

FILED
May 15, 2024
INDIANA UTILITY
REGULATORY COMMISSION

STATE OF INDIANA

INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

**JOINT PETITION OF OHIO VALLEY GAS)
CORPORATION AND OHIO VALLEY GAS, INC.)
FOR (1) AUTHORITY TO INCREASE ITS RATES)
AND CHARGES FOR GAS UTILITY SERVICE, (2))
APPROVAL OF NEW SCHEDULES OF RATES)
AND CHARGES, (3) APPROVAL OF DECOUPLING)
THROUGH A NEW SALES RECONCILIATION)
COMPONENT RIDER, AND (4) APPROVAL OF)
NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE ACCOUNTING)
RELIEF AND OTHER REQUESTS.)**

CAUSE NO. 46011

INDIANA OFFICE OF UTILITY CONSUMER COUNSELOR'S

PUBLIC'S EXHIBIT NO. 9 – CONSUMER COMMENTS

May 15, 2024

Respectfully submitted,



Lorraine Hitz
Attorney No. 18006-29
Deputy Consumer Counselor

APR 25 AM 5:29

4-25-2024

Dear Sir;

As a customer of Ohio Valley Gas I oppose the raise hike that you've proposed.

I'm on a fixed income (S.S.) + it's gets harder to pay monthly bills with everything else going up, food, gas, etc.

It hurts everyone when you want to raise prices that much, especially if you have families to feed.

Please consider others as you make these decisions.

Thank you,
Dreanna Nichols
(Customer in
Portland, In.)

From: [keith](#)
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Cause No. 46011
Date: Sunday, March 24, 2024 9:53:26 AM

****** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email. ******

I am writing to comment on the recent filing by the Ohio Valley Gas company and their letter to their users dated March 19, 2024.

My name is Keith Wheeler

Address 3747 Autumn Way Dr. Lawrenceburg, In 47025

Utility is Ohio Valley Gas in Winchester IN, Cause 46011

Their letter to their customers (dated 3/19/24) states that they are expecting an increase of \$.20-\$.30/ therm (distribution charge) as well as a fixed \$7.89 facility charge increase to their base rates. Their last rate changes were approved in 2017. I reviewed this data and went back to 2017 based on actual usage and the current facility charge of \$14.54/mo and calculated what these new rates would do to us as consumers. I also compared these increases to the actual changes in Cost of Living for Indiana based on the Consumer Price Index for the Midwest published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

The change in CPI over the years from 2017 to 2023 is about 24%. That would suggest a reasonable increase in rates based on usage for the average consumer of 24% including gas delivery and operating costs since the actual cost of gas is separate and charged separately based on the then current contracts in place. When you consider that most residential customers like ourselves use the majority of our gas consumption during the winter months while heating our homes, and the other 6 months may use virtually no gas but still have to pay the facility charge which is increasing from \$14.54 to \$22.43 or an increase of 54%.

1. After reviewing the historical usage of gas (which is actually decreasing from year to year because of the decrease in heating degree days) I find the proposed increase of GCA of \$.20/therm will result in a average increase of our monthly bill during heating season of 24%

2. But when you consider that for the other 6 months when we don't have to heat we still have to pay the increased facility charge of \$22.43 that results in a yearly increase of our total cost of gas of 49% which seems unreasonable given the change in CPI.

3. Therefore I would argue that the change in GCA of \$.20 seems warranted but no larger, and the increase in the facility charge may be appropriate during the usage months but not for those months where we aren't using any gas, maybe the former charge of \$15.54 for like a meter maintenance fee. I realize that having a customer disconnect and then reconnect is very costly and they have already made this economically impossible but having our projected gas costs increase by 50-70% isn't reasonable either.

From: noreply@in.accessgov.com
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Form Submission - OUCC Contact Form: James Faulkner
Date: Wednesday, April 24, 2024 11:22:33 AM

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A form has been submitted for: OUCC Contact Form
Please review the attached PDF for the submission information.

Title: Mr.

Name: James Faulkner

Email: jbnizer@gmail.com

Phone: (765) 212-0815

Address: 129 E Grand Street, Dunkirk, IN 47336

Dunkirk

IN

47336

Utilities: Ohio Valley Gas

Type of Inquiry: Case Comment

Comments: In regards to the recent proposed rate increases of 35%, 38% and 42% considerations on the amount of "Therms" usage is disgraceful.

First of all the more a consumer uses means that they get a small rate and those trying to (SAVE) on their utilities bills are being punished by paying higher rates. This process of billing always has infuriated me!

Secondly the percentage of rate hikes Ohio Valley Gas is asking would be an immense struggle for most of their customers and devastating to those on fixed incomes.

These rate hikes are way out of reach and should require a sincere investigation by our government agency overseeing corporate scrutiny.

From: noreply@in.accessgov.com
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Form Submission - OUCC Contact Form: John H VanHart
Date: Thursday, April 11, 2024 11:53:00 AM

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A form has been submitted for: OUCC Contact Form
Please review the attached PDF for the submission information.

Title: Mr.

Name: John H VanHart

Email: jlvanhart88@outlook.com

Phone: (765) 914-6110

Address: 1071 E. Howard Rd

Connersville

IN

47331

Utilities: Ohio Valley Gas Corp

Type of Inquiry: Case Comment

Comments: I am opposed to Ohio Valley Gas Corp's request for a 35% proposed rate increase. They have stated that the increase is needed, not because of the cost of the natural gas has increased, but because of inflationary the cost of doing business has increased. My cost of running and maintaining a household, and everyone else's, has also suffered under the inflationary pressure. Our cost of doing "business" has also has equally increased. I cannot approach my employer and request a 35% pay increase because the cost of my insurance cost, fuel cost, maintenance cost, food cost or any other cost have increased. I can ask for something more reasonable that is in line with the actual inflation numbers. However, according to InflationData.com, "Current Annual inflation for the 12 months ending March 2024 is 3.48%". Applying the Rule of 72, it will take approximately 21 years for prices to double. I believe that a much smaller increase, if any, may be in order. Thank you.

I can't believe you are
asking for another raise.
What are you trying to do
to us. I was on an \$80 budget
then raised to \$90 for 13
months. Then a big jump
to \$120.00 for 10 months so far.

I'm 86 yrs old fixed income
I can't afford this.

How there is young people
with children, I don't know
how they feed them not
counting everything else.

Have pity on us.

You should not raise
budget, least take some
off. Think about it.

From: [Cindie Fox](#)
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Gas increase
Date: Thursday, April 4, 2024 9:41:42 AM
Importance: High

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OVG,

I have been reading about the proposed increase and of course I am not writing in favor of this. An average of a 27% increase is well above an average of a cost of living increase for any gas usage household.

Where is the increase warranted from?

I just read several articles regarding an abundance of gas supplies since we had such a mild winter this past 2023/2024.

Regards,

Cindie L Fox

35 year customer

From: [Mindy Misner](#)
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Mindy Minser - Cause No. 46011
Date: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 11:12:29 AM

**** This is an EXTERNAL email. Exercise caution. DO NOT open attachments or click links from unknown senders or unexpected email. ****

Hello,

This email is about cause 46011 for Ohio Valley Gas Corporation. I hope you consider customers when having the hearing. We can barely keep up with all the bills anymore. The inflation and all the corporate and utility greed are out of control. They all have record profits. I have record-high bills, but my pay isn't going up to help with this problem. Between AEP and Ohio Valley, my winter bills are very expensive to stay warm. I like to stay reasonably warm nothing crazy. That might not be something I can keep doing soon. Please deny or reduce the increase. We can't take much more. Thank you.

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Robert Morel](#)
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Ohio Valley Gas Rate Increase Case #46011
Date: Monday, April 22, 2024 3:56:33 PM

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The increase of 35 % is extreme and the inflation rate (CPI) from 2017 to 2024 is 11.55%.
Their operating expenses are not uncontrollable.

This is a comparison of the old rates and new rates at 100 THERMS.

base rate old	\$14.54	base rate new	\$22.43
100Therms	\$105.55	100Therms new	\$135.85
7% Tax	\$8.40	7% Tax	\$11.07
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	\$113.95		\$169.35

This looks like an Increase of \$55.40 and 49% increase not 35%.
Can not afford a large increase.

Customer
Robert Morel
2445 Old Orchard Dr.
West Harrison IN 47060

From: [Sue Kaufman](#)
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Ohio Valley Gas Rates
Date: Monday, May 6, 2024 9:16:26 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to plead for you not to raise our rates. We are senior citizens on a fixed income. We have CenterPoint for electric, which we have no control over. It wasn't here when we moved here. This year our property taxes doubled, no control over that either. Home and car insurance have gone up. Groceries have gone thru the roof, along with medicines. It is getting very hard for seniors to make ends meet. Please consider all of us older folks before you raise these too.

Thank you,
Susan & David Kaufman
Santa Claus, IN 47579

From: [T Williams](#)
To: [UCC Consumer Info](#)
Subject: Ohio Valley Gas Request for rate increases cause #46011
Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2024 2:26:40 PM

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I would encourage the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission to reject Ohio Valley Gas request for rate increase and a fixed increased facility charge of \$7.89 to customers base rate.

I understand we have experienced a great deal of inflation but I don't believe it requires such a substantial increase. Ohio Valley Gas Corp according to online data has 127 employees and a revenue of \$87.7 million. Their proposed request would be a 35% increase in revenue according to the states website on this matter. I would ask the commission to look at their profits and the pay of their employees to see if their rate increase is justified. Also, do they need both a rate hike and an increase to the per therm rate as well. Seems excessive. Again I know things have gotten tough on a lot of businesses and households I just don't believe that it justifies the increase OVG is requesting. By increasing their rates you will affect the households of 16 Indiana counties and 1 Ohio County. While OVG might need some increase in rates it shouldn't have to hurt their customers as badly as this rate increase would.

I am a Ohio Valley Gas Corp customer. My address is 105 E Union St in Liberty, IN 47353 If you should need anything further from me don't hesitate to call or email me.

Thank you,

Tim Williams
Union County Indiana Commissioner
765-265-3938

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that a copy of the foregoing has been served upon the following parties of record in the captioned proceeding by electronic service on May 15, 2024.

Nicholas K. Kile
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Lauren Aguilar
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