

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



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June 12, 2013

Re: DE 12-097, Electric & Gas Utilities  
Investigation into Purchase of Receivables, Customer Referral and Electronic Interface for  
Electric and Gas Distribution Utilities

To the Parties:

On May 7, 2013, Retail Energy Supply Association (RESA) filed a motion to close docket without prejudice in the above referenced matter. On May 8, 2013, Public Service Company of New Hampshire and Unutil Energy Systems, Inc. filed responses to the motion noting general agreement with the relief requested. On May 9, 2013, North American Power and Gas, LLC (NAPG) and Granite State Electric Company d/b/a Liberty Utilities also filed responses in support of the motion.

On May 9, 2013, the Office of the Consumer Advocate and Staff jointly filed a recommendation in support of the motion to close the docket but also recommended the Commission open a proceeding to investigate the merits of establishing a payment hierarchy between distribution utilities and competitive suppliers. The recommendation notes that where a competitive supplier has elected to bill for electric supply through the distribution utility, the current payment hierarchy allows the distribution utility to apply the full amount of a planned payment or partial payment to its own past-due and current amounts before applying the payment to the competitive suppliers' past-due and current amounts. Staff and the OCA argue that this practice confuses customers and leads to dissatisfaction with their distribution utility and competitive supplier. Establishing a more "equitable" payment hierarchy would, according to Staff and the OCA, benefit those customers who are paying in accordance with a payment arrangement or budget payment plan inasmuch as they would no longer receive collection notices from a supplier. In addition, competitive suppliers would benefit with "less lag between the provision of service and receipt of payment." According to Staff and the OCA, RESA and NAPG agree with the recommendation.

The Commission has determined to grant the motion and adopt Staff's recommendation. Accordingly, DE 12-097 has been closed without prejudice and a new Order of Notice will be issued opening a proceeding to investigate the merits of establishing a payment hierarchy between distribution utilities and competitive suppliers in New Hampshire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Debra A. Howland".

Debra A. Howland  
Executive Director

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- b) Serve an electronic copy with each person identified on the Commission's service list and with the Office of Consumer Advocate.
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