

PUBLIC HEARING:
ATTENDEES IDENTIFY ISSUES
FOR PUC TO ADDRESS REGARDING
THE VGS IRP (Case No. 17-3658-PET)

At a public hearing in South Burlington held by the Public Utility Commission's (PUC) Hearing Officer on October 10, 2017, regarding the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) filed by Vermont Gas Systems (VGS), attendees identified the following issues:

1. The IRP should be updated to reflect the most up-to-date information such as incorporation of the approved renewable natural gas program. The IRP should also be revised if there is incorrect information presented.
2. VGS should address expansion into Rutland County consistently throughout the IRP document.
3. The IRP should include the impact of cold-climate heat pumps to be installed as estimated by the electric utilities and/or energy-efficiency programs on the Company's financial forecasts including a scenario in which there is negative load growth.
4. VGS should utilize a 4- or 5-year average for heating degree days instead of a 10-year average in order to account for climate change and increasing temperatures.
5. The IRP should include an explanation of rate increases as a result of VGS building the Addison Natural Gas Project and the legal challenges associated with that project.
6. Societal costs of the VGS forecasts, including environmental and economic costs, associated with climate change should be factored into the IRP when determining "least cost."
7. The IRP should address the environmental impacts of methane emissions associated with natural gas production and whether there are federal laws that may be enacted that would limit methane emissions. Carbon is addressed in the IRP; however, it is only one of the greenhouse gases.
8. Cost analyses presented in the IRP and any supporting information should be based on the most recently available actual and estimated costs.
9. The IRP should incorporate any natural gas usage estimates that have been developed by the Department of Public Service.

10. As an energy efficiency utility, VGS should be promoting cold-climate heat pumps, not natural gas furnaces, when more cost-effective.
11. Fracked gas should not be considered to be a clean-energy resource.
12. The IRP should address VGS's safety strategies to prevent and contain accidents such as explosions or leaks.
13. The five "other system investments" identified on page 5-12 should be described in more detail.
14. If VGS is considering looping its system in Addison County to accommodate future growth, it should take into account how landowners have already been affected by the installation of the pipeline in Addison county such as decreased property values and disruptions during construction.
15. The Commission should consider holding a second public hearing if there are substantial updates or revisions made to the IRP.
16. The public should have access to the analyses and working papers that VGS used to develop its IRP.
17. The Commission should consider whether the IRP in this proceeding meets the requirements that were set out in the previous IRP and the Order approving that IRP.

The public is encouraged to submit written comments on the VGS IRP by no later than November 17, 2017, via the PUC's electronic case management system, ePUC, or by mailing or e-mailing comments to the PUC or to the Clerk of the Commission, PUC, 112 State Street, 4th Floor, Montpelier, VT 05620. All documents in case 17-3658-PET can be viewed in ePUC at <http://epuc.vermont.gov/>. Use the case number (17-3658-PET) to find the documents for in the case.

A full transcript of the public hearing is available on ePUC.