

FAQs for Liberty Utilities Rate Increase Request - Docket No. RPU-2020-0002

January 6, 2020

Background:

Liberty Utilities Company (Liberty) filed an application with the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) on December 31, 2020, in Docket No. RPU-2020-0002, requesting approval to increase the natural gas rates it charges to its customers. Liberty mailed notices to its customers on December 29, 2020, showing the amount of the proposed increase by customer class.

Q1: How much of an increase is Liberty requesting?

A1: Liberty is seeking a base rate requirement of \$3,567,431, which includes an increase in its allowed annual revenue of \$566,241, which is an increase of approximately 18.87%. The current and proposed monthly rates shown in the table below include fixed service charges that are not proposed to change, plus rates that vary with usage, which are proposed to change. The numbers in this table reflect average monthly bills. These amounts do not include proposed surcharges (see Q2 below.) Ultimately, the IUB will set Liberty's final rates, which may be different than those proposed.

Customer Class	Current Monthly Rate	Proposed Increase	Proposed Monthly Rate	Percentage Increase
Residential	\$61.95	\$7.10	\$69.05	11.45%
Small Commercial	\$108.61	\$11.08	\$119.69	10.20%
Small Commercial Transport (includes Small Schools)	\$123.13	\$33.37	\$156.50	27.10%
Medium Commercial	\$930.05	\$82.32	\$1,012.38	8.85%
Medium Commercial Transport (includes Medium Schools)	\$397.26	\$84.44	\$481.69	21.25%
Commercial Interruptible	\$7,043.48	\$838.55	\$7,882.03	11.91%
Industrial	\$31,168.30	\$920.70	\$32,089.00	2.95%
Industrial Interruptible	\$4,958.43	\$159.43	\$5,117.86	3.22%
Industrial Transport	\$12,481.93	\$2,630.20	\$15,112.13	21.07%

Q2: Is Liberty proposing other changes?

A2: Liberty is proposing to discontinue the credit associated with the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 and increase the rate case surcharge from \$0.00957 per therm to \$0.01435 per therm with final rates.

Q3: Will Liberty implement temporary rates?

A3: Yes. Iowa law allows Liberty to implement temporary rate increases. Liberty is proposing temporary rates that match its proposed final rates.

Q4: When would the proposed rate increase take effect?

A4: Liberty is proposing that the temporary rate increase take effect on January 10, 2021. Those rates will be in effect until the Board makes a final decision in this case. Liberty's final rates will take effect after the Board issues a decision and those rates may be different than the temporary rates. Depending on the final rates approved by the IUB, a refund may be owed to customers with interest.

Q5: When did Liberty last increase its rates?

A5: Liberty's last general rate increase, Docket No. RPU-2016-0003, was approved by the IUB on April 28, 2017.

Q6: What happens next?

A6: The IUB will schedule a consumer comment hearing for customers to ask questions of Liberty, the IUB, or the Office of the Consumer Advocate. The IUB will then be scheduling a public hearing to receive evidence and testimony regarding the proposed increase in rates. The IUB will ultimately decide whether Liberty's proposal will result in rates that are reasonable and just or whether Liberty's proposal must be modified such that the resulting rates will be reasonable and just.

Q7: When will the IUB issue its decision on Liberty's proposed rate increase?

A7: The IUB will issue its decision by October 31, 2021.

Q8: How can I submit comments or objections to Liberty's proposed increase?

A8: You can email comments or objections to customer@iub.iowa.gov. Be sure to reference the docket number for this case, RPU-2020-0002, in your email. You may also use the [Open Docket Comment Form](#) and select the docket name for this case. Comments or objections are not individually addressed or responded to by the IUB, but they are reviewed and considered as the IUB makes its decision in the case. You may also submit verbal comments at consumer comment hearings. (See Q9 below.)

Q9: Will there be an opportunity to ask questions or deliver comments verbally?

A9: Yes. The IUB will schedule a consumer comment hearing for customers to ask questions of Liberty, the IUB, or the Office of the Consumer Advocate. Customers will receive notice from Liberty of the time and location once the consumer comment meeting is scheduled.

Q10: Will there be COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions in place at the consumer comment hearings?

A10: Yes. The IUB will require those attending the in-person hearings to maintain six-foot social distancing with anyone outside their immediate family and wear face masks or face shields. Masks, hand sanitizer, and gloves will be provided at the hearings. Individuals are encouraged to check the IUB's website, iub.iowa.gov, closer to the date of the consumer comment hearings, in case pandemic conditions have necessitated changes to the conduct of the hearings.

Q11: How can members of the public find the materials submitted to the IUB for the rate case?

A11: Public access to documents filed in this case are available in the Electronic Filing System (EFS) at <https://efs.iowa.gov> by searching under Docket RPU-2020-0002. Paper copies are also available (a fee may apply).

Q12: I have a complaint unrelated to the rate case regarding Liberty Utilities, how can I have that addressed?

A12: If you contacted your utility company and have tried unsuccessfully to resolve the matter, contact IUB Customer Service staff and request assistance. Call the IUB at 877-565-4450, fill out an Online Complaint form, or email customer@iub.iowa.gov. The IUB is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.