

## **FITZPATRICK - NS POWER BILLING DISPUTE - APPEAL M12982**

Dear URB Appeal Commissioner,

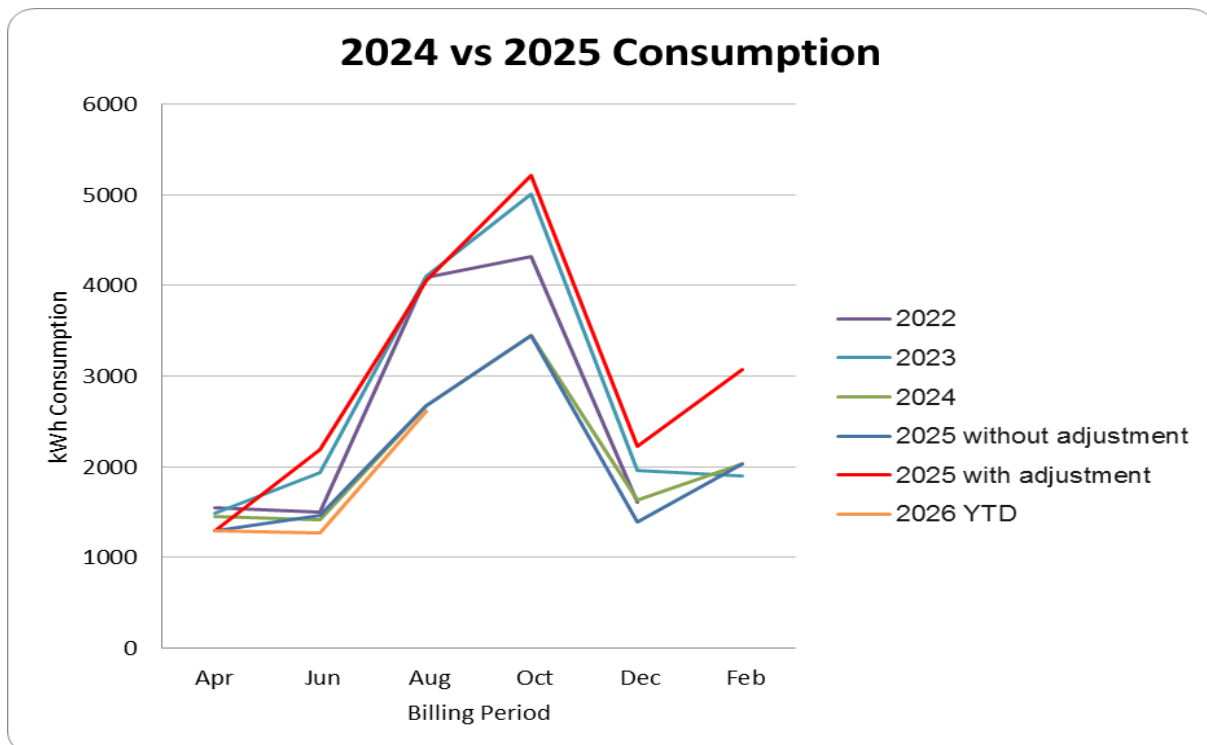
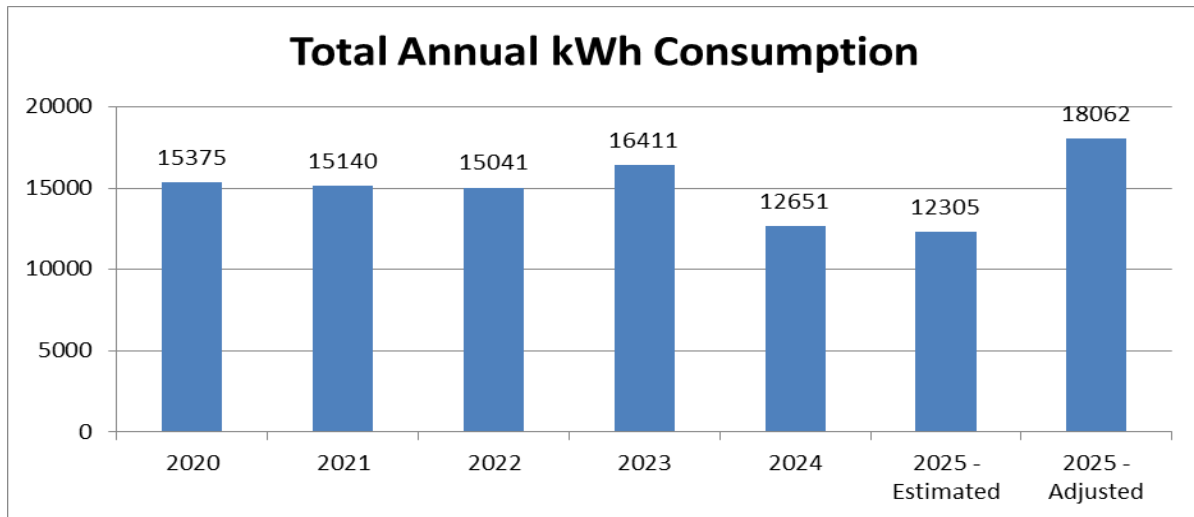
Please accept this document and the associated excel file as my reply to the NS Power submission on this appeal.

### **BACKGROUND**

- a) We are reliable paying customers. We are not pursuing this to avoid payment of legitimate electricity consumption.
- b) I understand the billings since April 2025 were based on estimates. The estimated bills seemed reasonable as they largely aligned with our 2024 experience.
- c) In April 2026 we received a bill from NS Power for 7055 kWh as a result of the first actual meter reading since April 2025 (an entire year). This bill was for the period Feb 1 - Apr 9 2026 PLUS the retroactive billing adjustments for 2025.
- d) I understand the reported consumption is the difference in the actual meter reading in Apr 2025 vs Apr 2026 less what was already billed. HOWEVER the 2025 retro adjustment results in a 43% increase in the total 2025 consumption which is absurd & unexplained.
- e) The adjusted 2025 consumption is shockingly high and does not make logical sense given our historical decreasing consumption trend and the fact that nothing changed in our household to explain such an increase. In fact all of our efforts and investments should have resulted in reduced consumption.
- f) We have been working to reduce consumption as shown by the downward trend.
  - We participated in the pilot test of the "time of day savings program" in 2025 further evidence of our commitment to efficiency.
  - We heat with oil and propane and we do not have air conditioning or interior heat pumps.
  - We have a pool that is operating maximum 2-3 months in the summer which is heated with a heat pump. The pool heater is our most significant electricity demand which is evidenced by the annual trend of higher consumption during the summer months.
  - We replaced all old appliances with energy efficient models.
  - We dry clothes on the clothesline on sunny days.
  - We replaced lights with LED's.
  - Outside, we largely use solar lighting.
- g) There are only 2.5 people living in our household (our son is here 50% of the time).

h) The trend:

- Our annual average consumption is 14,924 which is on par for a house our size that is not heated or cooled with electricity.
- Our main driver of consumption is the pool heater as shown in the monthly trend.
- Clearly the adjusted 2025 is the unexplainable OUTLIER.



\* The 2023 increase was due to early open and late closure of pool (non-standard year; lesson learned)

\* 2022, 2024, unadjusted 2025 and 2026 YTD show a DECREASING CONSUMPTION TREND.

## NS POWER COMMUNICATION/BILLING

- i) My husband and I contacted NS Power several times regarding this issue.
- \* Apr 23 - they told my husband usage was aligned with previous year – THIS IS INCORRECT.
  - \* NS Power was unable to provide any justification or insights related to the massive adjustment. They just insisted the meter was correct.
  - \* The NSP phone rep suggested I hire an electrician; or unplug things and watch the impact on the meter.
  - \* There were 3 emails to NS Power (Rita) that were never acknowledged or answered. (May 20, Jun 8, Jun 16).
  - \* I requested the meter be tested. The request was ignored until NSP was ordered to do it by the Dispute Resolution Office.
- j) NS Power was unable to separate the actual Feb 1 - Apr 9, 2026 usage from the retroactive portion. It was all lumped together. Did they think we weren't going to notice the massive adjustment?
- \* For the purpose of this review I assumed the Feb 1 - Apr 9, 2026 actuals were the same as 2025 which was an actual reading = 1298 kWh. Note this is 36% LESS than 2024 (1448 kWh) - further evidence of our efforts to reduce usage.
  - \* I assume the balance was the retroactive adjustments for 2025 estimated periods:  $7055 - 1298 = 5757$  kWh. NS Power agreed in their appeal submission the total alleged/adjusted usage for 2025 was 18062 kwh.
  - \* See additional detailed analysis and remarks provided in the excel file included with this submission.
- k) NS Power has no accurate meter readings for the periods in question, they are unable to explain the **unreasonable 43% increase** in consumption and were subject to a cyber security attack during that time. The full impact of that attack has not been disclosed. During that period we were also participating in a new "time of day" program that impacted the records in the meter database. This is evident in the NS Power submission as you can see multiple records for the same billing periods in 2025.
- l) The Dispute Resolution Office:
- \* The DRO did not communicate with me to understand my specific concerns before rendering a decision. The DRO proceeded based on a single initial email requesting their

assistance. I was surprised that I was not given the opportunity to state my case.

- \* The DRO gathered additional information from NS Power only, rendered a decision and then refused to take my questions.

- \* The Dispute Resolution Office also did not advise of the 12 days to appeal the decision.

- \* After being ordered by the DRO, NS Power took our meter for testing and reported its functioning within acceptable limits. We now have a new meter - not the meter they tested.

m) On Aug 17, 2026, following the DRO decision, we learned that NS Power provided a credit to our latest bill for \$103.90 because they had erroneously billed us for too many days in 2025. Further evidence of the unreliability of NSP billing. NS Power also failed to communicate with us regarding this adjustment.

n) In the NS Power appeal submission, the 2021 actual consumption is INCORRECTLY cited as 19,338 kWh or 2762 per billing cycle while our bills indicate it was 15,140 kWh or 2523 per billing cycle.

o) We monitored the meter ourselves Aug 14-16, 2026.

- \* 24 hours of normal activity measured 46 kWh with the pool heater running.

- \* This daily consumption aligns with our 2024 experience of 43 kWh per day for this same time period.

- \* On Aug 18, 2026 a qualified heat pump technician inspected the pool heater and confirmed it is functioning properly.

- \* With the NSP retro adjustment, daily usage calculates at 64 kWh per day (49% higher) with no known cause.

p) 2026 actuals are coming in BELOW 2024 record low levels

- \* The actual bill for Apr-May 2026 was LOWER than 2024 - again indicating a downward trend.

- \* The actual bill for Jun-Jul 2026 was incorrectly reporting consumption at two different totals of 7737 and 5120 kWh. After contacting NS Power, the agent indicated the bill was incorrect and the corrected bill would be reduced by about 50%. This highlights the continued unreliability of the NS Power Billing and further confirms our downward trend in consumption.

## THE ISSUE IN DISPUTE

q) The 2025 adjustment in consumption, for which there are no readings, no proof, no known cause and it occurred during a MAJOR computer system issue at NSP results in a **43% increase in our consumption and 45% increase in cost for 2025** - which is outrageous, unexplained and unjustified.

- r) With the adjustment, 2025 is the outlier year compare to both past and current year actual experience which is trending downward.
- s) Since there were no actual meter readings for a full year, IF there was in fact a consumption issue we had no way of knowing and therefore we didn't have the opportunity to make any corrections. We were flying blind because of the NSP computer issue.
- t) We have many unanswered questions:
  - \* How do we know the cyber attack and resulting system issues at NS power didn't impact the meter reading?
  - \* Even though the meter seems to be working correctly in July 2026 when tested, how do we know it was not malfunctioning in 2025 when no one was reading it?
  - \* Why didn't they read the meters manually like they used to?
  - \* Did the "Time of Day Savings Program" pilot mess something up? There are many billing records in the downloadable file for 2025 that didn't exist in the prior years. (see page 15 of NS Power submission). Testing new programs often have issues and cause unanticipated system issues
  - \* Did the "Time of Day Savings Program" coupled together with the cyber issue and the obvious ongoing issues in billing create this problem - the perfect storm?
  - \* Is NS Power trying to recoup the money they lost on the "time of day savings program"?
  - \* If consumption was actually higher in 2025, why are 2026 actuals coming in below the 2024 record low levels? Again nothing has changed.
  - \* How can NS Power bill us for an adjustment of this size, for which we had no real time knowledge that is counter to our consumption trend with no records or explanation?

## **REQUESTED RESOLUTION**

1. We request that the 2025 adjustment and total billed consumption for 2025 be reduced to align with the 2024 actual total consumption of 12651 kWh. This would be consistent with our consumption trend.
2. If the Appeal Commissioner does not agree with our preferred resolution #1, then we request the following:
  - a. Any 2025 adjustments must be billed at the "time of day savings program" rates as we were active in that program at the time with the majority of the usage occurring in the summer months at the rate of \$0.13.

- b. NS Power provide or cover the cost of a qualified individual to complete an consumption review of our home to diagnosis the root cause of the 2025 reported spike that we are not able to explain.
- c. Apply a discretionary billing adjustment of \$500 as a concession for the extensive amount of time this issue has consumed and the stress this has caused for my husband and I.

Sincerely,  
Dennita Fitzpatrick