



# about utility rate filings

Sections 9 and 15 of the *Water and Sewerage Act* require utilities to submit written proposals to the Commission for any rate changes. Filings can be prepared either by the Utility or its consultant (typically engineering or accounting), depending on the circumstances and/or the complexity of a Utility's tariff of rates.

There is a list of suggested filings, as well as a simplified rate filing template to assist in the preparation of a filing. As well, Commission staff can be consulted.

Following is a summary of the usual process that takes place when a rate filing is received by the Commission:

**Receipt of a Rate Filing**

Upon receipt, all rate filing documents are circulated to a utility panel of 3-4 members assigned to deal with matters requiring Commission approval, including rate filings.

**Notice of Application**

Shortly after, a Notice of Application is prepared and published in the Utility's local newspaper. The Notice tells customers about the filing and allows an opportunity to give feedback on the Utility's proposal. Customers are usually given 2-3 weeks to submit their comments in response to the published notice. (Notices can also be posted by the Utility throughout the community or sent directly to ratepayers.)

**NOTE:** The Commission encourages utilities to communicate matters affecting rates to its customers prior to submitting an application, whenever possible.

The Notice of Application and a copy of the Utility's rate submission are posted on the Commission's website as well.

**Staff Analysis**

In addition, TRSD staff carries out an independent analysis of the rate proposal for the Commission panel's review.

**Public Hearing**

Following the deadline for comments set out in the Notice, the panel reviews any input received and determines the necessity of a public hearing.

Whether a hearing is held depends generally on the nature and quality of responses. If no public hearing is held, the application is dealt with via a *paper hearing* which involves a review of the filing through a written process where the Commission and TRSD staff may ask questions, or look for more information on the Utility's proposal.

- Panel's Review & Determination**  
The Commission continues to review the details of the Utility's request and all relevant information to determine whether the proposed rates are *necessary* (see section 10 of the *Water & Sewerage Act*) and whether they adequately meet the Utility's projected revenue requirements.
- Commission's Findings**  
Upon completion of its review of the application and analysis, the Commission issues its findings in the form of a written Order and Tariff.
- Order & Tariff**  
The Order and Tariff are mailed to the Utility. As well, the Order, Tariff and a Background Report are posted on the Commission's website.

## **processing time**

The processing of a rate application usually takes between 3-6 weeks (mainly because of the 2-3 week public notice process), and filings should be submitted with this in mind. Effective dates for proposed rate changes typically coincide with a Utility's billing cycle so if a rate change is requested for effect January 1, rate filings should be submitted in early to mid-November.

## **suggested filings**

For guidelines on rate filing requirements, please see the Suggested Minimum Filings for Utility Rate Applications.

## **rate filing template**

The Commission offers an electronic rate filing template for simplified rate filings. The template is designed to assist in the preparation of a rate submission and relates to the requirements set out in the Suggested Minimum Filing guidelines. [Click here for template.](#)

## **comparable rates**

Rates in each municipality are unique and not comparable. Each jurisdiction has different factors affecting costs including, initial infrastructure costs, age of the treatment plant, funding received, type and level of treatment provided, the number of ratepayers, and general overhead and operating costs.