199—28.8(476) Customer contribution fund.

28.8(1) *Applicability and purpose.* This rule applies to each gas utility as defined in Iowa Code sections 476.1B and 476.1C. 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 assistance energy program for payment of winter heating bills.

28.8(2) *Notification.* Notice of the customer contribution fund is to be given to all customers at least twice a year. Upon commencement of service and at least once a year, the notice is to 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 service territory of the utility. A utility serving fewer than 6,000 customers may publish its semiannual notices locally in a free newspaper, utility newsletter, or shopper's guide instead of a newspaper. At a minimum, the notice is to 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 methods of contribution.

28.8(3) *Methods of contribution.* Contribution methods may include monthly pledges, as well as one-time or periodic contributions. A pledge by a customer or other party is not a binding contract between the utility and the pledger. Delayed contributions are not subject to late payment charges. Each utility may allow persons or organizations to contribute matching funds.

28.8(4) *Annual report.* On or before September 30 of each year, each utility is to file with the commission a report of all the customer contribution fund activity for the previous fiscal year from July 1 through 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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