

July 13, 2026

[REDACTED]
Allan King
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. King:

M12747 - Nova Scotia Power Inc. - Appeal of a Decision of the Dispute Resolution Officer

The Board received your Notice of Appeal to appeal a decision by the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO) dated March 12, 2026.

The following documentation was filed with the Board:

- The DRO's file and decision, dated March 12, 2026;
- Your appeal of the DRO decision, dated March 15, 2026;
- NS Power's response to your appeal, dated April 1, 2026;
- Your response to NS Power's response, dated April 16, 2026; and
- NS Power's response to Board information requests (IRs), dated June 19, 2026.

SUMMARY

I understand you are disputing your February 2026 bill due to a large increase in the recorded consumption compared to previous years.

You raise the concern of the financial burden this bill causes you.

APPEAL OF THE DRO DECISION

You appealed the DRO's decision on the following grounds:

- 1) Your usage dropped in December 2025 and jumped significantly in February 2026; and
- 2) You question if the cyber incident compromised NS Power's meter readings.

The DRO is an independent third party; his role is to address and ideally resolve disputes with NS Power that cannot be resolved through normal customer channels. He is not an employee of NS Power or the Board. Decisions of the DRO are binding on NS Power but

not on the customer. Customers may appeal DRO decisions to the Board within 12 days of receipt of the DRO's final written decision.

In his decision, the DRO stated:

In the context of Board approved Regulation 5.1, NS Power has appropriately billed the Customer for service to [REDACTED]

[Exhibit K-2, page 2]

BACKGROUND & FINDINGS

The following table summarizes some of the key events in the evidence before the Board:

Date	Event
May 8, 2023	You started account [REDACTED] with NS Power at [REDACTED]
February 2025	You asked NS Power for a cost estimate to change from oil heat to electric heat (heat pumps for the main level and upstairs).
October 2025	You installed heat pumps at the property.
March 5, 2026	You filed a complaint with the Board regarding your February 2026 bill. The Board forwarded your correspondence to NS Power to respond.
March 10, 2026	You contacted the DRO to dispute your February 2026 bill.
March 11, 2026	NS Power responded to the DRO regarding your appeal.
March 12, 2026	The DRO issued his decision.
March 15, 2026	You appealed the DRO's decision to the Board.

NS Power Regulation 5.1 authorizes it to estimate meter readings where it is unable to obtain an actual reading for reasons beyond its control:

METER READING

When reasonably possible, meters shall be read bi-monthly; however, the Company may read meters on a monthly basis.

...

ESTIMATED METER READING

If the Company is unable to obtain a meter reading due to circumstances beyond its control ... then the amount of power and energy used by the Customer shall be estimated by the Company using the best available data...

In the event that actual meter readings are obtained subsequent to estimated readings, the Company shall make the necessary adjustments...



Your Estimated Usage

Below is the summary of your usage during the period in dispute, based on the information before the Board.

Bill date	Reading	Usage	Daily usage	Account balance	Service period
February 25, 2025	20615 read Feb 21	506	8.0	\$136.02	December 20, 2024 – February 21, 2025 (63 days)
April 25, 2025	21015 read Apr 23	400	6.6	\$118.21	February 21 – April 23, 2025 (61 days)
June 25, 2025	20401 estimated	386	6.1	\$233.70	April 23 – June 25, 2025 (63 days)
August 26, 2025	21779 estimated	378	6.1	\$113.92	June 25 – August 26, 2025 (62 days)
October 28, 2025	22207 estimated	428	6.8	\$123.67	August 26 – October 28, 2025 (63 days)
December 23, 2025	22594 estimated	1579	6.5	\$278.80	April 23 – December 23, 2025 (244 days)
February 24, 2026	28266 read Feb 20	5672	96.1	\$1,126.42	December 23, 2025 – February 20, 2026 (59 days)
April 27, 2026	29195 read Apr 23	930	15.0	\$1,344.28	February 20 – April 23, 2026 (62 days)

According to NS Power's response to the Board's IR-2, it estimated your usage during periods when actual meter reads were not available by calculating the average daily usage from bills issued the previous year with the same seasonal code and then multiplied that by the number of days in the current service period.

The Board finds that by using your historical usage to estimate current usage during the periods when an actual meter read was not possible, NS Power complied with Regulation 5.1 by using the best available data.

The bill dated June 25, 2025, covers 63 days (April 23 to June 25, 2025). NS Power used your usage from June, August and October 2024 bills, totaling 1,131 kWh, divided by 184 days to get the average usage of 6.14 kWh per day. Your estimated usage for this billing period was calculated at 386 kWh (6.14 kWh/day multiplied by 63 days).

Similarly, for the bill dated August 26, 2025, your average usage from August and October 2024 bills was 6.11 kWh per day. Your usage for this billing period was estimated at 378 kWh (6.11 kWh/day multiplied by 62 days).

Your estimated usage of 428 kWh in the bill dated October 28, 2025, was based on your average usage from the October 2024 bill (6.8 kWh/day), multiplied by 63 days.

In the bill dated December 23, 2025, NS Power:

- credited you back for the 1,192 kWh it charged you in the June 2025 bill (386 kWh), August 2025 bill (378 kWh) and October 2025 bill (428 kWh); and



- charged you for the 1,579 kWh (estimated based on your average usage from the December 2024 bill (approximately 6.9 kWh/day), multiplied by 244 days).

This bill, therefore, attempted to reconcile the June, August and October 2025 bills. Your average usage for the entire period between April 23 and December 9, 2025, was calculated as 1,579 kWh divided by 244 days = 6.5 kWh per day, within the range of your actual consumption before the June 2025 bill.

The bill dated February 24, 2026, is the first bill that has an actual (not estimated) meter read since your April 2025 bill. The actual meter read of 28,266 kWh on February 20, 2026, was much higher than the estimated meter read of 22,594 kWh in the December 2025 bill. This means NS Power largely underestimated your usage in all the bills before this bill (ranged between 6.1 and 6.8 kWh/day). As a result, this February 2026 bill is a catch-up bill for the entire period from April 2025 to February 2026 at average consumption of 96.1 kWh per day. The Board finds that this bill fully and correctly reconciled your previously estimated bills based on an actual meter reading.

On April 15, 2026, you voiced your suspicion that the cyber incident was the cause of your large power bill. The Board understands your frustration receiving a large, reconciled bill of \$1,126.42, much higher than your previous bills. However, since this bill was based on an actual meter read on February 20, 2026, the Board accepts the calculated energy charges in this bill.

The Heat Pumps

You mentioned in your appeal that you purchased the property in 2024 and have been using oil and wood as the heat source until you installed the heat pumps in October 2025. NS Power explained that it was not aware of the heat pump installation until March 11, 2026, when you contacted NS Power regarding your February 2026 bill. NS Power's method of estimating usage did not account for the use of heat pumps, and therefore its estimates of your consumption for the October and December 2025 bills did not reflect the heat pump installation.

Using heat pumps instead of oil and wood would have increased your energy consumption and could explain the significant difference between the actual and estimated meter reads. Even if NS Power was aware of the heat pumps on your property, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to account for them in the estimated billing because there would be no way of knowing how much you would use them.

CONCLUSION

Pursuant to the *Public Utilities Act*, the Board is responsible for the general supervision of all public electric utilities operating in Nova Scotia, including NS Power. Among other things, the Board's jurisdiction includes approving *Regulations* that determine how NS Power is allowed to provide electric service to customers, and the rules they (and customers) must follow. In reviewing matters such as your appeal, the Board's role is to determine whether NS Power has properly applied the Board's approved *Regulations* in dealing with its customers.



The Board understands your concern with respect to the large increase in consumption on your February 2026 bill compared to previous years and the financial burden of being faced with additional costs you may not have expected. However, the Board finds that NS Power complied with the Regulations by using historical consumption data to estimate your usage when actual meter reads were not possible and then reconciling those estimates correctly following an actual meter read. The actual meter reading in February 2026 confirms that your electricity consumption significantly increased compared to the same time the previous year and the addition of the heat pumps was likely at least partly responsible.

The Board upholds the DRO's decision. With respect, your appeal is dismissed. The Board notes that it is conducting a separate investigation into the cybersecurity incident under M12273 which encompasses a broader review of its impact on customers.

The Board directs NS Power to reach out to you within thirty days of this decision to determine whether you require a payment plan to pay the outstanding balance on your account. If you require a payment plan, the Board directs NS Power to work with you to prepare a reasonable payment arrangement.

Yours truly,


Marc L. Dunning, P.Eng., LL.B.
Member

c. Kathleen Murray, Regulatory Counsel, NS Power

