

Rule 003 overview

Purpose

Sets service standards for regulated electricity and natural gas providers in Alberta. The rules ensures fair treatment of customers and maintains high-quality service.



Scope

In addition to reporting requirements for regulated rate providers, Rule 003 includes enforceable billing requirements that apply to all energy service providers. Those billing requirements are linked to specified penalties under Rule 032.



Key reporting requirements

Customer satisfaction



Billing accuracy and timeliness



Customer care



AUC Rule 003: *Service Quality Reporting for Energy Service Providers reporting process*

Who reports: Energy service providers – regulated rate providers (electricity) and default supply providers (gas).

When: Annually.

What do they report?

- Customer care (contact handling, call centre metrics).
- Billing (accuracy, timeliness).
- Customer satisfaction measures.
- Billing services (requirements & service guarantees, e.g., credits for errors).

How: Use AUC annual report template; disclose unexpected events and material changes.

AUC review: Staff review annually, publish a compliance summary and may initiate enforcement; specified penalties possible under Rule 032.

Rule 003 key reporting areas - 2024 reporting year insights

Customer care

The top three reasons customers called their regulated rate provider in 2024 included:

- Arranging for a connection, disconnection or move-out services.
- Inquiring about billing or rates.
- Making payments or payment arrangements for upcoming or overdue bills.

Billing accuracy and timeliness

Billing accuracy and timeliness remains high.

Customer satisfaction

Service providers are increasingly providing more services online (e.g. billing and customer inquiry forums).

Additional data

Shift toward electronic billing



Electronic billing increased across all utilities between 2023 and 2024, while paper billing declined. Apex saw the largest change, with electronic billing rising from 26% to 37%, and DERS increasing from 38% to 48%. ENMAX continued to lead in digital adoption at over 60%, with a modest increase year over year, while EPCOR also saw growth, rising from 51% to 53%. Overall, the data shows a clear shift toward electronic billing across providers.

Budget billing and payment plan use



Budget billing plans spread energy costs evenly over the year, with adjustments based on actual usage. From 2023 to 2024, participation remained low and stable, ranging from 2% to 9% across all providers, with Apex and DERS showing the highest uptake and ENMAX and EPCOR the lowest. Overall, the data indicates budget billing remains a niche option for customers. To support those facing payment challenges, providers often offer payment plans for eligible customers.