

# Update: Progress made in addressing billing issues

forward, these accounts will resume the normal meter reading cycle of alternating actual readings and estimated usage every other month.

**Entering a Meter Reading:** Customers may provide their own meter reading rather than being billed on an estimate every-other-month. This can be done through the Central Hudson mobile app or by following the directions [here](#).

As background, estimated billing was launched prior to the adoption of the new billing system in 2016 when state regulators required Central Hudson transition from bimonthly to monthly billing. In order to provide monthly billing without incurring customer cost impacts, actual readings alternate with usage estimates every-other-month.

## Solar Net Metering

Accounts generating a portion of their electricity with onsite solar panels and other equipment receive credit for electricity that flows back to the local grid. These accounts are billed bimonthly with actual meter readings; however, some have not received bills consistently since last fall.

**Solution:** Corrections are being put into place and bills are being issued to bring accounts up to date. In some cases, a single corrected summary bill based on actual usage for the previously estimated periods is issued, and in other cases several separate corrected bills for each of the estimated billing periods are issued.

## Community Solar

Accounts enrolled in the Community Solar program had not received bills from Central Hudson since September.

**Solution:** Bills have begun to be issued, and all affected accounts are expected to receive bills by mid-April. Residents are receiving separate bills for each of the months they did not receive a bill over a period of days. The usage and cost details are provided on each individual monthly bill, reflecting the usage and electric supply charges in those months. The most current bill will reflect the cumulative charges



» Market prices for electricity and natural gas remain volatile as we transition into Spring. Visit Central Hudson's [dedicated page](#) for the latest updates and a video message from Central Hudson President and CEO Charles A. Freni.

and any payments received. Following this catch-up period, these bills will be issued at their normal schedule. The New York State Public Service Commission has recognized that billing under the Community Solar program is highly complex and has opened a statewide proceeding involving all state utilities to address and resolve these complexities.

## Energy Service Companies and Budget Billing

Existing Budget Billing program customers who enroll with, drop or switch third-party energy suppliers are being removed from the program.

**Solution:** Third party energy suppliers, also called Energy Service Companies (ESCOs), provide an alternative resource for residents to purchase their electricity and natural gas supply. Accounts also participating in the Budget Billing program and who make changes in their energy supply purchases through an ESCO must also re-enroll in Budget Billing if they wish to remain on this program. Similarly, Budget Billing accounts also enrolled in Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) through their municipality must re-enroll in Budget Billing if the CCA supplier is changed.

The Budget Billing program offers leveled bill payments by dividing an account's annual usage by 12 months. With the new billing system, the budget bill amount may also be automatically ad-

justed in the sixth month, to reflect mid-year changes in usage or prices. The sixth month change occurs if there is an upward adjustment of \$10 or more, or a downward adjustment of 25 percent or more.

As a reminder, Central Hudson has not suspended utility services nor charged late fees since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. In addition, no-cost payment plans are available to customers looking to manage their account balances and unable to pay their new bills in full, without additional fees.

## Customer Assistance Programs

To help customers manage energy use and costs, Central Hudson offers discounts, rebates and incentives on many energy saving products and services. There are also steps customers can take to reduce their usage such as lowering thermostat settings, weatherizing and insulating, using LED bulbs and other measures. To learn more, [click here](#).

Payment assistance options are available to qualifying customers. Home Energy Assistant Program (HEAP) grants are now available for income-qualified residents. HEAP grant recipients also qualify for Central Hudson's Bill Discount program. Central Hudson's Good Neighbor Fund also provides grants to help pay the energy bills of local residents in need who have exhausted all other forms of public and private utility assistance. Additional information is available [here](#).