



October 3, 2012

To the Members of the Yukon Utilities Board:

The Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition (YAPC) is a non-profit organization whose aim is to raise the concerns and advocate for the needs of Yukoners impacted by poverty and subsequent marginalization. YAPC is aware of Yukon Energy's application to raise our electrical rates by 6.4% for 2012; effective July 1st, 2012 and then another increase of 6.5% for 2013 effective January 1st, 2013. We have opposed rate increases to basic service in the past and continue to believe that those who will be most ill affected by the said rate increase are those earning low incomes.

It is essential that the needs of low income Yukoners be taken into account when this decision is made. As many in the Yukon are aware, the territory is facing an unprecedented affordable housing crisis. According to the 2006 Census, an estimated 30% of Yukon households lived in housing considered below standards. These numbers are estimated to be significantly higher today. The 2010 Whitehorse Housing Adequacy Study was completed by 748 individuals. 58% of respondents reported an income under \$20,000, while 28% of these respondents indicated that they had a hard time paying utility bills.

Part of what makes a home affordable is the rate of utilities. Yukoners, including those who identify as low-income, rely on access to electricity to prepare and preserve food, do laundry, heat their water and most noteworthy, to heat their home in sub-zero temperatures. Those who may find themselves isolated in their home due to disability may rely on their computer to work from home or communicate comfortably with the outside world. Similarly, many landline telephones require electricity to function. Being without telephone communication can be extremely dangerous for Yukon's vulnerable populations.

Recent studies have shown that single parents as a group, most especially women, have the lowest incomes among Yukon families. Adding an additional financial burden seems unnecessary and members of the Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition would like to voice our opposition to this rate increase.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Hrenchuk
Co-Chair

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Co-Chair

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