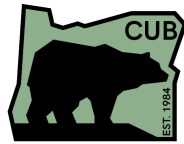




Community Toolkit



Oregon Citizens' Utility Board

Action toolkit for community member

Cascade Natural Gas General Rate Request

[Oregon Public Utility Commission \(PUC\) - Docket UG 525](#)

Campaign Status

Status:

Next step: Scheduled virtual public hearing on March 3, 2026 at 6 PM.

Related Dockets: [UG 525: Cascade Natural Gas Request for a General Rate Revision](#)

This campaign impacts: Customers of Cascade Natural Gas (major service areas are Bend and Eastern Oregon, Umatilla, and Ontario.)

Take Action Now: [Sign-up to testify](#) or send emails to puc.publiccomments@puc.oregon.gov

About the Campaign

This year, Cascade Natural Gas is asking regulators to approve a 17.4% increase in home billing rates. This is the first time Cascade has asked for a big increase since 2020. Cascade's initial request includes infrastructure projects, higher profits for shareholders, and investments in renewable natural gas. CUB is also investigating the gas utility's policy that requires customers to subsidize new hookups for homes and businesses, expanding the gas system.

Overall, Cascade is requesting \$16.4 million from all customers. **\$10.3 million of the request would apply to residential customers. Households could see average home gas bills rise to \$75 per month (an \$11 per month increase).** The impact would be even greater in the winter months when usage is higher. For an average customer paying \$119 in January 2025, Cascade's request would raise that to about \$135 in January 2027. **If approved, this increase would go into effect on October 31, 2026. Additionally, Cascade will be asking for its annual adjustment for fuel costs on top of this rate case, so customers may see further increases this year.**

Included in This Toolkit for Community Members

[Campaign Talking Points](#)

[How to Support the Campaign](#)

[Small But Mighty Tasks \(1-5 minutes\)](#)

[Strong Supporters \(15 minutes - 1 hour\)](#)

[Testimony Template Guideline](#)

[Community Activists \(2+ hours\)](#)

[Supporting Organizations](#)

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Campaign Talking Points

The Problem: Cascade is Asking for a Huge Increase in Our Gas Bills

- Cascade Natural Gas is asking regulators to approve a **17.4% increase in home gas bills**. This could raise the average January gas bill to \$135 (up from \$119) when heating is most important.
- **Oregon is in an energy affordability crisis**. In 2024, Oregon utilities disconnected a record 70,000 households, affecting an estimated 130,000 Oregonians.
- **Cascade is asking for more money that may not benefit Oregon families**. Big spending on adding new customers, expensive renewable natural gas, and expanding the gas system may mean higher bills with no real benefit for us.

Stop Expanding Subsidies for Growing the Gas System

- **Cascade will soon be the last remaining Oregon gas utility charging customers an expansion subsidy**. Line Extension Allowances are subsidies that help install natural gas hookups into new developments.
- **Regulators ended this subsidy for NW Natural and Avista because it does not benefit customers**. As folks all over the state choose to go electric, we must question if this subsidy should be continued. Removing it would save existing customers money!
- Cascade is not just holding on to the subsidy, but **also trying to punish new customers who decide to move away from using gas**. If a new customer doesn't use a baseline amount of gas each year, that new customer will have to pay Cascade back up to thousands of dollars.

Renewable Natural Gas is an Uncertain Bet for Households

- **Gas utilities must reduce their emissions by 2050, but we need that to be affordable**. Alternatives like moving customers to electric appliances also reduce gas use and are shown to be cheaper, practical, and better at reducing emissions.
- **Renewable natural gas is expensive!** Renewable natural gas is a favored option for gas utilities because its big cost means big profits. It also mainly benefits big business, where some industries cannot go electric.
- **Oregonians can not afford to be dragged down by bad bets on renewable natural gas**. Cascade has made big investments in capturing this methane at the Knott landfill, which is shutting down. We've also seen other investments into this fuel source fail with NW Natural's contracts with now-closed Tyson meat plants.

We Shouldn't Be Paying for Overinvesting in Growing the Gas System

- Cascade seems to be **projecting more growth in its gas system than makes sense** for Oregon. Approval of these overinvestments will strain Oregonian household budgets, in a time when we see so many struggling with energy affordability!
- **Bend, Cascade's largest service area, is actively considering policies that would shrink the gas system**. It is irresponsible to make costly investments that do not account for the trends we see in Oregon.

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How to Support the Campaign

Small But Mighty Tasks (1-5 minutes)

Submit a comment to regulators to make your voice heard today!

Short on time but want to let our regulators know you care about this issue? We've got a [pre-written form \(NOT CURRENT\)](#) you can use! **Bonus Points:** *Customize your email for an even bigger impact*

Share on social media

Get your community involved by sharing more information about how others can get involved!

Graphics to Share:

[Social Media Graphics - Canva Link](#)

Example Posts/Captions:

- Cascade Gas wants to increase your gas bill by 17.4%! Tell Regulators to prioritize affordability over corporate profits. Take action now: (link) #gas #energy
- Oregon is in an energy affordability crisis. Cascade Gas wants to increase your bill by 17.4%. Take action now: (link) #gas #energy
- Cascade Gas is making costly investments to expand Oregon's gas system, and wants you to pay for it! Tell regulators you won't stand for it: (link) #gas #energy
- Renewable natural gas is a risky investment that Oregonians can't afford. Tell regulators they need to prioritize affordability, not utility profits: (link) #gas #energy

Media:

[Cascade Gas Requests 17.4% Increase for Residential Customers](#)

[NW Natural seeks to shift costs of failed RNG investment to customers](#)

Strong Supporters (15 minutes - 1 hour)

- **[Write & submit a testimony](#) to regulators about your experience with energy affordability and how this rate increase would impact you.**
 - If you prefer email, puc.publiccomments@puc.oregon.gov — include docket # UG 525 in the subject line.
- **Reach out to our Community Organizer to learn more about the campaign and get plugged into our organizing around this issue!**
 - Email: david@oregoncub.org
 - Phone: (503) 482-6853

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- Set up a 1:1: [Calendly link to set up a meet!](#)

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Testimony Template Guideline

Step 1: Introduce yourself. State your name, city/town.

Step 2: Identify your connection to this issue:

- I'm concerned about rising bills, including how my gas will be affected. I already have a difficult time keeping up with my bills in the winter and these new rate increases will add onto the strain I face.
- I don't think it's fair that as an existing Cascade Gas customer, I'm paying to subsidize housing developers so that Cascade can grow its gas system.
- I fear that Cascade is making risky investments into renewable natural gas (methane capturing) and trying to stick us residential customers with those costs.

Step 3: Write 2-3 sentences expanding on the issues you checked off. Elaborate on your concerns and impacts related to this rate case. Use talking points in this guide.

Step 4: Reiterate the importance of the PUC prioritizing residential customers' costs and remind them what's on the line for you and your community.

Use the [talking points](#) above and/or your personal story!

Example testimony on the next page

Want help writing testimony?

Reach out to our Community Organizer at David@oregoncub.org

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Example testimony with this template:

Commissioners,

My name is David, and I'm from Umatilla, OR. I'm writing to share my thoughts on the request to increase rates for Cascade Natural Gas.

Despite working full-time, I live paycheck to paycheck. I've gotta room with a friend just to keep my costs affordable. Every winter, I experience more of a strain because heating my home adds a considerable chunk to my gas bill. I see that Cascade is requesting to raise rates by \$11 on average. The Oregon Citizens' Utility Board says that an average winter bill of \$119 will shoot up to about \$135. My household income is getting devoured bit by bit due to the rise in cost of living; this increase would put more strain on my wallet.

I understand needing to maintain and improve our utilities, but **I need the PUC to ensure that what we are paying for is absolutely necessary.** The rate case breakdown I've read from CUB shows that investments are being asked for that may not match up with the reality of gas demand in Oregon. Cascade is asking to invest in renewable natural gas (RNG), keep line extension allowances, and increase profits. The trends in Oregon are moving away from natural gas, and cities like Bend, OR, are choosing to downsize their investments in this system. The more Cascade invests, and the fewer customers on gas, means that I will have to pay for a larger chunk of the pie. **Regulators should set realistic expectations of how much Cascade should actually be investing.**

The renewable natural gas (RNG) bit worries me, too. From what I understand, these investments make more sense for business customers, not households like mine. **Gas utilities must reduce their emissions by 2050, but we need that to be affordable.** Alternatives like moving customers like me to electric appliances also reduce gas use and are shown to be cheaper, practical, and better at reducing emissions. I'm worried Cascade is only choosing renewable natural gas because that will help them rake in profits due to the heavy price tag of the investment! **We can not afford to be dragged down by bad bets on renewable natural gas.** Cascade has made big investments in capturing this methane at the Knott landfill, which is shutting down. We've also seen other investments into this fuel source fail with NW Natural's contracts with now-closed Tyson meat plants.

Lastly, Cascade seems to be **projecting more growth in its gas system than makes sense** for Oregon. Approval of these overinvestments will strain my household budget, in a time when we see so many of us struggling with energy affordability!

I urge the commission to take a strong and fair approach to this matter. Regular people have to make sound and informed decisions about our finances and how we manage our money. Yet, these utilities seem to think they can invest without accounting for the realities of where the state is moving and rely on customers to cover those costs. This is not fair, and as a customer, I

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worry that I will end up paying for Cascade's blunders. We should only be passing the most necessary cost increase that keeps service reliable, clean, and most importantly, affordable.

_____ (Signature/ printed name)

Community Activists (2+ hours)

[Give public comment at virtual public hearing](#)

(organizers are hoping to host an in-person meet up for the community to give testimony. More details PENDING.)

- When: March 3, 2026 at 6 pm
- Where: Virtual over Zoom. PUC link not available yet. [Sign up to testify using our link, and we'll reach out to share info when it's made available.](#)

Join our organizing team for this campaign!

- Reach out to David at David@oregoncub.org to get plugged in! meet bi-weekly on how to activate your local community, and learn more about how to organize grassroots campaigns to address our needs!

Write a letter to the editor for your local newspaper

- Interested in writing a letter to the editor? Reach out to David at David@oregoncub.org or Charlotte at charlotte@oregoncub.org

Join a community workshop or educational event on the topic and learn more.