

June 9, 2026

Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel
c/o Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan

Dear Members of the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel,

Re: Request to Reject Any Further Electricity Rate Increases for Northern Communities

We are writing as northern leaders and community representatives to respectfully urge the Saskatchewan Rate Review Panel to reject any further increase in electricity rates for northern communities and, at minimum, to recommend that northern residents be protected from additional rate burdens while a fairer approach is developed. For many households in northern Saskatchewan, electricity is not a discretionary expense. It is an essential service tied directly to heat, safety, health, and basic quality of life. This submission reflects concerns shared across northern communities that rising electricity costs will deepen hardship for families, elders, and local institutions that are already under significant pressure.

Northern communities face unique and disproportionate energy challenges. In communities such as Beauval, La Ronge, Pelican Narrows, Stanley Mission, and Deschambault Lake, many households do not have access to natural gas and must rely much more heavily on electricity, especially during long winter months. Public reporting on the current rate review has highlighted Beauval as an example where annual household electricity costs can reach about \$4,600 compared with roughly \$1,500 in other parts of the province. In practical terms, this means that seniors on fixed incomes, single-parent families, and households already facing overcrowding are being asked to absorb higher monthly bills for an essential service they cannot do without. In communities where several generations may be living in one home, higher electricity use is not a luxury; it is a reflection of real housing and heating needs.

There are also broader realities of northern life that make electricity affordability especially urgent. Recent wildfire seasons have shown how quickly communities such as La Ronge, Air Ronge, Stanley Mission, Pelican Narrows, Deschambault Lake, and Weyakwin can face evacuation, road disruption, smoke exposure, and service interruptions. When electricity is lost or strained during emergencies, residents can face risks related to heating, refrigeration of food and medicine, internet and phone access, and pressure on local water and public safety systems. These are not minor inconveniences in remote communities; they are serious impacts on daily life and community resilience. Rate decisions should reflect that electricity in the North is tied directly to safety, continuity of service, and the ability of families to remain secure in their homes.

A flat, system-wide increase may appear administratively simple, but it does not reflect the realities facing remote and northern residents. Treating all customer classes the same does not produce an equitable outcome when some communities have fewer alternatives, higher energy dependence, and greater vulnerability to rising utility costs. If SaskPower requires major infrastructure investment, those costs should not be recovered in a way that places an unfair burden on families and small communities already struggling with the cost of living.

We respectfully ask the Panel to recommend one or more of the following: reject the proposed increase as it applies to northern communities; establish a separate northern rate or affordability protection mechanism; and require a more transparent assessment of how proposed rate changes affect remote, northern, and Indigenous communities before any further increases are approved. A fair review process must consider not only SaskPower's financial needs, but also the practical realities of households, community organizations, and local leadership in places where there is no realistic substitute for electricity.

Thank you for considering this submission from the Northern Hamlet of Weyakwin Mayor and Council community representatives. We urge the Panel to put affordability, equity, and the realities of northern life at the centre of its recommendation. Northern communities should not be asked to bear a greater burden for an essential service simply because of geography, remoteness, and lack of alternatives.

Respectfully submitted,

On behalf of the Northern Hamlet of Weyakwin

R. Medrick Thomas, Mayor

Stella Brown, Deputy-Mayor

Nora Nelson, Councillor

Sharon Natomagan, Councillor