

October 7, 2025

REDACTED

Lisa Wallace
Chief Clerk of the Board
Nova Scotia Energy Board
1601 Lower Water Street, 3rd Floor
Halifax, NS B3J 3S3

Re: M12485 – DRO Appeal – Jean Nearing

Dear Ms. Wallace:

In the Nova Scotia Energy Board's (Board, NSEB) letter dated September 23, 2025, the Board directed as follows:

By copy of this letter, the Board directs Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NS Power, the Company) to file a response with the Board to the enclosed appeal on or before **2:00 PM on Tuesday, October 7, 2025**. NS Power must also provide a copy of their response to the appellant, Ms. Jean Nearing.

Ms. Nearing is appealing a decision by the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO) dated Monday, September 22, 2025. The complete DRO file as provided by the DRO pertaining to this decision is included as **Confidential Attachment 1**. Attached as **Confidential Attachment 2** are the relevant customer account and communication notes from NS Power's CIS database.

Please accept the following highlights of activities and communications pertaining to the September 22, 2025, DRO decision being appealed by Ms. Nearing:

- July 9, 2025 – NS Power spoke with Ms. Nearing regarding a billing inquiry and advised that her account (██████████) reflected a credit balance of \$308.01. This is referenced on page 1 of 4 in Confidential Attachment 2.
- September 15, 2025 – NS Power explained to Ms. Nearing that her June bill was based on an estimated read, while her August bill reflected a true read, which corrected the previously estimated charges. This is referenced on page 2 of 4 in Confidential Attachment 2.
- September 15, 2025 – Ms. Nearing called NS Power and asked to speak to a

supervisor. The representative advised that a supervisor could call her back to discuss the power bill. This is referenced on page 3 of 4 in Confidential Attachment 2.

- September 16, 2025 – A NS Power Supervisor spoke with Ms. Nearing regarding billing for multiple premises. NS Power explained the budget billing process and the impact of true usage adjustments, assuring Ms. Nearing that she would not be charged for power not used. NS Power confirmed that the cyber incident did not contribute to increased power usage. This is referenced on page 4 of 4 in Confidential Attachment 2.
- September 16, 2025 – Ms. Nearing contacted the DRO to formally dispute her bill. This is referenced on page 1 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.
- September 17, 2025 – The DRO responded to the customer and NS Power. He summarized his role and asked NS Power to provide its position in the matter as well as relevant account documentation. This is referenced on page 4 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.
- September 19, 2025 – Ms. Nearing confirmed her consent to release her personal information to the DRO. This is referenced on page 6 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.
- September 22, 2025 – NS Power responded to the DRO stating:

[...] Any differences between estimated and actual usage will be addressed and accurately reflected in a future bill. This customer's meter was read on August 13, 2025, and the billing was reconciled to reflect the actual usage. The recent payment made September 13th of \$169.00 was posted on the account on September 17th.

It is NS Power's position that the subject account has been billed appropriately.

NS Power attached the account ledger and meter reads for the subject account ([REDACTED]). This is referenced on pages 6 to 9 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.

- September 22, 2025 – After reviewing the materials NS Power provided, the DRO advised Ms. Nearing that her June bill was based on an estimated reading, while her September 19 bill reflected actual usage and reconciled any prior estimation error. The DRO stated that he believed the matter had been resolved and asked

Ms. Nearing to confirm whether he may close his file. This is referenced on page 10 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.

- September 22, 2025 – Ms. Nearing disputed the DRO's conclusion, stating the \$115.95 credit resulted from her \$169.00 September payment against a \$53.05 bill, not from reconciled charges. She reiterated that she had already paid \$845.00 for April to August yet was charged \$1,254.00 for those same months. She requested that the complaint remain open. This is referenced on page 11 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.
- September 22, 2025 – The DRO explained that billing discrepancies can result from estimated meter readings, which are reconciled once actual readings are obtained due to the cumulative nature of power meters. He clarified that Ms. Nearing was billed for 2,468 kWh in April (actual), 1,144 kWh in June (estimated), and 2,629 kWh in August (actual), reflecting net usage. He confirmed \$169.00 payments were posted for May through August, resulting in a credit of \$115.95, and stated the August billing was accurate.

He advised that if Ms. Nearing disagreed, he would issue a Final Written Decision, which she could appeal to the Board. This is referenced on pages 12 to 13 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.

- September 22, 2025 – The DRO issued a Final Written Decision to Ms. Nearing pertaining to this appeal, finding as follows:

In the context of Board approved Regulations 5.1 and 6.4, the Customer has been appropriately billed for service to [REDACTED], after an estimated June meter reading was followed by an actual August meter reading and the resulting reconciliation of all estimation error.

This is referenced on pages 21 to 22 of 22 in the DRO file attached as Confidential Attachment 1.

- September 22, 2025 – Ms. Nearing appealed the DRO's decision with the NSEB.

NS Power agrees with the DRO's decision that NS Power has appropriately billed Ms. Nearing.

Following the cyber incident, NS Power was temporarily unable to access meter data, resulting in most bills issued prior to July 2025 being based on estimated consumption. To provide customers with bills based on actual energy usage, NS Power began manual meter reading in July. Once actual readings were collected, discrepancies between

estimated and actual usage were reconciled through adjustments on subsequent bills.

Ms. Nearing's bill for the period April 14 to June 17, 2025, was based on an estimated usage of 1,144 kWh, calculated using historical consumption data for the property during a similar time of year. This resulted in energy charges of \$250.68. On August 13, 2025, NS Power obtained an actual meter read at the property of 54,363. The previous actual read, taken on April 14, 2025, was 50,589.91, confirming total actual consumption of 3,773 kWh over the full 121-day period.

To reconcile the earlier estimate, NS Power subtracted the previously billed 1,144 kWh from the total actual usage, resulting in a net billing of 2,629 kWh on the August bill. The full energy charge of \$250.68 from the June estimate was credited back to Ms. Nearing. After applying this credit, a base charge of \$76.68, and adjustments for tax and rebates, the total charges for the full period of April 14 to August 13, 2025, came to \$530.06. Ms. Nearing's prior account credit of \$477.01 reduced the balance to \$53.05. Her payment of \$169, received on September 17, 2025, further reduced the balance, resulting in a current account credit of \$115.95. Please refer to Confidential Attachment 3 for copies of Ms. Nearing's June and August bills.

NS Power's CIS records and billing documentation confirm that the estimated charge was removed and replaced with actual usage data. Ms. Nearing's account was reconciled in accordance with Board-approved billing practices.

Please consider the enclosed information confidential due to the personal nature of the information that has been provided. NS Power has forwarded a copy of this correspondence to Ms. Nearing by e-mail.

Yours truly,



Kathleen Murray
Regulatory Counsel

Encl.

c. Ms. Jean Nearing

**M12485 Nearing DRO Appeal Confidential Attachments 1-3
have been removed due to confidentiality.**