199—19.14(476) Customer contribution fund.

19.14(1) *Applicability and purpose.* This rule applies to each gas utility as defined in Iowa Code section 476.1. Pursuant to Iowa Code section 476.66, each utility shall maintain a program plan to assist the utility's low-income customers with weatherization and to supplement assistance received under the federal low-income home energy assistance program for the payment of winter heating bills.

19.14(2) *Notification.* Each utility shall notify all customers of the customer contribution fund at least twice a year. Upon commencement of service and at least once a year, the notice will be mailed or personally delivered to all customers or provided by electronic means to those customers who have consented to receiving electronic notices. The other notice may be published in a local newspaper(s) of general circulation within the utility's service territory. At a minimum, the notice shall include:

a. A description of the availability and the purpose of the fund;

b. A customer authorization form that includes a monthly billing option and any other methods of contribution.

19.14(3) *Methods of contribution.* Contributions will be provided as monthly pledges, as well as one-time or periodic contributions. A pledge will not be construed to be a binding contract between the utility and the pledger. The pledge amount shall not be subject to late payment charges by the utility. Each utility may allow persons or organizations to contribute matching funds.

19.14(4) *Annual report.* On or before September 30 of each year, each utility shall file with the commission a report of all the customer contribution fund activity for the previous fiscal year, beginning July 1 and ending June 30, on a form provided by the commission that contains an accounting of the total revenues collected and all distributions of the fund.

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