

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

**In the Matter of the 2019/2020 Annual Compliance Filing for the
Universal Service Fund and Lifeline Program Components Within the Societal Benefits Charge Rate
Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:2-21 and N.J.S.A. 48:-21.1 Submitted by Elizabethtown Gas Company
BPU Docket No. ER19060736**

TAKE NOTICE that, pursuant to the Electric Discount and Energy Competition Act, N.J.S.A. 48:3-49, et seq., the Universal Service Fund (“USF”) program was established by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“Board”), to provide funds to assist qualifying low-income individuals in paying their energy bills. Pursuant to Board Orders dated April 30, 2003, July 16, 2003, June 30, 2004 and June 22, 2005, the State’s electric and gas public utilities’ Societal Benefits Charges (“SBC”) provides recovery of funding for the USF program through uniform statewide rates. The SBC also includes funding for the Lifeline program which incorporates funds for the Work First NJ program.

The State of New Jersey’s Department of Community Affairs is the Administrator of the USF program, and the New Jersey Department of Human Services is the Administrator of the Lifeline program and authorizes the disbursement of benefits to eligible customers in the respective programs.

Elizabethtown Gas Company (“Elizabethtown” or “Company”) made a compliance filing with the Board on June 24, 2019, requesting authority to implement an increase related to the statewide USF/Lifeline program charge, as described below, to be effective on October 1, 2019. Based upon the results and available estimates known to date for the 2018/2019 USF program year and the available estimates for the 2019/2020 USF program year, it is anticipated that the USF rates should be set to collect \$111.4 million, of which, \$83.0 million would be recovered through electric rates with the remaining \$28.4 million recovered through gas rates on a statewide basis. The Lifeline rates should be set to collect \$74.6 million, of which, \$50.7 million would be recovered through electric rates with the remaining \$23.9 million recovered through gas rates on a statewide basis.

The current after-tax USF/Lifeline program charge for natural gas customers is \$0.0103 per therm. The changes in rates inclusive of taxes are as follows: (i) the USF program charge will increase from \$0.0049 to \$0.0066 per therm or \$0.0017 per therm and (ii) the Lifeline charge will increase from \$0.0054 to \$0.0055 per therm or \$0.0001 per therm for a total net increase of \$0.0018 per therm. The proposed after-tax USF/Lifeline program charge will increase to \$0.0121 per therm. The above request will not result in any profit to the Company. The revenues received under the proposed USF charge are designed to permit the Company to recover only its costs for the USF and Lifeline program. Actual program costs will be reconciled with the revenues received through the USF program charge in the next annual filing scheduled to be made no later than July 1, 2020.

The proposed statewide natural gas rates inclusive of taxes for customers are as follows:

**Universal Service/Lifeline Fund Components of the
Societal Benefits Charge**

	Present	Proposed
USF	\$0.0049	\$0.0066
Lifeline	\$0.0054	\$0.0055
Total	\$0.0103	\$0.0121

If approved by the Board, the impact of the proposed rate changes in the USF/Lifeline Charge on typical monthly residential gas bills for customers taking gas service under the Residential Delivery Service tariff is illustrated below:

Rate Impacts

<u>Consumption in Therms</u>	<u>Present Bill July 1, 2019</u>	<u>Proposed Bill October 1, 2019</u>	<u>Proposed Change</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
10	\$16.89	\$16.91	\$0.02	0.1%
50	\$51.68	\$51.77	\$0.09	0.2%
100	\$95.17	\$95.35	\$0.18	0.2%
250	\$225.64	\$226.09	\$0.45	0.2%

Based on this filing, the bill of a typical residential gas customer using 100 therms per month would see an increase in their monthly bill from \$95.17 to \$95.35, or \$0.18 or approximately 0.2%.

The Board has the statutory authority to establish the USF and Lifeline charges at levels it finds just and reasonable. Therefore, the Board may establish the USF and Lifeline charges at levels other than those proposed by Elizabethtown.

Copies of the Company's June 24, 2019 filing are available for inspection at the Company offices located at 520 Green Lane, Union, New Jersey, or online at Elizabethtown's website: www.elizabethtowngas.com, or at the Board located at 44 South Clinton Avenue, 2nd Floor, Trenton, NJ 08625-0350. Any member of the public who wants to inspect the petition at the Board may contact the Board's Division of Case Management at (609) 292-0806 to schedule an appointment.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the following date, time and location for public hearings have been scheduled on the above filing so that members of the public may present their views:

Thursday, August 15, 2019

4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Liberty Hall Corporate Center, 1085 Morris Avenue, Union, New Jersey 07083

Monday, August 19, 2019

4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Hunterdon County Complex, Route 12, Building #1, Flemington, New Jersey 08822

The public is invited to attend and interested persons will be permitted to testify and/or make a statement of their views on the proposed rate changes. Information provided at the public hearings will become part of the record of this case and will be considered by the Board in making its decision. In order to encourage full participation in this opportunity for public comment, please submit any requests for needed accommodations, including interpreter, listening devices or mobility assistance, 48 hours prior to the hearing. Regardless of whether they attend the hearing, members of the public may submit written comments concerning the petition to the Board by addressing them to: Aida Camacho-Welch, Secretary, New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, 44 South Clinton Avenue, 3rd Floor, Suite 314, P. O. Box 350, Trenton, NJ 08625-0350.

Elizabethtown Gas Company

Christie McMullen –President and Chief Operating Officer



520 Green Lane
Union, NJ 07083
T: 908.662.8448
F: 908.662.8496

Deborah M. Franco, Esq
Regulatory Affairs Counsel

June 24, 2019

Via FedEx & Electronic Mail

Aida Camacho-Welch, Secretary
State of New Jersey
Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue, 3rd Floor, Suite 314
P.O. Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350

Re: In the Matter of the 2019/2020 Annual Compliance Filing for the Universal Service Fund and Lifeline Program Components Within the Societal Benefits Charge Rate Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 48:2-21 and N.J.S.A. 48:-21.1 Submitted by Elizabethtown Gas Company

BPU Docket No. _____

Dear Secretary Camacho-Welch:

Enclosed for filing are an original and two “courtesy” copies of the Elizabethtown Gas Company (“Elizabethtown” or “Company”) 2019/2020 filing for the Company’s Universal Service Fund (“USF”) and Lifeline components of its Societal Benefits Charge (“SBC”) rate”), which has also been filed electronically utilizing the Board’s e-Filing Program. This filing is made in compliance with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’ (“Board”) Orders in Docket No. EX00020091 dated April 30, 2003, July 16, 2003, June 30, 2004 and June 22, 2005. The change in rates inclusive of taxes are as follows: (i) the USF gas rate is proposed to increase from \$0.0049 to \$0.0066 per therm, and (ii) the Lifeline gas rate is proposed to increase from \$0.0054 to \$0.0055 per therm, resulting in a combined total net increase of \$0.0018 per therm. The current rates, effective October 1, 2018, were approved by the Board in its Order dated September 17, 2018 in Docket No. ER18060661.

Based upon the actual results and available estimates known to date for the 2018/2019 program year and the available estimates for the 2019/2020 program year, the proposed USF gas rate is designed to recover approximately \$28.4 million statewide. The proposed Lifeline gas rate is designed to recover approximately \$23.9 million statewide. The proposed rates are based on available gas jurisdictional usage estimates for 2019/2020. Attachment A of the PSE&G Compliance Filing, in this proceeding, presents the combined data of each of the State’s utilities used to develop the proposed USF and Lifeline gas rates. Note that Elizabethtown’s therms used to compute statewide rates exclude therms for wholesale sales used to generate electricity per the Senate Bill 2381, P.L. 2011 c.9 (“LCAPP Legislation”) signed into law on January 28, 2011.

The Company has appended proposed tariff sheets to reflect the proposed gas USF and Lifeline rates noted above as Attachment A. The proposed rates are designed to recover Elizabethtown's portion of the above-referenced 2019/2020 statewide total USF and Lifeline programs. Also enclosed is a proposed form of Notice of Public Hearings as Attachment B.

The proposed statewide rate changes inclusive of taxes are as follows:

	Present	Proposed
USF	\$0.0049	\$0.0066
Lifeline	\$0.0054	\$0.0055

The impact of the proposed rate changes on typical monthly residential gas bills for customers taking gas service under the Residential Delivery Service tariff are as follows:

Consumption in Therms	Present Bill*	Proposed Bill	Change in Bill	Percent Change
10	\$16.89	\$16.91	\$0.02	0.1%
50	\$51.68	\$51.77	\$0.09	0.2%
100	\$95.17	\$95.35	\$0.18	0.2%
250	\$225.64	\$226.09	\$0.45	0.2%

*For rates in effect on June 1, 2019 inclusive of taxes.

Accordingly, the Company respectfully requests that the Board issue an Order approving the proposed statewide gas USF and Lifeline rates as shown in the proposed tariff sheets appended hereto as Attachment A effective for gas service rendered on and after October 1, 2019.

If you have any questions concerning the above, please contact me at 908-662-8448.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Deborah M. Franco

cc: Stacy Peterson (3 hard copies)
Service List (*electronically*)