

Linda M. Lane
[REDACTED]
Mission Hill, South Dakota 57046
December 6, 2016

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
Capitol Building
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5070

Re: Comments on the Farm Tap Declaratory Rulings Docket NG16-014

Dear Commissioners,

I am a utility customer of Northwestern Energy and am dependent on that utility to supply natural gas to my home. I am retired and on a limited income. I use the natural gas to heat my home, heat my water, cook, and to help prepare goods which I sell in a farmers' market. Our family paid a considerable amount to be able to hook up to this utility back when we built this house 25 years ago. We rely on it.

I received letters from Northwestern Energy indicating they want to stop providing natural gas service to me effective December 31, 2017.

I understand the hearing on December 14, 2016 will examine three questions proposed by your staff, and I have the following comments.

- 1) Does the Commission have jurisdiction over any utility providing natural gas from the transmission line owned and operated by Northern Natural Gas Company?
 - a. It appears to me, as a customer, that both Northern Natural Gas Company and Northwestern Energy fit your definitions of a "Gas Utility" and that both provide "Gas Service" in my part of South Dakota. I found the definitions in the South Dakota Codified Laws 49-34A-1.
 - b. Northern Natural Gas presents itself on its website as a gas transmission company, not a utility. But, its transmission lines run through the most productive farmland in South Dakota, and allowing farms and homes to tap those lines where they are nearby makes good economic and environmental sense. There is no economic reason to install separate lines to serve local delivery when the transmission line is available. Northern is very proud of their Green credentials, and this economical use of clean natural gas should fit in with that commitment by the company.
 - c. See comment 2a. below.
- 2) If so, which entity, NorthWestern Corporation dba NorthWestern Energy or Northern Natural Gas Company, if either, is a public utility as defined by SDCL Chapter 49 with respect to these farm tap customers?
 - a. Please find attached a copy of my recent gas bill from Northwestern Energy. They clearly think they are my gas utility, and it says so on the bill. They are charging me for "Utility Services" as shown on page 2 of the bill. Furthermore, they refer me to you, the Public Utilities

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Commission if I have any "unresolved questions or concerns" and they provide your phone number. With the greatest respect, I think both Northwestern Energy and I agree that they are a utility, and that they are my utility, and that I am their customer.

- 3) Are the farm taps in whole or in part subject to state jurisdiction for the purpose of pipeline safety pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-34B?
 - a. Since our tap is regulated to very low pressure, I don't think it needs regulation as a hazardous pipeline.

Thank you for your attention to my comments. Please understand, my goal is to be able to keep natural gas service to my home, and to my neighbors' homes and farms, whoever supplies it. The current tap has worked well for many years, and it seems to me there is no better solution than to keep it operating.

Sincerely,



Linda M. Lane



NorthWestern
Energy

Delivering a Bright Future

Customer Service: 1-800-245-6977

CUSTOMER:

LINDA LANE

ACCOUNT NUMBER:

ACCOUNT DESCRIPTION:

BILLING DATE:

August 31, 2016

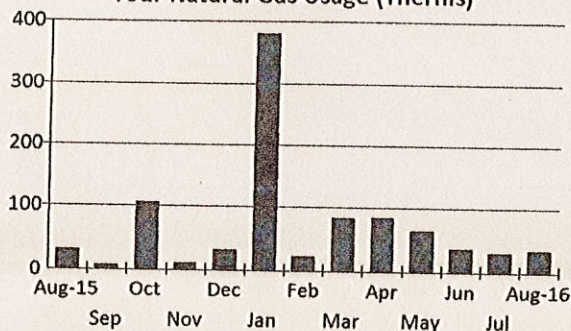
Service Address:

NNG WORTHING SD 57077

11 E Park St | Butte, MT 59701-1711 | NorthWesternEnergy.com

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Your Natural Gas Usage (Therms)



	Aug 2015	Jul 2016	Aug 2016
Days of Service	32	27	32
Therms Used	31.00	31.00	36.00
Avg. Therms per day	1.0	1.1	1.1
Avg. cost per day	\$0.76	\$0.85	\$0.82
Avg. daily temp (°F)	72	75	74

DUE DATE

September 21, 2016

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

\$ 27.56



ACCOUNT SUMMARY

Previous Balance			\$	23.94
Payments Received	August 15, 2016	Thank you	\$	(23.94)
Current Charges			\$	26.37
Tax			\$	1.19

Total Amount Due

\$ 27.56

☒ **SUMMARY OF CURRENT CHARGES**

	Utility Service	TOTAL
Natural Gas Service	\$ 26.37	\$ 26.37

Total Current Charges

\$ 26.37

\$ 26.37



BUDGET BILLING INFORMATION



IMPORTANT ACCOUNT INFORMATION



MESSAGE BOARD

Questions about your bill or service? Call the NorthWestern Energy Customer Contact Center TOLL FREE at 800-245-6977 (Monday through Friday, 7 a.m.-6 p.m. Central Time) or visit us at: www.northwesternenergy.com

Account Number: [REDACTED]
Customer Name: LINDA LANE
Service Address: [REDACTED] NNG WORTHING SD 57077

NorthWestern Energy: 1-800-245-6977
Customer Service: (M-F 7 AM - 6 PM)
and Emergencies 24 hours a day

PAY BY PHONE OPTIONS:

Credit/Debit or ATM Card:

1-877-361-4927

Checking, Savings, or Money Market:

1-800-218-4959

Customers with unresolved questions or concerns may contact the consumer affairs division of South Dakota Public Utilities Commission at 1-800-332-1782 or write the PUC at 500 East Capitol Ave, Pierre, SD 57501.

Current Rates Effective 08/02/2016

NATURAL GAS SERVICES

Service Charge	\$	6.00
Farm Tap Customer Charge	\$	.2100500
Purch Gas Commodity SD 81	\$	.3583100

UTILITY SERVICES

GAS SERVICES

Read Dates			Meter Readings		Read	Meter	Conversion	Average	Billed
From	To	Day	Previous	Current	Code	Volume	Pressure	BTU Factor	Therms
07/22/2016	08/23/2016	32	843.00	864.00	Actual	21.00	1.6259334	1.058375	36.00

Meter Number: [REDACTED]

Rate: 81M-Farm Tap Customer Charge

Customer Charge	\$	6.00
Energy Charge	\$	7.56
Purch Gas Commodity SD 81	\$	12.81

Natural Gas Services Total \$ 26.37

TOTAL UTILITY SERVICES \$ 26.37

TAXES

STATE TAX - SOUTH DAKOTA	\$	1.19
TOTAL TAXES	\$	1.19