

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

IN RE: EXAMINATION OF THE :
FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING : DOCKET NO. 3400
A DEBT FORGIVENESS PLAN :

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Pursuant to the provisions of Sections 39-1-1 and 39-3-11 of the Rhode Island General Laws, as amended, the Public Utilities Commission will conduct public hearings on the following dates and locations:

July 31, 2003 @ 7:00 P.M.	Pawtucket City Hall Council Chambers 137 Roosevelt Street Pawtucket, Rhode Island
August 7, 2003 @ 7:00 P.M.	The Cathedral of St. John, Synod Hall 271 North Main Street Providence, Rhode Island
August 14, 2003 @ 7:00 P.M.	Town of Bristol Burnside Building 400 Hope Street Bristol, Rhode Island
August 21, 2003 @ 7:00 P.M.	Woonsocket City Hall Council Chambers 162 Main Street Woonsocket, Rhode Island
September 3, 2003 @ 9:30 A.M.	Public Utilities Commission 89 Jefferson Boulevard Warwick, Rhode Island

In this docket, the Commission will examine the propriety and feasibility of a proposal by various consumer groups and filed with the Commission, entitled "Long-Term Arrearage Management Solutions for Rhode Island" ("Arrearage Plan") to supplement many pre-existing low income energy assistance programs in Rhode Island. The Arrearage Plan proposes to

provide arrearage management and targeted discount rate assistance programming solely for Rhode Island LIHEAP recipients. It provides for a write-down of existing low-income utility arrears (unpaid utility bill balances) for those participating in the Arrearage Plan. The total preliminary estimate of cost of implementing the Arrearage Plan is \$15.5 million plus the amount of arrears forgiven. The Arrearage Plan would be partially funded through federal LIHEAP dollars. However, the LIHEAP grant to Rhode Island will not be sufficient to cover the costs. Therefore, the Arrearage Plan proposes the implementation of a non-bypassable volumetric surcharge on customers' bills. The following are preliminary estimates of the rate impact:

For Narragansett Electric Customers, the average monthly bill would increase by approximately 1%. The proposed surcharge for the average Residential Customer, depending on rate class, would range from \$.14 to \$5.84 per month. The proposed surcharge for the Small Commercial and Industrial Customer, depending on rate class, would range from \$.30 to \$23.33 per month. The proposed surcharge for the Medium Commercial and Industrial Customer, depending on rate class, would range from \$4.67 to \$105.00 per month. The proposed surcharge for the Large Commercial and Industrial Customer, depending on rate class, would range from \$116.66 to \$4,900.00 per month.

For New England Gas Customers, the monthly bill would increase by approximately 1%. The proposed surcharge for the Residential Non-heating Customer would range from \$.18 to \$.21 per month. The proposed surcharge for the Residential Heating Customer would range from \$.82 to \$.96 per month. The proposed surcharge for the Commercial and Industrial Firm Sales Customer, depending on rate class, would be \$1.24 to \$219 per month. The proposed surcharge for the Commercial and Industrial Transportation Sales Customers would be between \$13.11 to \$1,008.54 per month. The proposed surcharge for the Non Firm Transportation Sales

Customers would be approximately \$2,778.21 per month.

Copies of the proposed Arrearage Plan may be obtained by calling the Clerk's office at 941-4500, in person, or from the Commission's website at www.ripuc.org/docket/3400page.html.

The deadline to file a Motion to Intervene as a party in this docket is August 18, 2003.

Reference is made to Chapters 39-1, 39-3 and 42-35 of the Rhode Island General Laws; specifically Sections 39-1-7, 39-1-8, 39-1-11, 39-1-12, 39-1-16, 39-1-18, 39-1-20, 42-35-8 and 42-35-10.

THESE BUILDINGS ARE ACCESSIBLE TO THE HANDICAPPED. INDIVIDUALS REQUESTING INTERPRETER SERVICES FOR THE HEARING AND SPEECH IMPAIRED MUST NOTIFY THE COMMISSION CLERK'S OFFICE AT 941-4500, SEVENTY-TWO HOURS IN ADVANCE OF HEARING DATE.

Luly E. Massaro
Commission Clerk
July 17, 2003