



2022 Avista General Rate Case Information Sheet

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The Public Counsel Unit of the Washington Attorney General's Office represents residential and small business customers of state regulated electric, natural gas, water, and telecommunications companies and customers of transportation companies regulated by the Utilities Transportation Commission (UTC). Public Counsel advocates on behalf of customers before the UTC and courts regarding rates, mergers, business practices, service quality, energy efficiency, safety, and policy matters.

Avista's Initial Rate Increase Request

On Jan. 21, 2022, Avista filed a request with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) to increase its electric and natural gas rates for the next two years. Avista argues that major capital investments are necessary to provide safe, reliable, and improved service; meet mandatory obligations; and replace aging or damaged infrastructure and equipment. Avista also argues that costs are rising related to labor and benefits, informational technology, and insurance premiums, particularly due to the impact of nationwide wildfires.

The Proposed Settlement for This Case

All parties except Public Counsel reached an agreement to settle this case with a lower rate increase than Avista originally requested and additional terms, including incorporating equity into business planning, tracking of performance metrics, low-income program improvements, natural gas decarbonization planning, removal of Colstrip Coal Plant costs, and removal of other discretionary cost increases.

Public Counsel Position on the Settlement

Public Counsel supports many Settlement terms, but objects to certain cost-related terms and the bill impact to customers. Public Counsel believes the rate increase should be much lower and challenges Avista's request for higher shareholder profits, operations and maintenance costs, and capital expenditures. Public Counsel also offers improvements to Avista's Wildfire Mitigation Plan to better prevent utility-caused wildfires, improve service reliability, increase accountability, and improve accessibility of emergency information for vulnerable communities.

If you have questions, you can contact Public Counsel by email at: utility@atg.wa.gov, or by mail at: Attorney General's Office, Public Counsel Unit, 800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000, Seattle, WA 98104.

The Parties

The UTC considers the recommendations of every party, and no party's recommendation is considered binding. The following parties are participating in this proceeding:

- Avista
- UTC Staff *
- Washington Attorney General's Office, Public Counsel Unit (residential and small business customer advocate)
- The Energy Project (low-income customer advocate)
- Alliance of Western Energy Consumers (large industrial customer advocate)
- Small Business Utility Advocates (small business customer advocate)
- Walmart, Inc.
- Sierra Club (environmental advocate)
- Northwest Energy Coalition (environmental advocate)

*In formal UTC proceedings, regulatory Staff participates like any other party, and UTC Commissioners make the decision.





Table 1: Average Residential Monthly Bill Comparison

		Current Bill	Initial Request	Proposed Settlement	Public Counsel Position
Electric	Year 1	\$85.52	\$92.04	\$89.99	\$85.58
	Year 2		\$94.84	\$92.23	\$86.07
	Total Change			\$6.71	\$0.55
Gas	Year 1	\$64.86	\$66.40	\$65.06	\$64.90
	Year 2		\$67.15	\$65.58	\$64.98
	Total Change			\$0.72	\$0.12

This table compares the monthly bill increase for the average residential electric customer using 932 kWhs of electricity and the average residential gas customer using 67 therms of natural gas.

Table 2: Avista Revenue Increase Comparison

		Initial Request	Proposed Settlement	Public Counsel Position
Electric	Year 1	\$52.9 million	\$38 million	\$383 thousand
	Year 2	\$17.1 million	\$12.5 million	\$2.8 million
Gas	Year 1	\$10.9 million	\$7.5 million	\$1.7 million
	Year 2	\$2.2 million	\$1.5 million	\$237 thousand

This table compares the different positions on how much additional revenue Avista should be allowed to collect through rates as a result of this rate case to cover its expenses, including the utility’s authorized rate of return (i.e., shareholder profit).

Table 3: Rate of Return Comparison

Initial Request	Proposed Settlement	Public Counsel Position
7.31%	7.03%	6.46%

Rate of return allows the utility to cover its debt expense and shareholder profits. This table compares the different positions regarding the appropriate level.

Process for Commission Decision

The UTC must approve the settlement for it to take effect. The UTC may approve, approve with modifications, or reject the settlement. The UTC will hold a hearing on the proposed settlement on Sept. 21, 2022 and will issue its decision in time for new rates to go into effect no later than Dec. 21, 2022.

Submit a Comment

The UTC Commissioners appreciate hearing from members of the public and how the Company’s proposed rate increases will impact them. The UTC is holding a virtual public comment hearing to take comments on Sept. 7, 2022, at 6 p.m. You can participate via the zoom link below or by phone.

- Zoom: <https://bit.ly/3BX7DAO>
- Phone: dial 253-215-8782 and use Meeting ID 932 0659 3527 and Passcode 333313.

The public can additionally submit comments in the following ways:

- Via UTC web form at: utc.wa.gov/consumers/ (click on “Submit a Comment” link at the bottom of the web page)
- By e-mail at: comments@utc.wa.gov
- By mail at: **UTC, P.O. Box 47250, Olympia, WA 98504-7250**
- By phone: **1-888-333-WUTC (9882)**

Please include the following in your written comment: your name, mailing address, the name of the company (Avista), and Docket Numbers UE-220053 and UG-220054. For more information, see <http://www.utc.wa.gov/>, or call 1-800-562-6150.