential customers shall cover all residential customers, including eligible low-income customers. This will confirm the underlying intent that when residential

customer data is reported, distributors should combine data in respect of eligible low-income customers and non low-income residential customers.

The Board notes that some gas distributors include a definition of “residential customer” in their current Conditions of Service. The Board believes that all gas distributors should add a definition of “residential customer” to their Conditions of Service in order to make effective use of the data reported.

A definition of “eligible low-income customer” was previously added to GDAR. A cross-reference to that definition of “eligible low-income customer” is proposed to be added to the definition section of the Gas RRR. The intended result is that gas distributors start to track the number of eligible low-income customers who have benefited from specific low-income customer service policies offered by the gas distributors.

The LEAP Working Group asked for clarification on how accounts disconnected for non-payment (i.e. “locked”) should be treated when reporting number of customers above. At present, some distributors exclude such customers from the total number of active customers reported internally. Distributors advised, however, that many of such accounts will return to service at some point.

The intent of the updated customer service policies is to encourage distributors to work more proactively with disconnected residential customers to have service restored. Therefore, the Board believes it is appropriate to include accounts that have been disconnected for non-payment, as part of the Gas RRR customer service data to be reported, where there is a prospect of restoration of service.

3.2 Disconnections for Non-Payment

Collection of the data proposed below will allow the Board to monitor the application of the updated customer service policies and assess the impact of these policies on the number of residential and low-income customer disconnections for non-payment.

The Board accordingly proposes amending the Gas RRR to require that the following information be filed annually:

- number of residential customer accounts disconnected for non-payment during the course of the year;

- number of eligible low-income customer accounts disconnected for non-payment during the course of the year;
- number of residential customer accounts disconnected for non-payment more than once during the course of the year; and
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts disconnected for non-payment more than once during the course of the year.

The above data will also allow the Board to assess the extent to which residential and eligible low-income customers have been disconnected multiple times during the course of the year. This will help identify whether a distributor has a significant number of such customers that are prone to repeat payment problems and thus provide a better understanding of the disconnections data reported.

Some gas distributors have suggested the Board may want to monitor customers that are disconnected for non-payment and reconnected several years in a row, as this would also demonstrate repeat payment problems. The Board agrees that this would provide useful additional information. The Board therefore proposes the following additional information be filed annually:

- number of residential customer accounts where the account was disconnected for non-payment in both of the last two years
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts where the account was disconnected for non-payment in both of the last two years.

3.3 Amount of Arrears and Aging of Arrears

Collection of the data identified below will help the Board monitor the amount of arrears and ascertain the impacts of the updated customer service policies.

The Board proposes amending the Gas RRR to require that the following information be filed annually:

- number of residential customer accounts in arrears during each month of the year;
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts in arrears during each month of the year;

- total dollar amount of arrears for residential customer accounts in arrears during each month of the year; and
- total dollar amount of arrears for eligible low-income customer accounts in arrears during each month of the year.

Monthly data is requested in this area as some distributors do not disconnect service during the winter months, which may impact payment patterns of some customers during the course of the year.

The Board also proposes to add a definition of what qualifies as accounts “in arrears”. This definition requires distributors to treat customer accounts as being “in arrears”, for Gas RRR reporting purposes, when the accounts is more than 30 days past the minimum payment period required to pay the gas and non-gas services billed by the distributor. This will remove from the data, the effect of customers who are just a few days late in their payments.

To better understand trends in this area, the Board also proposes adding requirements to the Gas RRR to provide that the following information be filed annually with respect to aging of accounts receivable:

- number of residential customer accounts in arrears that are, at the end of each month, from 31 to 60 days overdue, from 61 to 90 days overdue, from 91 to 120 days overdue, and greater than 120 days overdue
- total dollar amount of residential customer arrears that are, at the end of each month, from 31 to 60 days overdue, from 61 to 90 days overdue, from 91 to 120 days overdue, and greater than 120 days overdue
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts in arrears that are, at the end of each month, from 31 to 60 days overdue, from 61 to 90 days overdue, from 91 to 120 days overdue, and greater than 120 days overdue
- total dollar amount of eligible low-income customer arrears that are, at the end of each month, from 31 to 60 days overdue, from 61 to 90 days overdue, from 91 to 120 days overdue, and greater than 120 days overdue.

The time periods proposed above build upon current practices in the sector.

3.4 Arrears Payment Agreements

Collection of the information identified below will allow the Board to assess the use and success of the various types of arrears payment agreements provided by gas distributors.

The GDAR customer service amendments did not prescribe the specific terms of arrears payment agreements (e.g. minimum length, maximum down payment, etc.) that the gas distributors should offer their customers. As a result, collection of more detailed data is proposed to better understand the practical operation and success of such agreements in the gas sector.

The Board therefore proposes adding requirements to the Gas RRR to provide that the following information be filed annually regarding customer arrears payment agreements:

- number of arrears payment agreements entered into during the course of the year with residential customers;
- number of arrears payment agreements entered into during the course of the year with eligible low-income customers;
- total amount of monies owing under arrears payment agreements entered into during the course of the year with residential customers;
- total amount of monies owing under arrears payment agreements entered into during the course of the year with eligible low-income customers;
- number of arrears payment agreements with residential customers that were cancelled during the course of the year due to non-payment;
- number of arrears payment agreements with eligible low-income customers that were cancelled during the course of the year due to non-payment; and
- number of arrears payment agreements entered into during the course of the year with residential customers that were: i) up to one month in duration ii) from one to three months in duration iii) from four to six months in duration; ii) from seven to nine months in duration; iii) from nine to twelve months in duration; and iv) from thirteen or more months in duration.
- number of arrears payment agreements entered into during the course of the year with low-income residential customers that were: i) up to one month in duration ii) from one to three months in duration iii) from four to six months in duration; ii) from seven to nine months in duration; iii) from nine to twelve months in duration; and iv) from thirteen or more months in duration.

Some gas distributors have indicated that if a customer wished to re-negotiate the terms of an existing arrears payment agreement because it cannot be maintained, the distributor will cancel the existing agreement and then create a new one. Therefore, in these cases, the data on the total number of cancelled arrears payment agreements will include both those that were canceled for nonpayment as well as those that were cancelled in order to be re-negotiated.

3.5 Write Offs

One of the expected overall results of the improved customer service policies is to help customers better manage their payments. Collection of the data identified below will allow the Board to monitor and assess if there has been a change in residential and low-income customer write offs.

The Board accordingly proposes amending the Gas RRR to provide that the following information be filed annually:

- number of residential customer accounts written off in whole or in part during the course of the year;
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts written off in whole or in part during the course of the year;
- total dollar amount of write offs for residential customer accounts during the course of the year; and
- total dollar amount of write offs for eligible low-income customer accounts during the course of the year.

The intent here is that distributors should only report amounts that were actually written off. In response to questions raised at the LEAP Working Group meeting, the Board would confirm that the intent is not to report the bad debt “provision” (i.e. the estimate of the bad debt amount that the distributor may eventually write off).

3.6 Equal Billing and Equal Payment Plans

The information proposed to be reported below will allow the Board to assess to what extent customers have taken advantage of the equal billing and payment options offered by gas distributors. Use of such arrangements is expected to help customers better manage their gas bill payments.

The Board proposes amending the Gas RRR to provide that the following information be filed annually by distributors:

- number of residential customer accounts enrolled in an equal billing plan at year end;
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts enrolled in an equal billing plan at year end;
- number of residential customer accounts enrolled in an equal payment plan at year end; and
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts enrolled in an equal payment plan at year end.

It is understood that all three rate-regulated gas distributors bill their residential customers on a monthly basis.

At present, gas distributors use varying terminology to describe their plans. To promote consistency, definitions of “equal billing plan” and “equal payment plan” will also be added to the Gas RRR as follows:

- equal billing plan means a billing plan where the amount due in each bill is equalized over the course of the billing periods in a year
- equal payment plan means an arrangement where a customer has entered into an equal billing plan and the monthly payment is made with an automatic withdrawal from a financial institution.

Where a customer enters into an automatic payment plan alone, the person is not intended to be captured by the second definition.

3.7 Security Deposits

The information identified below would allow monitoring of the impact of the updated customer service policies on the number and dollar value of residential and eligible low-income customer security deposits held by gas distributors.

The Board proposes amending the Gas RRR to provide that the following information be filed annually:

- number of residential customer accounts with a security deposit held at year end;

- total dollar amount of security deposits held in respect of residential customers at year end;
- number of eligible low-income customer accounts with a security deposit held at year end; and
- total dollar amount of security deposits held in respect of eligible low-income customers at year end.

In its March 1, 2012 letter, issued during the low-income customer service policy consultations, the Board suggested gas distributors modify their customer service policies to waive security deposits for low-income customers who do not have an account with a financial institution and are willing to enroll in an equal billing plan. The data proposed to be collected above will provide an understanding of trends in security deposits held in respect of residential and low-income customers.

4.0 Proposed Gas RRR Amendments Pertaining to Customer Service- Related Enquiries and Complaints

In its September 6th, 2012 Notice, the Board stated “given that the gas sector will not be subject to detailed prescriptive customer service rules, it will be useful to monitor customer complaints that may emerge”. As such, to understand the day-to-day impact of gas distributors’ customer service policies, it will be helpful for distributors to summarize the number of residential and low-income customer service-related complaints they receive by subject matter. This data will also assist in identifying areas where issues are being raised about the application of customer service policies and suggest where future changes may need to be considered.

In developing the list of topics and sub-topics below, the current tracking of customer enquiries employed by Enbridge and Union were reviewed. In addition, the topics and sub-topics currently employed by the Board’s Consumer Relations Centre were considered. The most frequent areas of gas distributor complaints received by the Board’s Consumer Relations Centre were also reviewed and taken into account in developing the proposed customer enquiries and complaints reporting requirements below.

4.1 Definition of Customer Service-Related Complaints

As mentioned above, the Board will request that gas distributors start reporting on customer service-related complaints received from residential and low-income customers. Tracking the number and types of such customer complaints will allow the Board and gas distributors to assess how their updated customer service policies are working and identify potential areas for improvement.

In this area, the Board believes it is valuable to gather data separately for eligible low income customers. Distributors have indicated that the number of escalated complaints are relatively modest and are dealt with on a one-off basis. Therefore it will be possible to readily identify complaints from eligible low-income customers

To provide clarity as to what is meant by “customer service-related complaint”, the Board proposes adding the following definition to the Gas RRR:

- “customer service-related complaint” means a customer service-related enquiry from a residential customer that requires escalation by a customer service employee for further internal review by the utility.

This proposed definition of complaint, for RRR purposes, builds upon the practices currently employed by gas distributors.

The language in the above definition is intended to capture complaints received by distributors using any means of communication (e.g. telephone, e-mail, voice mail, written letter, etc.).

In preliminary discussions with gas distributors, several other questions were raised about the application of proposed definition of customer service complaints:

- Union advised that, currently, if multiple contacts by a single customer occurred within the same billing period, they would be treated as one complaint. But if the same customer raised the same concern several months later, it would consider a new complaint.
- Enbridge and Union advised that they tend to classify a number of issues raised by the same customer at the same time as one complaint. In their experience, complaints are often inter-related from a root cause perspective.

- The major gas distributors have several levels internally that deal with customer service policy matters. Sometimes, customers directly contact senior utility staff with their concerns. Distributors commented that these tend to be serious issues and will generally be treated as complaints.

The Board prefers to not mandate how the above implementation issues should be addressed. The rate-regulated gas distributors are encouraged to cooperate in developing consistent practices in classifying and reporting customer service-related complaints.

4.2 Customer Service-Related Complaints to be Reported

The Board believes it will prove helpful to obtain data on the total number of customer service-related complaints in respect of both residential customers and eligible low-income customers.

The Board accordingly proposes adding requirements that gas distributors report the following information:

- number of customer-service related complaints raised with a utility during the year by residential customers; and
- number of customer-service related complaints raised with a utility during the year by eligible low-income customers.

In addition, the Board believes it will prove useful if some level of detail is known about the various types of customer service-related complaints. It is proposed that distributors subdivide their total residential and eligible low-income customer complaints by topic. The topics to be proposed are based on the issues raised by the Board during the course of its review of utility customer service policies.

The Board proposes to also identify key sub-topics under each of the major customer service policies. The specific sub-topics proposed below are intended to gather more detailed information that will be useful for assessing the operation and impact of the gas distributors' updated customer service policies. An "other" sub-topic will be added in each major topic to capture unforeseen complaints in that area.

The Board accordingly proposes that gas distributors annually subdivide and report on the number of customer service-related complaints received during the course of the

year, from their residential and eligible low-income customers separately, in respect of each of the following areas:

1) Bill Issuance and Payment

- a) due date of bill;
- b) date payment received;
- c) credit balance refund;
- d) payments in respect of Automatic Payment Plans/ Preauthorized Payment Plans; and
- e) other.

2) Billing Adjustments

- a) under-billing (e.g. about how far go back for under-billing adjustment or about adequacy of time period offered to pay under-billing adjustment);
- b) over-billing (e.g. about how refund payments are made, such as by cheque, credit to account, etc.); and
- c) other

3) Equal Billing and Equal Payment Plan

- a) customer could not join the plan;
- b) mid-season review (e.g. about whether or not a mid-season review took place);
- c) final annual true-up (e.g. about time allowed to pay a debit adjustment and whether a refund cheque was issued in the case of a credit adjustment); and
- d) other.

4) Disconnection Notices

- a) no notice;
- b) notice did not provide adequate information;
- c) notice received too soon prior to disconnection;
- d) deposit not considered before issuing disconnection notice; and
- e) other.

5) Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures

- a) distributor not making one final call before disconnection;
- b) reconnection (e.g. distributor missed reconnection appointment or no show); and
- c) other.

6) Suspension of Disconnection Pending Review of Low-Income Eligibility

- a) adequacy of period of suspending disconnection pending review of low-income eligibility; and
- b) other.

7) Arrears Payment Agreements

- a) not making agreement available;
- b) application of late payment charges;
- c) amount of down-payment required before entering agreement;
- d) length of agreement offered;
- e) cancellation and reinstatement (e.g. cancelled after customer missed only one payment, customer not given adequate notice when cancelled or customer was not reinstated when paid in full before cancellation); and
- f) other.

8) Security Deposits

- a) not offering customer to pay over 6 months;
- b) unfair amount requested;
- c) not returned;
- d) not waived (e.g. good credit record not accepted); and
- e) other.

9) Opening and Closing of Accounts

- a) former tenant's charges applied to new tenant;
- b) tenant's charges applied to landlord without consent;
- c) former owner's charges being applied to a new owner; and
- d) other.

10) Low-Income Customer Eligibility

- a) eligibility for low-income customer service policy;
- b) eligibility for low-income customer emergency financial assistance (e.g. LEAP or Winter Warmth); and
- c) other.

11) Other Customer-Service Related Topics.

4.3 Customer Service-Related Enquiries to be Reported

The Board believes it will also be useful to report the total number of initial customer service-related enquiries (in addition to escalated complaints) gas distributors receive from their residential customers. This data could then be used in order to understand the total number of customer service-related complaints reported relative to the total customer service-related enquiries received.

The Board therefore proposes amending the Gas RRR to require that the following information be filed annually:

- total number of customer service-related enquiries distributors received during the year from their residential customers; and
- number of customer service-related enquiries distributors received during the year from their residential customers for selected topic areas listed under section 4.2 above. Distributors will identify the major topic areas for which they have the ability to report on.

The Board proposes including a definition of “customer service enquiry” as follows:

- “customer service-related enquiry” means an enquiry from a residential customer pertaining to the utility’s customer service policies.

The tracking of customer service inquiries is expected to be done automatically through a menu of options provided to the customers who contact the distributors. Enbridge’s and Union’s current telephone and e-mail systems provide a number of options related to their customers service policies the customers are asked to choose from when they contact them. The Board proposes gas distributors track customer service-related enquiries by the areas that are already identified in their existing systems or can be added from the list of topics set out in section 4.2 above, with some amalgamations for simplification. The Board is aware of the customer satisfaction concerns related to the menu of options provided to the customers when they contact the distributors and this should be taken into account when gas distributors respond to the proposed reporting of enquiries above.

5.0 Baseline Data

In addition to the data that will be required to be reported under the final Gas RRR Customer Service amendments, the Board believes that gathering relevant baseline data will assist in assessing the impacts of the gas customer service policies.

As a result, the Board proposes gas distributors to also file readily available information for 2011 and 2012 in respect of the various measures that will be tracked under the forthcoming Gas RRR amendments.

In addition to the new data to be reported under the Gas RRR requirements for the period July 1, 2013 onwards (as proposed in section 9 below), the Board believes it would be useful if gas distributors collected and provided any relevant data readily obtainable for the first six months of 2013. This will also help in assessing trends under the updated gas customer service policies.

Union has advised staff that it will likely be able to provide baseline data for all items set out in section 3 above, aside from arrears payment agreements data.

Enbridge has advised staff that it would be able to gather baseline data in the following areas:

- number of residential customer accounts at year end;
- number of residential customer accounts disconnected for non-payment during the course of the year;
- total dollar amount of arrears for residential customer accounts in arrears during each month of the year;
- number of arrears payment agreements entered into during the course of the year with residential customers;
- total dollar amount of bad debt expense recorded for residential customer accounts during the course of the year (provided that this is based on using the definition of “write-offs” proposed by Enbridge);
- number of residential customer accounts enrolled in equal billing plans at year end; and
- total dollar amount of security deposits held in respect of residential customers at year end.

NRG advised it would have some baseline data available as follows:

- number of residential customers;
- number of low-income customers, based on the LEAP Program;
- number of residential customers disconnected for non-payment during the course of one year, and more than once during the course of the year;
- number of low-income residential customers disconnected for non-payment during the course of one year, and more than once during the course of the year; and
- number of security deposits for residential customers held at the end of the year, and the dollar amount of total residential deposits held at the end of the year.

6.0 Non Rate-Regulated Gas Distributors

In its April 2, 2012, submission commenting on the GDAR Low-Income Customer Service amendments, Kingston Utilities has stated that it has adopted for its natural gas customers the customer service policies required to be provided to its electricity customers under the Board's current codes.

In its March 26, 2012, submission commenting on the GDAR Low-Income Customer Service amendments, Kitchener Utilities stated that it is prepared to voluntarily comply with aspects of the proposed amendments to the extent that it can, given its situation relative to the larger gas distributors.

The Board would encourage the non rate-regulated gas distributors to review the proposed Gas RRR amendments and indicate where they have, or could readily obtain, relevant data that they could then file. This will allow the Board to assess customer service policy trends across all gas distributors.

7.0 Uses of Data to be Collected

7.1 Annual Performance Monitoring

The information to be reported annually by gas distributors under the proposed Gas RRR amendments, supplemented by gas customer service complaints received directly by the Board, will be used to monitor results each year for gas customers and distributors under the updated residential and eligible low-income customer service policies.

7.2 *Assessment of the Impact of the Revised Customer Service Policies*

The 2009 Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (“LEAP”) Report of the Board indicated that it will be important to later evaluate and measure performance so as to better understand “how effective the LEAP program has been in managing low-income energy consumer issues in relation to their use of natural gas and electricity such as disconnections, bad debt expenses, etc.”

Once several years of results from the annual Gas RRR customer service reporting become available, the Board will decide if there is merit in undertaking another detailed review of gas sector customer service policies.

The scope of any detailed future review will depend on the actual experience under the gas customer service policies to that date. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative measures may be used. The assessment of the impact of updated customer service policies could involve, for example, the following:

- Trend analysis of the performance indicators collected or derived from the Gas RRR data to be collected.
- Estimation of the impacts of the updated customer service policies relative to 2011 and 2012 base years in the areas identified above.
- Collection of additional data through interviews or focus/working groups to assess the impact of the updated gas customer service policies from the prospective of distributors, customers and social service agencies.

If the assessment reveals that a particular customer service policy is not contributing towards the intended results of the updated customer service policies, the Board or gas distributors could decide to examine changes to that customer service policy. Any future assessment could also make recommendations for changes and improvements to the Gas RRR customer service reporting requirements.

8.0 **Anticipated Benefits and Costs**

The data outlined in sections 3 and 4 above will prove helpful in monitoring performance and trends under the residential and eligible low-income customer service policies implemented by gas distributors. It is also expected that distributors will find the data valuable for their own management purposes as well. Much of the information

requested to be filed is already collected by gas distributors in the normal course of their business. Some of the information is available at an operational level, but distributors will be required to put some additional effort into collecting and summarizing the data for reporting purposes.

Reporting distributor data on customer service complaints, as proposed in section 4 above, is important as it will help the Board, and gas distributors, to assess if any areas emerge where a number of customers are having concerns.

Each distributor already investigates escalated customers complaints, so the Board believes the amount of additional work required to report such complaints by topic will be manageable.

The Board acknowledges that some implementation cost will incur, as the topics and sub-topics to be reported differ somewhat from how the major distributors currently internally track and classify their enquiries and complaints.

Smaller distributors will tend to have fewer low-income customers and this may impact what implementation means (i.e. computerized versus manual work arounds) will use track and collect the information requested under sections 3 and 4 above.

The Board views the package of Gas RRR amendments as a necessary and valuable complement to the less-prescriptive GDAR customer service amendments recently adopted for the gas sector.

9.0 Coming Into Force and Initial Filing Date

The Board proposes that rate-regulated distributors start collecting information in respect of the proposed Gas RRR amendments set out in Attachment A, no later than July 1, 2013. Where feasible, distributors may wish to start collecting the information requested earlier.

The Gas RRR provides that the reported data must be forwarded to the Board four months after the distributor's financial year-end. Currently, Enbridge and Union have a financial year-end of December 31st, while NRG has a September 30th year-end. Therefore the Enbridge and Union filings are due April 30th each year, while NRG's filing is due January 31st.

The Board proposes that Enbridge and Union file their new customer service data for the July to December 2013 period as part of their regular April 2014 RRR filing. The Board would also request that available baseline data for 2011, 2012 and the first six months of 2013 be filed at that time.

The Board proposes that NRG file its new customer service data for the July to September 2013 as part of its regular January 2014 RRR filing. The Board would also request that available baseline data for 2011, 2012 and the first six months of 2013 be filed at that time.

10.0 Cost Awards

Cost awards will be available under section 30 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* to eligible parties in the EB-2010-0280 process in relation to the provision of comments on the proposed Gas RRR amendments set out in Attachment A, to a maximum of **10** hours in total each. Costs awarded will be recovered from all rate-regulated gas distributors based on their respective distribution revenues.

11.0 Invitation to Comment and Filing Instructions

All interested parties are invited to provide comments on the proposed amendments by **January 18, 2013**.

Two (2) paper copies of each comment must be provided and should be sent to:

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary
Ontario Energy Board
P.O. Box 2319
2300 Yonge Street
Suite 2700
Toronto, Ontario M4P 1E4

The Board requests that interested parties make every effort to provide electronic copies of their comments in searchable/unrestricted Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format, and to submit their comments through the Board's web portal at www.pes.ontarioenergyboard.ca/eservice.

A user ID is required to submit documents through the Board's web portal. If you do not have a user ID, please visit the "e-filings services" webpage on the Board's website at www.ontarioenergyboard.ca, and fill out a user ID password request. Additionally, interested parties are requested to follow the document naming conventions and document submission standards outlined in the document entitled "RESS Document Preparation – A Quick Guide" also found on the e-filing services webpage. If the Board's web portal is not available, electronic copies of comments may be filed by e-mail at boardsec@ontarioenergyboard.ca.

Those that do not have internet access should provide a CD or diskette containing their comments in PDF format.

Comments to the Board must be received by the Board Secretary by **4:45 p.m.** on the required date. They must quote file number **EB-2010-0280** and include your name, address, telephone number and, where available, your e-mail address and fax number.

If the written comment is from a private citizen (i.e., not a lawyer representing a client, not a consultant representing a client or organization, not an individual in an organization that represents the interests of consumers or other groups, and not an individual from a regulated entity), before making the written comment available for viewing at the Board's offices or placing the written comment on the Board's website, the Board will remove any personal (i.e., not business) contact information from the written comment (i.e., the address, fax number, phone number, and e-mail address of the individual). However, the name of the individual and the content of the written comment will be available for viewing at the Board's offices and will be placed on the Board's website.

This Notice, the proposed amendments set out in Attachment A, and all written comments received by the Board in response to this Notice will be available for public inspection at the office of the Board during normal business hours and on the Board's website at www.ontarioenergyboard.ca.

Any questions relating to these proposed amendments to the Gas RRR should be directed to Takis Plagiannakos, Manager, Rates, Conservation and Policy Evaluation, Regulatory Policy, at 416-440-7680 or by e-mail at takis.plagiannakos@ontarioenergyboard.ca .

The Board's toll free number is 1-888-632-6273.

DATED at Toronto, December 13, 2012

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Original Signed By

Kirsten Walli
Board Secretary

Attachment:

Attachment A: Proposed Customer Service Amendments to the Natural Gas Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements