



## North American Energy Standards Board

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Home Page: [www.naesb.org](http://www.naesb.org)

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### RETAIL GAS QUADRANT

### GAS PRACTICES INVENTORY TASK FORCE

#### Survey

March 27, 2003

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SUBCOMMITTEE: Supplier / Utility Interface

CATEGORY: Creditworthiness

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. How often is the Delivery Service Suppliers' creditworthiness reviewed? **At a minimum annually, more frequently if conditions warrant**
5. What are the creditworthiness determinants? **Audited Financial Statements review, S&P/Moody's/Fitch ratings, Dunn & Bradstreet credit score, banking & trade references, UCC filings, SEC filings and LDC payment history**
6. How do you calculate the security requirement?  
**Maryland: The Company may base the Supplier's collateral requirement on two times the peak month's bill for each customer on whose behalf the marketer is acting.**  
**Kentucky, Ohio, and Pennsylvania: The Company shall base the Supplier's Collateral Requirement on two (2) times the average month's aggregated gas consumption of all Customers currently served by the Supplier at the Company's current WACOG rate for the preceding twelve (12) Months. In**



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addition, the value of three (3) of the highest Month's released pipeline Capacity, as well as two (2) times the expected Monthly Balancing Fees based on the current aggregated Customers currently served by the Supplier are also included. This amount is updated monthly and additional collateral is secured for any amount exceeding the collateral amount on hand.

Virginia: The Company shall base the Supplier's Collateral Requirement on the highest month's aggregated gas consumption of all Customers currently served by the Supplier at the current Citygate Index rate. In addition, the value of the highest Month's released pipeline Capacity is also included. This amount is updated monthly and additional collateral is secured for any amount exceeding the collateral amount on hand, at the Company's discretion.

7. What types of security instruments are allowed?
  - (a) **Cash deposit or pre-payment;**
  - (b) **Letter of credit, in a form and format acceptable to the Company;**
  - (c) **Surety or Performance bond, in a form and format acceptable to the Company;**
  - (d) **Guaranty, in a form and format acceptable to the Company;**
  
8. When may the Local Distribution Company call on the security? **As needed**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Technical Electronic Implementation Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Customer Information

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. What type of historical customer information is available to the Delivery Service Provider? **Third party gas suppliers have access to twenty-four (24) months of Customer Usage history, for those customers they are approved to serve, through an ftp website.**
5. How is the customers' credit information shared with the Delivery Service Provider? **No sharing of customer credit information occurs.**
6. How quickly must the Local Distribution Company respond to the Delivery Service Provider's request? **Information is provided electronically, thru an automated daily process.**
7. How is the customers' meter read data (consumption) shared with the Delivery Service Provider? **Via ftp files.**



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8. What are the Delivery Service Provider's limits on the use of the customer information? **Customer lists remain the property of the issuing Columbia subsidiary and is to be used only by the Delivery Service Provider and its employees for marketing and solicitation efforts related to the applicable Choice Program only. Service Providers are also prohibited from providing the list to any other party.**
  
9. What are the rules governing the use of customer mailing lists? **Customer lists remain the property of the issuing Columbia subsidiary and is to be used only by the Delivery Service Provider and its employees for marketing and solicitation efforts related to the applicable Choice Program only. Service Providers are also prohibited from providing the list to any other party.**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Uniform Utility Billing and Collection Services and Charges

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. What information must be provided on the Local Distribution Company's invoice to the Delivery Service Provider? **Company shall render to Supplier a monthly statement of the quantities delivered and amounts owed, if any. All charges owed to Company by Agent shall be offset against or recouped from Agent's receivables check.**
5. What are the invoice payment terms?  
**Ohio: Due within 10 business days of receipt**  
**Kentucky: Due on 20<sup>th</sup> day of following month**  
**Pennsylvania & Maryland: Due within 15 days of receipt.**  
**Virginia: Due upon receipt**  
**All: The Supplier shall render payment by means of check sent to a lockbox or by electronic funds transfer to the Company, if the required payment posting information is provided to the Company.**



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6. How are billing questions and disputes managed between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **In the event of a bona fide dispute as to whether Agent owes money to Company, the process of offset or recoupment of such amounts from Agent's receivables check shall be tolled pending a good faith review of the dispute. Agent shall provide a detailed description of the dispute, including disputed amounts, to Company in writing within five days of receipt of such monthly statement. Company will not issue the portion of the receivables check that is in dispute until said dispute has been resolved.**
  
7. How are overpayments managed between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **Credit balances are returned to Suppliers upon request.**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing Agency Arrangements

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. What are the Delivery Service Provider's obligations as the customers' billing agent?  
**Kentucky: Supplier cannot be billing agent.**  
**All other States: Supplier is required to abide by any and all tariff provisions.**
5. What are the Local Distribution Company's obligations in administering the billing agency arrangement? **All except Kentucky: The day 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 and applicable delivery charges.**
6. What are the provisions for the use of a "lock box" payment mechanism? **Permitted**



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7. What are the provisions for terminating the billing agency arrangement? **Non-payment of customer delivery charges or termination of Supplier's participation in the Choice Program.**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Dispute Resolution Process – Suppliers and LDCs

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. What is the initial notification process for a dispute between a Delivery Service Provider and a Local Distribution Company? **Supplier shall provide a detailed description of the dispute to Company in writing within five days of receipt of such monthly statement.**
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, in the order due, and if any payment remains, it shall be applied to Supplier's Commodity charges, in the order due.**
6. What is their requirement to meet to resolve a dispute? **No requirement to meet unless complaint filed with the state commission.**



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7. When does the Public Service Commission become involved during dispute resolution? **As requested**
8. What alternate methods are available to resolve disputes? **Mediation, courts**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Dispute Resolution Process – Suppliers and Customers

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. What is the process for resolving a dispute between a Delivery Service Provider and a customer? **Dispute resolution procedures require cooperation between the Delivery Service Provider and the Public Utility/Service Commission or Consumers Counsel Office related to customer disputes. Suppliers are required to maintain a contact person for disputes and to provide copies of any related materials and/or contracts needed to resolve complaints.**
5. What is the hierarchy of payments between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **There would be no hierarchy related to a Delivery Service Provider's payment to the LDC. All charges would relate to the LDC.**
6. What is the requirement for a Delivery Service Provider to resolve a dispute? **Supplier shall provide a detailed description of the dispute, including disputed amounts, to Company in writing within five days of receipt of such monthly statement.**



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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**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing and Payment Processing - Dual Billing

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. What are the billing options? **All except Kentucky: 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.  
Kentucky: Dual billing is not an option**
5. Who are the billing parties? **The Company and the Supplier, or the supplier's agent.**
6. What billing format is used and how is it determined?  
**Kentucky: This is not an option in Kentucky  
Maryland: The Company's bill will resemble a tariff invoice without the charges for gas; the supplier is free to use any billing format as long as it conforms to all state regulations.**



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**Ohio: The Company's policy on bill format and billing procedure shall comply with Rule 4901:1-18-10 of the Ohio Administrative Code, Orders of the Public Utilities Commission, and Section 4905.30 of the Ohio Revised Code, as amended from time to time.**

**Pennsylvania: Suppliers who are providing billing services shall comply with the billing and payment provisions set forth in 52 Pa. Code §§ 56.11- 56.12, except § 56.15(12) and (13), and § 56.16(b)-(d). This obligation includes the obligation to offer residential customers equal monthly payment arrangements or “budget billing,” as set forth in 52 Pa. Code § 56.12(7).**

**Virginia: Suppliers billing must be in compliance with all SCC Retail Access Rules**

7. What are the minimum elements on a Delivery Service Provider’s bill?

**Kentucky: This is not an option in Kentucky.**

**Maryland: The invoice must comply with all state regulations.**

**Ohio: The Company's policy on bill format and billing procedure shall comply with Rule 4901:1-18-10 of the Ohio Administrative Code, Orders of the Public Utilities Commission, and Section 4905.30 of the Ohio Revised Code, as amended from time to time.**

**Pennsylvania: Suppliers who are providing billing services shall comply with the billing and payment provisions set forth in 52 Pa. Code §§ 56.11- 56.12, except § 56.15(12) and (13), and § 56.16(b)-(d). This obligation includes the obligation to offer residential customers equal monthly payment arrangements or “budget billing,” as set forth in 52 Pa. Code § 56.12(7).**



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### **Virginia: Suppliers billing must be in compliance with all SCC Retail Access Rules**

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.**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing and Payment Processing – Utility Consolidated Billing

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 11, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
4. What are the billing options? **Consolidated bill produced by the LDC, including delivery charges from the LDC and commodity charges from the Delivery Service Provider.**
5. What are the requirements for the Local Distribution Company to provide a consolidated bill?  
**Supplier who chooses this billing option must execute an Aggregation and/or Billing Agreement.**
6. 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, in the order**



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**due, and if any payment remains, it shall be applied to Supplier's Commodity charges, in the order due.**

7. What are the functions and responsibilities of the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **The day following the end of the Customer's billing cycle, the Company shall provide an electronic file via FTP to the Supplier that will contain the Customer's usage being billed including the current and previous meter readings, applicable delivery charges and customer payments.**
  
8. What are the minimum elements on a consolidated bill?  
**Bill format and information is the same as a non-transportations tariff bill with the addition of the marketer's name, address, phone number, and any other requirements set by the State Commission.**
  
9. How are payments processed between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider? **Payments to the Delivery Service Provider for Commodity Charges billed to the customer are paid by check or by Electronic Funds Transfer directly to the Supplier's bank account. This takes place after the billing is completed each month and is less any fees owed to the LDC.**



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SUBCOMMITTEE: Customer Processes Subcommittee

CATEGORY: Billing and Payment Processing – Supplier Consolidated Billing

1. What entity do you represent? **Columbia of Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia**
2. What is the date of this response? **April 3, 2003**
3. What jurisdiction are these responses for? **Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania & Virginia,**
4. What are the billing options?  
**Consolidated Billing is not an option for any of the States.**
5. What are the requirements for the Delivery Service Provider to provide a consolidated bill?  
**Consolidated Billing is not an option for any of the States.**
6. What is the hierarchy of payments between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider?  
**Consolidated Billing is not an option for any of the States.**
7. What are the functions and responsibilities of the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider?  
**Consolidated Billing is not an option for any of the States.**
8. What are the minimum elements on a consolidated bill?



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**Consolidated Billing is not an option for any of the States.**

9. How are payments processed between the Local Distribution Company and the Delivery Service Provider?

**Consolidated Billing is not an option for any of the States.**