

STATE OF VERMONT  
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 18-0974-TF

Tariff filing of Green Mountain Power Corporation requesting a 5.45% increase in its base rates effective with bills rendered January 1, 2019, to be fully offset by bill credits through September 30, 2019.

PREFILED DIRECT TESTIMONY OF  
CAROL FLINT

ON BEHALF OF THE  
VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

August 10, 2018

Summary: Ms. Flint's testimony presents an overview of Green Mountain Power's recent customer service history including service reliability. Based on her review, Ms. Flint concludes that GMP has excellent customer service.

Direct Testimony  
Of  
Carol Flint

1 **Q1. Please state your name and occupation.**

2 A1. My name is Carol Flint. I am the Director of the Consumer Affairs and Public  
3 Information Division (“CAPI”) of the Vermont Public Service Department (the  
4 “Department” or “PSD”).

5  
6 **Q2 Please describe your educational background and experience.**

7 A2. I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree with a focus in Sociology from Norwich University  
8 (Vermont College), Northfield, Vermont. I joined the Department as the CAPI Director  
9 in February, 2016. Previously, I served as Executive Director for BROCC—Community  
10 Action in Southwestern Vermont, beginning in 2014 after having worked at Capstone  
11 Community Action for over 20 years, most recently as its Program Director for Family  
12 and Community Support Services. Community Action Agencies are non-profit entities  
13 providing anti-poverty supports and services. Programs under my direction at Capstone  
14 included low income tax clinics and tax preparation services, supervised visitation  
15 programs for non-custodial parents and their children, crisis fuel assistance, food shelves,  
16 workforce development programming such as the Community Kitchen Academy, disaster  
17 case management services, homelessness prevention, and housing counseling. At BROCC,  
18 programming under my guidance expanded from what is listed above to include child  
19 care nutrition services and weatherization assistance.

20

1 **Q3. Have you previously testified before the Vermont Public Utility Commission (the**  
2 **“Commission”)?**

3 A3. Yes. I have provided testimony previously in Docket Nos. 8701, 8881, and 17-1238-  
4 INV, 17-3112-INV, 17-3232-PET, 18-0409-TF and 18-0726-INV.

5

6 **Q4. What is the focus of your testimony?**

7 A4. The focus of my testimony is to review Green Mountain Power’s (“GMP” or the  
8 “Company”) recent customer service history and describe its service reliability  
9 performance.

10

11 **Q5. How does CAPI evaluate GMP’s service quality performance?**

12 A5. The Department regularly reviews the reports that GMP files with the Commission in  
13 accordance with GMP’s Service Quality and Reliability Plan (“SQRP”). The SQRP  
14 provides performance standards for measures including call answer performance, billing  
15 accuracy, meter reading, work completion, customer satisfaction, rate of complaints to  
16 the PSD, worker safety, and system reliability. GMP reports on the SQRP performance  
17 standards on a quarterly basis and the reports show both monthly and quarterly averages  
18 for performance metrics. Mr. Steve Costello’s prefiled testimony on behalf of GMP  
19 discusses GMP’s SQRP reports.

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1 **Q6. Please describe GMP's performance under the SQRP.**

2 A6. GMP has an excellent record for meeting its SQRP performance standards. GMP has  
3 met all performance standards in each quarter of 2017 and for reports filed to date in  
4 2018.

5

6 **Q7. Did CAPI review service disconnection reports filed by the Company, and are there**  
7 **any concerns?**

8 A7. CAPI reviewed disconnection reports filed for 2017 and did not identify any concerns.

9

10 **Q8. What is your opinion about the customer service that Green Mountain Power has**  
11 **provided?**

12 A8. In my opinion, GMP provides excellent customer service. CAPI records indicate that  
13 171 CAPI cases were opened in 2017 based on customer contacts, not including people  
14 calling that were immediately referred to GMP (for e.g. the customer called the  
15 Department in error). Only eight cases were considered to be escalated, meaning that  
16 GMP could have or should have done something more to resolve the complaint. No  
17 complaints were coded as PUC rule violations for 2017. A review of complaint records  
18 and staff interactions therein demonstrates that GMP is reasonable and flexible when  
19 working with its customers. GMP promptly responds to CAPI when the division is  
20 investigating complaints. The company provides the information necessary for CAPI to  
21 work towards resolution with the consumer.

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1 Most consumers that contact CAPI are seeking assistance with negotiating a payment  
2 arrangement with the company when service is scheduled to be disconnected or has been  
3 disconnected for nonpayment. Other complaints concern unexplained high use, estimated  
4 bills, service reliability, net-metering and posting of payments. In 2017, CAPI received  
5 five complaints about reliability, one in Randolph, and one in Bristol (areas for which  
6 service reliability concerns have been previously noted). The remainder of the service  
7 reliability complaints were in Bradford, Pownal and East Thetford. CAPI received  
8 sixteen complaints, ten of which the division investigated, from GMP customers in 2017  
9 regarding the application of net metering credits and changes to rates and fees under the  
10 that year's rule revision.

11

12 **Q9. Does that conclude your testimony?**

13 A9. Yes.