



- Specific suggestions for improvement included:
  - Alberta Works indicated some of its offices last year waited five to seven days for information back from retailers after sending consent for release of information forms signed by customers. It indicated that not all offices reported this but retailers should ensure there is a quick turnaround in all cases. The group questioned if some offices may be using outdated contact information.
  - One retailer suggested that the process begin earlier. Last year it ran the list even earlier, giving them more time to contact the customer and allowing them to send a shorter list to the UCA. Others indicated that the timelines should not change from last year. The group agreed to keep the timelines the same as last year.
  - Last year, one retailer included commercial sites in its list to the UCA. The UCA asked that commercial sites not be included on lists going forward.
  - The UCA also noted that last year it received customers who had already closed their accounts and moved on its lists. The question of whether vacant properties are included on the lists was posed to the group. The UCA asked that vacant sites not be included on lists going forward.
  - The group discussed whether the retailers can distinguish in their systems customers that have been disconnected and then moved from those that have only been disconnected.
  - EPCOR Energy believes that it removes from its lists all customers who have indicated that they have moved (as long as notification from the customer has been received before generating its list for the UCA).
  - Direct Energy was unsure and indicated that it also uses the term “unknown.” Direct Energy agreed to check if it is removing from its lists all customers (who they are aware of) that have moved or are no longer living at the disconnected site. Direct Energy will also confirm circumstances in which it uses the term “unknown.” Direct Energy also mentioned that these types of sites may have appeared on its list last year because of the flood. Many sites were disconnected during the flood; some were later salvaged and some were reconnected. So, last fall, the status of some sites was still not known.

**ACTION: Direct Energy to confirm whether it removes from its lists individuals who have moved or are no longer living at a disconnected site. Direct Energy to advise by September 19, 2014.**

**ACTION: Direct Energy to confirm circumstances in which it uses the term “unknown.” Direct Energy to advise by September 19, 2014.**

### 3 Referral process – social services agencies to provide updated contact and process information

- Alberta Works confirmed that Caron Bishop is the designated contact for Edmonton and Roxanne Gill is the backup contact located in Calgary.
- It was agreed that all parties would send updated contact information to the AUC for circulation.

**ACTION: All parties to send updated contact information to [regulatorypolicy@auc.ab.ca](mailto:regulatorypolicy@auc.ab.ca) by September 19, 2014. The AUC will then distribute the contact information.**

#### 4 UCA process – group to discuss timelines and other changes to process for 2014/2015

- Last year the process timeline was:
  - October 11 - retailers ran their lists of customers cut-off for nonpayment (CONP'd) sometime since the prior winter moratorium that remained cut off and in arrears.
  - October 17 to the end of October - retailers attempted to contact the customers by letter and/or by phone
  - November 1 - an updated list was pulled and information for those customers in arrears was sent to the UCA using the Excel template provided by the UCA. (Those customers not in arrears were passed on to the distributor for site visits.)
- It was noted that November 1, 2014, is a Saturday. The group decided that this year everyone would submit their lists to the UCA by Friday, October 31.

**ACTION: Retailers to provide the UCA lists by October 31, 2014, containing customers disconnected for nonpayment since the last winter moratorium that remain disconnected and in arrears.**

- The UCA questioned whether it should be receiving customers on the lists who owe a very small amount (e.g. under \$10). The UCA proposed that customers whose accounts are in arrears by such a small amount should, instead, be moved to the distributors' lists for site visits, because if the amount is small, the customer has likely not paid it because of the reconnection fee and the deposit. Therefore, the customer is similar to those whose bills are paid, and the retailer can collect the outstanding small amount later when it collects the reconnect fee and deposit.
- The group discussed what dollar threshold should be used to determine which list customers should appear on.
- Retailers expressed concerns about adding an additional level of complexity to their queries. One suggestion was that retailers could filter their lists using Excel to identify those that fall below the threshold and then manually move them to the distributor list. Retailers were also concerned with the potential of having to collect additional amounts later.
- Distributors expressed that changing the process to incorporate a threshold would require a change in training as well because scripting would need to change.
- The group decided against instituting a threshold this year but asked that the UCA use the time this fall to monitor the number of customers who owe less than \$25 and determine the reasons why customers remained disconnected despite owing a small amount. The UCA agreed to provide group with an update in the spring. AUI having the fewest number of customers appearing on its list and being its own default supply provider volunteered to perform a pilot and add customers in arrears less than \$25 to their site visit list and report back on the experience in the spring.

**ACTION: UCA to continue to contact customers owing less than \$25 and obtain reasons why customers remain disconnected despite owing a small amount. The UCA to provide the group numbers and reasons in the spring.**

- The UCA revisited the topic of municipal permit requirements for gas customers who have been disconnected for six months or more. As mentioned during the September 12, 2013, meeting, the UCA would like retailers to get in touch with these consumers before they reach the six month barrier. The UCA reminded the group that Alberta Works will only pay for the permits required by the municipalities to obtain reconnection if the customer is the home owner. Otherwise, Alberta Works considers the costs of obtaining the permits as belonging to the landlord. Previously, during the September 2013 meeting, the group had discussed that Direct Energy should provide information about this in the letter it sends to customers in the fall. Direct Energy indicated that it did not include this information in its letter last year but that it refers to the UCA website in its letter, and the UCA website has information about this.
- It was mentioned that those customers who were disconnected at the beginning of May 2014 due to nonpayment will require a permit should they remain disconnected past October 2014.
- The UCA asked Direct Energy if it would be possible to run a query in mid-October to identify customers approaching the six-month mark of disconnection due to nonpayment, attempt contact to arrange reconnect and, if unsuccessful, provide that list to the UCA shortly after producing it so that the UCA could reach out to those customers earlier before the end of October.
- Direct Energy advised that it would look into whether producing such a list would be possible.

**ACTION: Direct Energy to look into running a query mid-October for the UCA which identifies gas customers approaching the six-month mark of disconnection due to nonpayment. Direct Energy to let the UCA know by September 19, 2014.**

## 5 Distributor site visit process

- The group agreed that the distributors' lists would be provided to them by October 31, 2014.

**ACTION: All retailers to provide distributors by October 31, 2014, their lists of customers that remain disconnected for nonpayment and are not in arrears.**

## 6 Other issues

- On behalf of ENMAX Encompass not in attendance at the meeting, the AUC raised the issue of how to deal with sites that remain disconnected due to nonpayment but have switched retailers and cannot get reconnected due to a site lock.
- The AUC provided a refresher on the site lock process:
  - A site gets disconnected due to nonpayment to their retailer.
  - ATCO Gas marks the site as being locked.
  - A new retailer enrolls the site.
  - ATCO Gas sends the retailer an EMC transaction (non-standard transaction) to inform the retailer that there is a lock on the site.
  - The new retailer issues an energize request in order to get the site reconnected.
  - ATCO Gas sends an energize failure.

- In order to get reconnected, the customer must pay the retailer that disconnected them (former retailer) and, upon receiving payment, the former retailer must send the release lock transaction (RCL) to ATCO Gas.
- ATCO Gas sends a new EMC transaction to the new retailer to inform that retailer that the lock has been lifted.
- The new retailer issues a new energize request.
- The group discussed whether or not customers with site locks are appearing on any of the retailers' lists. Direct Energy was uncertain if customers that they have issued disconnect requests for that are no longer their sites are on their lists. [UPDATE: Direct Energy has since confirmed that customers who were CONP'd and then enrolled with another retailer are not on its lists that are sent to the UCA nor to the distributors.]
- ATCO Gas suggested that it should be the responsibility of the retailer that issued the disconnect request to add those customers to its lists. ATCO Gas did, however, point out that there are some retailers that are not part of this group that do issue disconnect requests.
- The AUC indicated that competitive retailers that are not involved in this process would likely not be aware that they would be expected to provide lists to the UCA and distributors unless they are contacted directly.
- ATCO Gas and ATCO Electric were asked whether it would be possible to identify customers that have enrolled with other retailers but remain disconnected due to a site lock, with the goal of determining which retailers need to be part of this process this fall. The AUC would then specifically contact those retailers to work with them. ATCO Gas and ATCO Electric indicated that they would investigate whether it would be possible for them to obtain this information.
- The group discussed that it would be useful to know how many customers are in this situation and, therefore, may require site visits and/or contact by the UCA.

**ACTION: ATCO Gas and ATCO Electric to identify customers that have enrolled with other retailers but remain disconnected due to site locks and provide the information to Direct Energy for their sites to include on their lists and for all other sites provide it to the AUC to allow the AUC to determine which retailers to contact about this.**

- The AUC thanked all parties for their participation and continued hard work on this initiative.