



For Immediate Release

Maine's Public Advocate Urges Customers to Weigh in on Unitil Rate Increase

July 20, 2026 | HALLOWELL, Maine – The Maine Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) is urging customers of Unitil to attend upcoming public witness hearings and share how a proposed natural gas rate increase would affect their households.

Northern Utilities, which does business in Maine as Unitil, provides natural gas service to customers in southern and central Maine. The company has asked the Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to approve an increase in its natural gas distribution rates. If approved as filed, the average Unitil residential heating customer would pay about \$11 more per month. Among the issues the PUC will review is the level of profit the company should be permitted to earn for its shareholders.

"Mainers are already feeling the strain of higher costs for housing, groceries, insurance, and energy," said Public Advocate Heather Sanborn. "These hearings give customers an opportunity to tell the PUC what another increase in their monthly bills would mean for their families and budgets."

The PUC has scheduled two public witness hearings before ruling on the request:

- **Tuesday, July 21, 5:00 p.m. at Portland City Hall**
- **Tuesday, July 28, 5:00 p.m. at Lewiston Public Library**

Customers can testify in person or remotely. To testify remotely, email PUCPublicHearing@maine.gov by 4:00 p.m. the day before the hearing for instructions. To file a comment with the Public Utilities Commission regarding this proposal, visit their [website](https://www.maine.gov/meopa) and post a comment in docket number 2026-00049.

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