

**NEW JERSEY NATURAL GAS COMPANY
NOTICE OF FILING AND PUBLIC HEARING**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIVERSAL SERVICE
FUND PURSUANT TO SECTION 12 OF THE ELECTRIC DISCOUNT AND
ENERGY COMPETITION ACT OF 1999
BPU DOCKET NO. EX00020091**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF NEW JERSEY NATURAL
GAS COMPANY 2023/2024 ANNUAL COMPLIANCE FILING FOR THE
UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND PROGRAM FACTOR WITHIN THE
SOCIETAL BENEFITS CHARGE RATE
BPU DOCKET NO. ER23060409**

PLEASE 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 (the “Board”), to provide funds to assist qualifying low-income individuals in paying their energy bills. Pursuant to Orders of the Board dated April 30, 2003, July 16, 2003, and June 22, 2005, the State’s electric and gas public utilities’ Societal Benefits Charge (“SBC”) includes recovery of funding for the USF program through uniform statewide rates. The SBC also includes funding for the Lifeline Program, which provides assistance with heating costs to qualifying elderly and disabled persons and incorporates funds for the Work First New Jersey 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 programs and authorizes the disbursement of benefits to eligible customers in the respective programs.

New Jersey Natural Gas Company (“NJNG” or the “Company”) made a compliance filing with the Board on June 28, 2023, requesting authority to implement an increase related to the statewide USF/Lifeline program charge, as described below, to be effective on October 1, 2023. The current after-tax USF/Lifeline program charge for natural gas customers is \$0.0166 per therm. The USF component is increasing by \$0.0004 per therm and the Lifeline component is increasing by \$0.0007 per therm. The proposed after-tax USF/Lifeline program charge will increase to \$0.0177 to recover approximately \$49.5 million for the statewide natural gas USF program and \$26.8 million for the Lifeline program. The above request will not result in any profit to the Company. The revenues received under the proposed USF charge are designed to recover only costs for the USF and Lifeline programs and are remitted to the State by the Company. 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, 2024. Copies of NJNG’s June 28, 2023 filing can be reviewed on the Company’s website, www.njng.com/regulatory in the “Filings & Updates” subsection of the “Regulatory Info.”

The proposed statewide charges for natural gas customers are as follows:

Universal Service/Lifeline Fund Components of Societal Benefits Charge				
	Present	Present (Incl. Sales and Use Tax)	Proposed	Proposed (Incl. Sales and Use Tax)
USF- per therm	\$0.0104	\$0.0111	\$0.0108	\$0.0115
Lifeline- per therm	\$0.0052	\$0.0055	\$0.0058	\$0.0062
Total USF/ Lifeline	\$0.0156	\$0.0166	\$0.0166	\$0.0177

If approved by the Board, the impact of the proposed changes in the USF/Lifeline Charge on typical natural gas bills is illustrated below:

Customer Type	Therm Level	Rates		Increase	
		Bill as of June 1, 2023	Proposed Bill as of October 1, 2023	Amount	
					Percent
Residential Heat Sales	100	\$151.18	\$151.29	\$0.11	0.07%
Residential Non-Heat Sales	25	\$45.16	\$45.19	\$0.03	0.07%
General Service Small	100	\$171.61	\$171.72	\$0.11	0.06%
General Service Large	1200	\$1,593.44	\$1,594.76	\$1.32	0.08%

Based on this Filing, a typical residential heat natural gas customer using 100 therms per month would see an increase in their monthly bill from \$151.18 to \$151.29, or \$0.11 or approximately 0.07 percent.

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 NJNG.

A copy of the Filing can be viewed on the Company’s website at www.njng.com/regulatory.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, virtual public hearings will be held on following date and times so that members of the public may present their views on the Filing:

VIRTUAL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: August 23, 2023 HEARING TIMES: 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. LOCATION: Zoom Virtual Webinar Join: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/2458136397?pwd=VUJpK1V0aDYxZDIiZUIwaEIOWDFRZz09 -or- Dial-In: +1 646 876 9923 Meeting ID: 245 813 6397 Passcode: 819208
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Representatives of the Company, Board’s Staff and the New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel will participate in the virtual public hearings. Members of the public may use the Zoom Link or Dial-In Number and Conference ID to express their views on this matter. All comments will be part of the final record of the proceeding and will be considered by the Board. To encourage full participation in this opportunity for public comment, please submit any requests for needed accommodations, such as interpreters and/or listening assistance, 48 hours prior to the above hearings to the Board Secretary at board.secretary@bpu.nj.gov.

The Board is also accepting written and electronic comments. Comments may be submitted directly to the specific docket listed above using the “Post Comments” button on the Board’s Public Document Search tool. Comments are considered public documents for purposes of the State’s Open Public Records Act. Only public documents should be submitted using the “Post Comments” button on the Board’s Public Document Search tool. Any confidential information should be submitted in accordance with the procedures set forth in N.J.A.C. 14:1-12.3. In addition to hard copy submissions, confidential information may also be filed electronically via the Board’s e-filing system or by email to the Secretary of the Board. Please include “Confidential Information” in the subject line of any email. Instructions for confidential e-filing are found on the Board’s webpage.
<https://www.nj.gov/bpu/agenda/efiling/>.

Emailed and/or written comments may also be submitted to:

Secretary of the Board
Sherri L. Golden,
44 South Clinton Ave., 1st Floor
PO Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625-0350
Phone: 609-913-6241
Email: board.secretary@bpu.nj.gov

**New Jersey Natural Gas Company
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