

From: Shannon [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, July 14, 2019 5:19 PM
To: ConsumerRelations@ontarioenergyboard.ca <ConsumerRelations@oeb.ca>
Subject: Attn: Marissa RE: File # 2019-000-3542

Dear Marissa,

Thank you for taking my call last Friday morning.

We are hoping that we can find a solution to our serious problem as soon as possible.

I will try to keep this email short, but feel that some background information is required.

My husband Stan and I live [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I have lived in Thames Centre all of my life and we bought Stan's father's place in late 2017.

In January 2018 (18 months ago) I reached out to Epcor to request a natural gas hook up at our place. They have a natural gas line that runs right past our home and we know people who live south of us (in Malahide Township) who have hooked their home to it.

In the spring of 2018 we filled out the required forms and things seemed to be moving along. We were then informed by Epcor, that they were sorry but they just realized that we are in Union Gas territory and let us know we will need to reach out to Union Gas to get natural gas.

That seemed silly at the time since there was a new Epcor natural gas line right on our road that goes right by our home. We asked if they could get an exception for our place, since our closest neighbours (both who have Union Gas natural gas hook ups) are quite a distance away and we knew it would be costly to have the line brought from either direction. They said they tried, they talked about OEB hearings but in the end, they said we'd need to contact Union Gas.

So we did, they came out when the snow was still on the ground in 2019 to survey and get us a final price to extend the Union Gas natural gas line from the closest southerly neighbour to our place. They were out several times and 'Reg Thompson' was our main contact there. They gave us a mid-July 2019 time frame for our hookup.

This was good news, we had plans to remove the aging back section of the house and complete a small addition including a new natural gas HVAC system, along with natural gas hot water tank, fireplace etc.

In the spring we had the old oil furnace removed in preparation for the addition. The contractor was hired, plans submitted to the township and approved and as I write this now we are about 75% finished the addition with an estimated completion date of August 31, 2019.

Attached is a letter (attached as page 1 of Union Gas info for OEB) Reg Thompson left us in May 2019 indicating that when all the approvals were met, he'd get us a final cost and he'd have to pick up payment. Working in conjunction with our contractor's HVAC tradesmen from Koolen Electric, who also had to sign off with Union Gas as the company who was to do the final hook up after Union Gas installed the line we completed all the applications and who has also received the same 'good to go' messages as we have..

On June 3, 2019 Reg Thompson reached out by email (copy attached) to say that all approvals were met and that he needed payment. He came and picked up a certified cheque for \$14,351.01 payable to Union Gas on June 10, 2019. We received a formal receipt in the mail. Please read this email carefully as it is clear to us things were in order and we could expect install in approximately 5 weeks.

Early last week we received an extremely upsetting phone call from Reg Thompson who said, we have a problem. What he told us was that he had learned that the OEB was prohibiting Union Gas to extend any of their natural gas lines in Thames Centre and that there was some sort of hearing coming up in late August. (As a side note, when dealing with Epcor early on in this process, they also said there were OEB hearings coming up that might help us get an exemption and be about to use their line, but in the end, nothing came of that, so we don't have much hope that any hearing can help us at this late date.)

As you can imagine, this came as a complete shock as we have written notice of approvals, contracts signed, money paid and we had removed our oil furnace with the knowledge that we would have natural gas heat with our new furnace install when the addition was complete.

Our primary concerns are getting natural gas hook up before the freezing weather comes and we have brand new plumbing rupturing because of the lack of heat etc., let alone the stress and inconvenience of not having heat in the home.

It seems impossible to us that we could have a contract to have the gas line extended at our expense and then have them renege on that contract.

We are asking that the OEB take whatever steps necessary to ensure that we have natural gas hook up before the winter weather sets in. We are not attached to whether Epcor simply runs a line across the road to our home (most logical), or Union Gas runs it 300+ feet, either way it is imperative that the job gets done.

Attached (as page 1 of the Union gas info for OEB) is the hand written note from Mr. Reg Thompson stating that when all approvals are received he'll get back to us with a final cost. Obviously those approvals were received, as indicated on his email dated Jun 3, 2019 (attached as Approval and request for payment email from Reg Thompson). Payment was made (attached as page 2-3 of the attachment called Union Gas info for OEB) and we have received an install date around mid July.

Please confirm receipt of this email and thank you in advance for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

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[REDACTED]