



## Ohio Administrative Code

### Rule 4901:1-29-12 Customer billing and payments.

Effective: December 1, 2014

---

(A) A retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator (and/or its agent) may bill customers directly for competitive retail natural gas services pursuant to this rule. A retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator may bill for consolidated services if it can demonstrate, pursuant to the standards contained in the incumbent natural gas company tariffs, to the incumbent natural gas company and the commission it has the capability to bill customers for such services.

(B) Customer bills issued by or for retail natural gas suppliers and governmental aggregators shall be accurate and understandable, be rendered at intervals consistent with those of the customer's natural gas company, and contain sufficient information for customers to compute and compare the total cost of competitive retail natural gas service(s). Such bills shall also include:

(1) The customer's name, billing address, service address, the customer's natural gas company account number, and if applicable, the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator account number.

(2) The dates of service covered by the bill, an itemization of each type of competitive retail natural gas service covered by the bill, any related billing components, the charge for each type of natural gas service, and an itemization of all other fees and charges.

(3) The customer's historical consumption during each of the preceding twelve months or each of the preceding months that the customer has been a customer of the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator, whichever is less; with a total consumption and an overall average monthly consumption for such period.

(4) The applicable billing determinants, including beginning meter reading(s), ending meter reading(s), multiplier(s), and any other consumption(s) adjustments.

(5) The unit price charged per Ccf or Mcf, whichever is consistent with the incumbent natural gas



company's billing format, if the product is based on a per-unit price for competitive retail natural gas service, as calculated by dividing current-period competitive retail natural gas service charges by the current-period consumption. For monthly-rate offers, a specific listing of the rate being charged per month for the duration of the contract.

(6) An identification of the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator of each retail natural gas service appearing on the bill.

(7) The amount billed for the current period, any unpaid amounts due from previous periods, any payments or credits applied to the customer's account during the current period, any late payment charges or gross and net charges, if applicable, and the total amount due and payable.

(8) The due date for payment to keep the account current. Such due date shall be consistent with that provided by the incumbent natural gas company for its charges.

(9) Current balance of the account, if a residential customer is billed according to a budget plan.

(10) Options and instructions on how customers may make their payments.

(11) A toll-free or local telephone number and address for customer billing questions or complaints must appear for any retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator whose charges appear on the bill.

(12) The following statement: "If your complaint is not resolved after you have called (name the retail natural gas company or governmental aggregator), or for general utility information, residential and business customers may contact the public utilities commission of Ohio (PUCO) for assistance at 1-800-686-7826 (toll free) from eight a.m. to five p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.puco.ohio.gov>. Hearing or speech impaired customers may contact the PUCO via 7-1-1 (Ohio relay service).

The Ohio consumers' counsel (OCC) represents residential utility customers in matters before the PUCO. The OCC can be contacted at 1-877-742-5622 (toll free) from eight a.m. to five p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.pickocc.org>."



(13) The incumbent natural gas company's twenty-four hour local/toll-free telephone number for reporting service emergencies.

(14) Identification of estimated bills or bills not based upon actual end-of-period meter readings for the period.

(15) An explanation of any codes and abbreviations used.

(C) If applicable, each retail natural gas supplier and governmental aggregator shall, upon request, provide customers with the name and street address/location of the nearest payment center and/or authorized payment agent and disclose any fee associated with using such payment center and/or agent.

(D) When a customer pays the bill at a payment center or to an authorized payment agent, such payment shall be credited to the customer's account as of the day it is received by such payment center or agent.

(E) Each retail natural gas supplier and governmental aggregator shall establish policies and procedures for handling billing disputes and requests for payment arrangements.

(F) Partial payments applied towards any past due amount on a bill or the balance due on a disconnection notice must be apportioned to past due natural gas company service and delivery charges, then to any current natural gas company service and delivery charges, before being applied to any retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator charges unless the customer pays the entire amount past due or more. In that case, any amount paid over the amount past due shall be applied first to natural gas company service and delivery charges.

(G) Natural gas companies shall make dual billing and consolidated billing available to retail natural gas suppliers and governmental aggregators.

(1) If the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator elects for its charges to be included on the incumbent natural gas company's consolidated bill:



- (a) The retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator shall furnish the incumbent natural gas company sufficient bill contents as required by paragraph (B) of this rule.
- (b) The incumbent natural gas company shall produce a consolidated bill including all such required contents provided by the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator if it is not already on the customer's bill from the incumbent natural gas company. However, the consolidated bill may provide the following amounts on a consolidated basis only: budget amounts, past due balances, and payments applied.
- (c) The consolidated bill shall state the name of the applicable retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator in close proximity to the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator commodity charges.
- (d) The incumbent natural gas company shall offer budget billing of retail natural gas supplier and governmental aggregator charges as a customer-elected option.
- (2) If the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator elects a dual billing arrangement, the incumbent natural gas company's bill shall include the name of the applicable retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator and a statement that such retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator is responsible for billing the retail natural gas supplier or governmental aggregator charges.
- (H) Customer bills issued by or for a natural gas company shall state the customer's historical consumption during each of the preceding twelve months, with a total and average consumption for such twelve-month period.
- (I) Natural gas companies shall prominently display the "apples to apples" notice on customer bills for customers in accordance with rule 4901:1-13-11 of the Administrative Code.
- (J) Natural gas companies shall comply with Chapter 4901:1-18 of the Administrative Code regarding disconnection of a customer's natural gas service.
- (K) For the purposes of this rule, full payment of a budget amount due shall not be construed as a



partial payment.

(L) In the event the retail natural gas supplier or opt-in governmental aggregator bills for its own services, the retail natural gas supplier and/or governmental aggregator may terminate the contract for customer nonpayment only upon fourteen days' notice.

(M) Any competitive retail natural gas service supplier that bills for both regulated and unregulated service shall comply with paragraphs (E) and (F) of rule 4901:1-13-11 of the Administrative Code.