



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Supplier / Utility Interface

General Comments

Survey Completed by Ron Slate, (413) 781-9200 ext. 2100 email rslate@nisource.com

Bay State Gas Company operates in Massachusetts. Northern Utilities operates in Maine and New Hampshire. All three states offer daily metered transportation service where daily customer usage is cashed out against daily Supplier deliveries. Without exception, daily metered customers receive two separate bills, one from the LDC for delivery charges and one from the Supplier for commodity charges. Daily metered transportation service is not included in the responses to the Billing questions in the following survey.

In Massachusetts and New Hampshire the majority of transportation customers participate with Non-daily transportation service, a service similar to many other Choice programs across the country. (Maine does not yet offer non-daily transportation service). The responses regarding the Billing questions in the following survey are specific to non-daily transportation service.



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Supplier / Utility Interface

CATEGORY: Creditworthiness

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas Company/ Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine**
4. How often is the Delivery Service Suppliers' creditworthiness reviewed? **Annually**
5. What are the creditworthiness determinants?

Dunn & Bradstreet credit score, LDC payment history

6. How do you calculate the security requirement?

The Company shall base the Supplier's Maximum Financial Liability as two (2) times the highest Month's aggregated Gas Usage of all Customers currently served by the Supplier at the highest Monthly Index in the preceding twenty-four (24) Months. This amount may be updated continuously, and at minimum, whenever



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

the aggregated Gas Usage of all Customers served by the Supplier changes by more than 25%.

7. What types of security instruments are allowed?

- (a) **Advance deposit;**
- (b) **Letter of credit;**
- (c) **Surety bond;**

8. When may the Local Distribution Company call on the security? **As needed**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Technical Electronic Implementation Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Customer Information

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas Company, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine**
4. What type of historical customer information is available to the Delivery Service Provider? **Third party gas suppliers have access to Customer Usage history through our web sites if they provide a customer account number. More detailed usage is available via ftp web site once a Choice customer is enrolled.**
5. How is the customers' credit information shared with the Delivery Service Provider? **No sharing of customer credit information is permitted.**
6. How quickly must the Local Distribution Company respond to the Delivery Service Provider's request? **Information is available as desired.**
7. How is the customers' meter read data (consumption) shared with the Delivery Service Provider? **Via ftp files at posted on our web site**
8. What are the Delivery Service Provider's limits on the use of the customer information? **No customer lists are provided**
9. What are the rules governing the use of customer mailing lists? **No customer lists are provided**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Uniform Utility Billing and Collection Services and Charges

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas Company, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire**
4. What information must be provided on the Local Distribution Company's invoice to the Delivery Service Provider? **By the tenth (10th) Business Day of the calendar month, the Company shall render to the Supplier a statement of the quantities delivered and amounts owed by the Supplier for the prior Month.**
5. What are the invoice payment terms? **The Supplier shall have ten (10) Business Days from the date of such statement to render payment to the Company. The Supplier shall render payment by means of electronic funds transfer to the Company.**
6. How are billing questions and disputes managed between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **If the correctness of the Company's bill to the Supplier is questioned or disputed by the Supplier, an explanation should be promptly requested from the Company. If the bill is determined to be incorrect, the Company shall issue a corrected bill. In the event that the Supplier and the Company fail to agree on the amount of the bill, the Supplier**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

**shall follow the billing and termination procedures of the MDTE
(Massachusetts) or the NH PUC (New Hampshire).**

7. How are overpayments managed between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **Credit balances are returned to Suppliers upon request**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing Agency Arrangements

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire**
4. What are the Delivery Service Provider's obligations as the customers' billing agent?

A Single bill from the Supplier that includes both delivery and commodity charges is not permitted. The only option available for Suppliers to bill is Standard Passthrough Billing Service.

Standard Passthrough Billing Service

The Customer taking Distribution Service shall receive two (2) bills: the Company shall issue one bill for Distribution Service; and the Supplier shall issue a second bill for Supplier Service.

The Supplier shall be responsible for the collection of amounts due to the Supplier from the Customer. Customer payment responsibility with Competitive Suppliers shall be governed by the particular Customer/Competitive Supplier Contract.

Within three (3) Business Days following the end of the Customer's billing cycle, the Company shall provide an electronic file for the Supplier that will contain the Customer's usage being billed including the current and previous meter readings.



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

5. What are the Local Distribution Company's obligations in administering the billing agency arrangement? **N.A.**
6. What are the provisions for the use of a "lock box" payment mechanism? **Permitted**
7. What are the provisions for terminating the billing agency arrangement? **N.A.**

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Dispute Resolution Process – Suppliers and LDCs

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire**
4. What is the initial notification process for a dispute between a Delivery Service Provider and a Local Distribution Company? **No formal process**
5. What is the hierarchy of payments between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **If a Customer pays the Company less than the full amount billed, the Company shall apply the payment first to Distribution Service, and if any payment remains, it shall be applied to Supplier Service.**
6. What is their requirement to meet to resolve a dispute? **Whose requirement?**
7. When does the Public Service Commission become involved during dispute resolution? **As requested**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

8. What alternate methods are available to resolve disputes?

Mediation, courts



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Dispute Resolution Process – Suppliers and Customers

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire**
4. What is the process for resolving a dispute between a Delivery Service Provider and a customer? **No formal process**
5. What is the hierarchy of payments between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **For a consolidated bill, if a Customer pays the Company less than the full amount billed, the Company shall apply the payment first to Distribution Service, and if any payment remains, it shall be applied to Supplier Service.**
6. What is the requirement for a Delivery Service Provider to resolve a dispute? **Good faith effort**
7. What is the requirement for a Delivery Service Provider and a Local Distribution Company to work together to resolve a dispute between a Delivery Service Provider and a customer? **None**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing and Payment Processing - Dual Billing

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire**
4. What are the billing options?

**The Company shall offer two billing service options to Customers taking
Distribution Service: Standard Complete Billing Service and
Standard Passthrough Billing Service.**

Standard Complete Billing Service

**The Customer shall receive a single bill from the Company for both
Distribution Service and Supplier Service. The Company shall use
the rates supplied by the Supplier to calculate the Supplier's portion
of the single bill, and integrate this billing within a single mailing to
the Customer. The Company may charge a fee to the Supplier for
providing this billing service as approved by the MDTE or the
NHPUC.**

**The Supplier shall adhere to the customer classes and rate pricing
structure as specified in the Company's current Schedule of Rates on
file with and approved by the MDTE or the NHPUC. The Company
shall reasonably accommodate, at the Supplier's expense, different
customer classes or rate structures as agreed to by the Company and
the Supplier in the Supplier Service Agreement.**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

The Company shall provide an electronic file for the Supplier that will, in addition to the usage being billed, contain the calculated Supplier billing amounts for the current bill cycle. Customer revenue due the Supplier shall be transferred to the Supplier in accordance with the Supplier Service Agreement. Upon receipt of Customer payments, the Company shall provide a file for the Supplier summarizing all revenue from Supplier sales which have been received and recorded that day.

If a Customer pays the Company less than the full amount billed, the Company shall apply the payment first to Distribution Service, and if any payment remains, it shall be applied to Supplier Service.

Standard Passthrough Billing Service

The Customer taking Distribution Service shall receive two (2) bills: the Company shall issue one bill for Distribution Service; and the Supplier shall issue a second bill for Supplier Service.

The Supplier shall be responsible for the collection of amounts due to the Supplier from the Customer. Customer payment responsibility with Competitive Suppliers shall be governed by the particular Customer/Competitive Supplier Contract.

Within three (3) Business Days following the end of the Customer's billing cycle, the Company shall provide an electronic file for the Supplier that will contain the Customer's usage being billed including the current and previous meter readings.

- 5. Who are the billing parties? The LDC; or separate bills from the LDC and Supplier.**
- 6. What billing format is used and how is it determined? Rate ready consolidated billing**
- 7. What are the minimum elements on a Delivery Service Provider's bill?
 - (1) The starting and ending date of the billing period;****



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

- (2) **Any fixed monthly charges;**
 - (3) **The price structure for natural gas therm usage and all other applicable billing determinants;**
 - (4) **The total number of therms used during the billing period;**
 - (5) **Any applicable penalty date, including but not limited to penalties for late payments, and the related penalty;**
 - (6) **Any other factors necessary to compute the charges;**
 - (7) **An itemized breakdown of the charges, including any late fee, penalty or aggregation fee, if applicable, and the name of the company/entity assessing the charge;**
 - (8) **The telephone number, fax number, email address, and toll free telephone number, if available, of the Supplier or aggregator's customer service department or customer service contact person; and**
 - (9) **The toll free telephone number of the commission's consumer affairs division.**
8. How are billing determinants communicated between the Delivery Service Provider and the Local Distribution Company or other billing party? **Via ftp files posted to a secure web site. Files are flat with NO protocol for EDI, XML or any other language.**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing and Payment Processing – Utility Consolidated Billing

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 2, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire**
4. What are the billing options? **Consolidated bill produced by the LDC or two separate bills, one for delivery charges from the LDC, one for commodity charges from the third party supplier.**
5. What are the requirements for the Local Distribution Company to provide a consolidated bill? **Supplier who elects this service must execute a service agreement**
6. What is the hierarchy of payments between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **On partial payments, LDC charges are paid first, the oldest supplier charge is paid next.**
7. What are the functions and responsibilities of the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **The Company shall offer Distribution Service, metering, billing, and information services for a Customer to purchase Supply Service from a Supplier, provided that the Supplier meets applicable registration and licensing requirements established by law or regulation. The Company is prohibited from providing these services to a Supplier that has not met applicable registration and licensing requirements established by law or**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

regulation . In addition, the Company is prohibited from providing these services to a Supplier for a new Customer if the Supplier does not meet applicable registration and licensing requirements established by law or regulation.

The Company will also:

- (1) Provide customer service and support, including call center functions, for services provided by the Company;
- (2) Respond to service interruptions, reported gas leaks, and to other customer safety calls;
- (3) Handle connections, curtailments, and terminations for services provided by the Company;
- (4) Read meters;
- (5) Submit bills to Customers for Distribution Service, and if contracted by the Supplier, for Supplier Service in accordance with Section 14.2.1;
- (6) Address billing inquiries for Distribution Service;
- (7) Answer general questions about Distribution Service;
- (8) Provide to Suppliers, on request, the data format and procedures for electronic information transfers and funds transfers;
- (9) Provide to Customers, on request, a list of Suppliers that are qualified to operate on its system;
- (10) Arrange for or provide Default Service to the Customer at the request of the Customer in accordance with the Company's tariff; and,
- (11) Provide information regarding, at minimum, rate tariffs, billing cycles, capacity assignment methods, and consumption algorithms, on its Website or by alternate electronic means.



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

8. What are the minimum elements on a consolidated bill?
- (1) **The starting and ending date of the billing period;**
 - (2) **Any fixed monthly charges;**
 - (3) **The price structure for natural gas therm usage and all other applicable billing determinants;**
 - (4) **The total number of therms used during the billing period;**
 - (5) **Any applicable penalty date, including but not limited to penalties for late payments, and the related penalty;**
 - (6) **Any other factors necessary to compute the charges;**
 - (7) **An itemized breakdown of the charges, including any late fee, penalty or aggregation fee, if applicable, and the name of the company/entity assessing the charge;**
 - (8) **The telephone number, fax number, email address, and toll free telephone number, if available, of the Supplier or aggregator's customer service department or customer service contact person; and**
 - (9) **The toll free telephone number of the commission's consumer affairs division.**
 - (10) **12 months historical consumption**
9. How are payments processed between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **FTP files are posted daily tracking customer payments applied to Supplier balances. Wire transfers are made to**



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

Supplier's bank account based on negotiated terms of the Supplier Service Agreement.



North American Energy Standards Board

1100 Louisiana, Suite 3625, Houston, Texas 77002
Phone: (713) 356-0060, Fax: (713) 356-0067, E-mail: naesb@aol.com
Home Page: www.naesb.org

RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

Survey

March 27, 2003

SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing and Payment Processing – Supplier Consolidated Billing

1. What entity do you represent? **Bay State Gas, Northern Utilities**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 3, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Massachusetts, New Hampshire,**
What are the billing options? **Standard Complete Billing Service and Standard
Passthrough Billing Service.**
4. What are the requirements for the Delivery Service Provider to provide a consolidated
bill? **Not permitted**
5. What is the hierarchy of payments between the Local Distribution Company and the
Delivery Service Provider? **N.A.**
6. What are the functions and responsibilities of the Local Distribution Company and
the Delivery Service Provider? **N.A.**
7. What are the minimum elements on a consolidated bill? **N.A.**
8. How are payments processed between the Local Distribution Company and the
Delivery Service Provider? **N.A.**