

Alberta Utilities Commission Enforcement

May 13, 2020

Mike Stock
Vice President, Financial Services & Regulatory Affairs
AltaGas Utilities Inc.
5509 45 Street
Leduc, Alta. T9E 6T6

Dear Mr. Stock:

No notice of specified penalty issued for self-reported contraventions

1. On March 27, 2020, the Alberta Utilities Commission issued Bulletin 2020-10: *Suspension of specified penalties program for self-reported contraventions*, in which the Commission announced that in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it would suspend the issuance of notices of specified penalty to ensure that utility service providers can focus on helping their customers during the 90-day utility payment deferral program. Specifically, the Commission stated that it would exercise its regulatory discretion by putting in place the following measures:

- a. No new notices of specified penalty for any contraventions that arose prior to March 18, 2020, will be issued during the 90-day deferral period from March 18 to June 18, 2020. Any notices of specified penalty issued prior to March 18, 2020, will continue in effect.
- b. After June 18, 2020, for any self-reported contraventions that arose prior to March 18, 2020, the Commission will only consider issuing notices of specified penalty for contraventions that resulted in disconnections of a customer's site in error if that customer's site was disconnected for a period in excess of 24 hours. A notice of specified penalty will not be issued for any other self-reported contraventions.

2. AltaGas Utilities Inc. (AltaGas) has self-disclosed several events to the AUC under Rule 032: *Specified Penalties for Contravention of AUC Rules*, related to possible contraventions of Subsection 3.4.1(4) of Rule 003: *Service Standards for Energy Service Providers*. AltaGas stated that it had mistakenly sent an outdated file to a collections agency which resulted in 29 customers that were not in arrears to be referred to a credit agency in error.

3. The Commission considers contraventions of this nature to be serious due the potential lasting harm that an incorrect referral to a collection or credit agency may have on a customer's credit history. The Commission will not issue a notice of specified penalty in this instance due to the measures set out in Bulletin 2020-10, however the Commission requests the following information so it can be satisfied that any harm to a customer arising from a wrongful referral to a collection agency is mitigated.

4. The Commission requests that AltaGas respond to the following questions by Wednesday, May 27, 2020.
- a. Please explain the process steps that AltaGas takes when it retracts a referral to a collection agency.
 - b. What information does AltaGas receive from the collection agency to confirm that the referral was successfully retracted?
 - c. Please describe the information and measures available to AltaGas to ensure that a referral made in error does not cause harm to a customer's credit history.
5. If you have any questions, please contact the undersigned at 403-592-4529 or by email at greg.andrews@auc.ab.ca.

Sincerely yours,

Greg Andrews
Senior Enforcement Analyst