Nova Scotia Energy Board

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June 19, 2026

[redacted]

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Dear Mr. Yadav:

M12756 - Nova Scotia Power Inc. - Appeal by Uday Yadav of a Decision of the Dispute Resolution Officer

The Nova Scotia Energy Board (Board) has completed its review of your appeal regarding your Nova Scotia Power Incorporated (NS Power) account. The Board has carefully reviewed your submissions, the information filed by NS Power, the Dispute Resolution Officer (DRO) record, and the responses provided during the appeal process. The Board acknowledges that this matter has been a source of significant frustration and concern for you.

Following the cyber incident experienced by NS Power in 2025, the company was unable to consistently obtain actual meter readings for certain customers, including your account. During this period, NS Power still had an obligation to continue issuing monthly bills. As a result, bills were issued based on estimated consumption until actual meter data became available.

An estimated bill is not intended to be a precise calculation of a customer's actual usage. Rather, it is a temporary approximation based on the best information available at the time. The purpose of an estimate is simply to allow billing to continue until an actual meter reading can be obtained.

Because an estimate is only an approximation, it may be either higher or lower than actual consumption. Once an actual meter reading becomes available, the customer's account is reconciled. If the estimate was too high, the customer receives a credit. If the estimate was too low, the customer is billed for electricity that was consumed but not previously charged.

In the Board's view, this distinction is important. The reconciliation process does not create new electricity charges. It simply corrects the difference between estimated consumption and actual consumption once accurate meter information becomes available. Estimated billing is not, by itself, a billing error. It is a temporary method used when an actual read is not available.

Electricity meters are cumulative. The meter does not reset after each bill. It continues to record total electricity used at the property. When NS Power obtains an actual meter read after one or more estimated bills, the account is reconciled. Rather than using the estimated meter reading as the starting point to measure usage for the next period, NS Power reverts back to the last actual meter reading on file. This is because an estimated read is not treated as a final, or necessarily accurate, measurement of consumption. Any usage already billed through estimates is then credited or reversed to avoid double-counting.

Your appeal concerns the $292.67 balance that continued to appear on your account after you provided a meter reading in November 2025 and made a payment of $205 on December 15, 2025.

The Board understands your concern. You are not disputing that electricity was used at the property. Your concern is that you were told the amount owing would be approximately $205, you paid that amount, and the remaining $292.67 continued to appear on later bills.

Billing History

Your relevant billing history is summarized below:

Read Type	Bill Start Date	Bill End Date	Last Meter Read	New Meter Read	kWh Usage	kWh Credited Due to Estimation	Total Usage Billed	Opening Balance	Payments	Current Period Charges	Balance
True Read	13-Nov-24	14-Jan-25	24,511.25	27,144.31	2,633	-	2,633	288.23	-288.23	532.13	532.13
True Read	14-Jan-25	12-Mar-25	27,144.31	30,259.13	3,115	-	3,115	532.13	-532.13	638.23	638.23
Estimated	12-Mar-25	14-May-25	30,259.13	31,651.13	1,392	-	1,392	638.23	-638.23	311.55	311.55
True Read	14-May-25	9-Jul-25	30,259.13	33,356.00	3,097	-1,392	1,705	311.55	-	345.83	657.38
Estimated	9-Jul-25	15-Sep-25	33,356.00	34,916.00	1,560	-	1,560	657.38	-968.93	344.29	32.74
Estimated	15-Sep-25	14-Nov-25	33,356.00	37,263.00	3,907	-1,560	2,347	32.74	-32.74	497.67	497.67
True Read	14-Nov-25	14-Jan-26	37,263.00	38,905.23	1,642	-	1,642	497.67	-205.00	358.79	651.46
True Read	14-Jan-26	12-Mar-26	38,905.23	41,887.81	2,983	-	2,983	651.46	-358.76	609.90	902.60

For the May 14, 2025 bill, NS Power estimated usage of 1,392 kWh using the March 12 actual read of 30,259.13 and the May 14 estimated read of 31,651.13.

On July 9, 2025, NS Power then obtained an actual read of 33,356. NS Power then reverted back to the last actual read on file, which was the March 12, 2025, read of 30,259.13, rather than treating the May estimated read as the starting point. Total usage from March 12 to July 9 was 3,097 kWh. Since 1,392 kWh had already been billed in May, NS Power provided you with a credit for that amount and billed the remaining 1,705 kWh (3,097 kWh – 1,392 kWh = 1,705 kWh).

The same process occurred on the November 14, 2025 bill. The September bill estimated usage of 1,560 kWh using the July 9 actual read of 33,356 and the September 15 estimated read of 34,916.

For the November bill, NS Power did not use the September estimated read as the starting point. Instead, it reverted back to the last actual read on file, the July 9 actual read of 33,356. The November estimated read was 37,263, resulting in a total estimated usage of:

37,263 − 33,356 = 3,907 kWh

Because 1,560 kWh had already been billed on the September estimate, NS Power reversed that amount. The net usage billed on the November bill was:

3,907 kWh − 1,560 kWh = 2,347 kWh

The November current charges were calculated as follows:

November 14, 2025, Bill	
Reversal of September estimated charges	-$ 327.89
Charges for usage from July 9 to November 14	$ 801.86
Other applicable charges/taxes/adjustments	$ 23.70
Total amount due	**$ 497.67**

Your account opened the November billing period with a balance of $32.74. A payment of $32.74 was received, clearing that opening balance. The November current charges were then $497.67. As a result, the November 14, 2025, bill showed $497.67 owing.

The disputed $292.67 arose from the November 14, 2025, balance. The November bill showed $497.67 owing. You paid $205 on December 15, 2025. That payment reduced the balance, but did not eliminate it:

$497.67 − $205.00 = $292.67

That is why $292.67 appeared as a previous balance on your January 14, 2026, bill.

The January bill also included new current charges of $358.79 for the period from November 14, 2025, to January 14, 2026. Therefore, the January balance was:

$292.67 + $358.79 = $651.46

The Board finds that the $292.67 was not a new charge, duplicate charge, or charge for electricity not used. It was the unpaid portion of the November 14, 2025 balance after the $205 payment was applied.

The March 12, 2026 bill continued to show a similar carry-forward amount because that unpaid balance remained on the account. After a payment of $358.76, $292.70 remained unpaid and was carried forward with the March current charges.

The Board has also considered your concern that NS Power did not issue a new corrected bill after you provided a meter reading in November 2025. The Board accepts that this was confusing. A customer who is told that a bill “would have been” lower may reasonably expect a new bill or updated statement.

NS Power does not necessarily issue a new bill each time usage is corrected. Instead, the account may be corrected on a later bill or through a credit or adjustment. The fact that a new bill was not issued does not, by itself, mean the balance was incorrect. The Board finds that the account was ultimately reconciled correctly based on the meter reads, usage, charges, reversals, and payments.

The Board finds that NS Power's billing records are internally consistent. When actual reads were obtained, NS Power used the last actual read as the baseline and reversed estimated usage where necessary to avoid double-counting.

The Board finds that the $292.67 arose because your November 14, 2025 bill showed $497.67 owing, and the payment you made on December 15, 2025 was $205.00. The difference is $292.67.

The Board therefore finds that the $292.67 was a valid carry-forward balance. It was not a billing error, duplicate charge, or charge for electricity not used. The Board acknowledges that NS Power's communication could have been clearer. However, the evidence does not support removing the $292.67 from the account.

The Board upholds the Dispute Resolution Officer's decision. With respect, your appeal is dismissed.

The Board directs NS Power to reach out to you to within 30 days of this decision to determine whether you require a payment plan to pay the $292.67. If you require a payment plan, the Board directs NS Power to work with you on preparing a reasonable payment arrangement.

Yours very truly,

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