

November 23, 2011

The Honorable Robert F. Powelson
Chairman
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Chairman Powelson:

Thank you for your November 3, 2011, letter regarding the "Prepare Now" campaign and outreach efforts to educate customers on the availability of programs to assist them in heating their homes safely, reducing their energy usage, and paying their energy bills.

Equitable Gas Company has been and continues to be very active in numerous customer education efforts on those issues. For example, in June of this year, Equitable launched its new pilot energy conservation program for residential customers. Called the SAVER (Smart Audits & Valuable Energy Rebates) Program, this three-year pilot program provides free home energy audits for high-use customers. In addition, rebate dollars are available for any customer who makes their home more energy efficient through the purchase of eligible energy efficient home heating or water heating equipment, or installs air sealing/insulation measures.

The SAVER program has been promoted through print media, direct mail, radio advertising and most recently a one month fall television campaign. I am pleased to report more than 620 home energy audits have been scheduled and more than \$68,000 of rebates have been paid to customers participating in the SAVER program.

Also, in September and October of this year, Equitable Gas continued its "Prepare Now For Winter" safety messaging on Pittsburgh area radio. The radio spots urged customers to get a furnace inspection, purchase carbon monoxide detectors, and take simple home weatherization steps to reduce their winter energy bills.

We also remain committed to encouraging customers to apply for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), Crisis and Dollar Energy Fund grants. Equitable Gas continues to partner with Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Peoples Natural Gas Company, and Peoples TWP to promote LIHEAP in western Pennsylvania and we strongly encourage all eligible customers to apply for assistance. A LIHEAP television advertising campaign took place in late October and early November encouraging customers to apply for the LIHEAP program while funds are still available.

We have also attended and hosted numerous community meetings this Fall with seniors, area social service agencies and state legislators and their staff promoting all assistance programs including budget billing and third-party notification and how to apply for them.

Plans are currently underway for Equitable Gas Company to host the third annual "Call if You Need Help" phone banks with KDKA television in December. This phone bank program provides viewers the ability to call for information and counseling on utility assistance programs, credit counseling programs and food donation programs should they be struggling financially. We have co-hosted a similar phone bank program for LIHEAP the last two years and should LIHEAP funds be available in early 2012 we may again co-host a "Call for LIHEAP" program on KDKA television.

Equitable Gas continues to support the Dollar Energy Fund through corporate contributions in addition to promoting customer donations to the Fund through bill payments. In addition, Equitable will continue to sponsor the Dollar Energy Fund/KDKA News Radio Warmathon. The next Warmathon will take place in February 2012 and we will provide volunteers to assist in this major fundraising event.

As the Commission may know, the Equitable Gas Call Center screens delinquent customers for participation in CAP and can immediately enroll those that are eligible. This eliminates the need for referrals and avoids delays in processing. We also waive the security deposit requirements for customers who are eligible for CAP when service is initiated or restored, and refer customers to all available grants to assist with reconnecting service

The safety of our customers remains a priority for Equitable Gas. We refer customers to the Crisis program for repairs and participated in a free furnace check program with a local trade association for HVAC professionals this Fall. We also continue to operate a hardship repair fund to assist eligible customers with needed heating equipment or gas line repairs.

Equitable Gas Company remains committed to providing safe, reliable natural gas service to our customers and assisting those in need through many outreach and customer education efforts. I hope this information proves helpful as we all seek to assist Pennsylvania citizens in "Preparing Now" for winter weather.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will R Lucas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "L" and "C".

William Lucas
Executive Vice President