

Rule 003 Compliance Summary Report

In 2004, the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) introduced [Rule 003: Service Quality Reporting for Energy Service Providers](#). This rule has two main purposes:

1. It sets out the reporting requirements for [regulated utility service providers](#).
2. It allows the AUC to address issues related to [billing](#).

Regulated utility service providers submit regular annual reports to the AUC, along with extra reports when unusual events, like a postal strike affecting billing, happen. These reports help the AUC monitor and identify customer service trends, including areas such as customer experience with call centre personnel, bill accuracy, timeliness and overall customer satisfaction in the electricity and natural gas service sectors.

2023 reporting year highlights:

1. **Customer care and satisfaction:** Regulated utility service providers are constantly adjusting their operations to meet customers' changing communication needs. New technologies, like online chat and surveys, are being introduced to make customer interactions more efficient.
2. **Bill accuracy and timeliness:** Bill accuracy and the timely delivery of bills remain strong, thanks to the maturity of the market and the operation of [Rule 004](#).
3. **Billing payment flexibility:** To help customers manage their bills, regulated utility service providers are exploring new ways to offer flexible payment options. These efforts aim to reduce the chances of service disconnections whenever possible.

Successful strategies reported by industry:

Regulated utility service providers have reported several strategies to improve customer service, including:

- Building in more staff flexibility to handle high call volumes during busy times.
- Providing customers with more online resources to answer frequently asked questions.
- Redesigning bill inserts and other customer materials to make them easier to understand.
- Allowing customers to choose their preferred billing due date.
- Offering various methods for online payments.
- Updating budget billing programs to avoid large end-of-year charges.
- Reducing barriers to reconnecting service by offering payment plans.

Looking ahead: New rate structure for electricity providers

In September 2024, the government of Alberta introduced the [Rate of Last Resort Regulation](#), effective January 1, 2025. This new regulation will change the [pricing structure for electricity from regulated utility service providers](#). These changes may affect customer service trends, and the AUC will monitor them as part of its ongoing Rule 003 compliance reviews.