



Date: March 5, 2026
To: Municipal Light Board: Warren Leon, John Dalton, Brian Foulds, and Chris Schaffner
From: Jason Bulger, CMLP Director
Subject: Agenda for virtual Light Board meeting on **Wed., March 11, 2026, at 7:30 A.M.** (link below)

- | | | | | |
|---------|---|------------|------------|------------------------|
| 7:30 AM | 1. Call to Order | | | |
| 7:30 AM | 2. Meetings and Minutes | 5 Minutes | Chair | Vote |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vote to approve the regular session minutes of February 11, 2026. <p>Upcoming Meetings:
 Apr 8, 2026; May 13, 2026; Jun 10, 2026; Jul 8, 2026; Aug 12, 2026; Sep 9, 2026; Oct 14, 2026</p> | | | |
| 7:35 AM | 3. Chair’s Update | 5 Minutes | Director | Information |
| 7:40 AM | 4. Director’s Update | 10 Minutes | Director | Information |
| 7:50 AM | 5. Broadband Update | 10 Minutes | BB Manager | Information |
| 8:00 AM | 6. Time-of-Day Light Board Forum Debrief | 20 Minutes | Chair | Discussion |
| | <p><u>Background:</u> The Light Board is having a public forum on March 4th to discuss Time-of-Day rates.
 <u>Purpose:</u> To have a brief discussion about what transpired and determine if any adjustments in communication are required as a result of questions asked or information gleaned at the event.</p> | | | |
| 8:20 AM | 7. Status of CMLP Audit | 10 Minutes | Director | Information/Discussion |
| | <p><u>Background:</u> CMLP has its financials audited independent of the Town every year. The 2024 audit has been completed. The Financial Audit Advisory Committee will be hearing a presentation on the audit by the Auditing firm’s partner assigned to this audit on 2/26/2026.
 <u>Purpose:</u> The audit and process will be discussed, including an update on the 2025 audit.</p> | | | |
| 8:30 AM | 8. Suspend reg. meeting and open rate hearing | 30 Minutes | Asst. Dir. | Discussion/Vote |
| | <p><i>Requires a motion, a second, and roll call vote</i>
 <i>Sample motion: “I move that we suspend the meeting in progress and enter into a rate hearing for the purpose of discussing the rates listed in the posted agenda.”</i></p> <p><u>Background:</u> Due to the new rates previously approved and changes made to rates and riders in preparation of the Time-of-Day rates taking effect obsolete Tariff sheets need to be reviewed.
 <u>Purpose:</u> To discuss and receive public comments on the discontinuance of the Electric Resistance Heat Pump Heating Rate (R-7).</p> | | | |



CONCORD MUNICIPAL LIGHT PLANT

ELECTRIC | BROADBAND | ENERGY MANAGEMENT

9:00 AM 9. **Liaison & Public Comments** 10 Minutes Chair Information

9:10 AM 10. **Adjourn**

Distribution:

Kerry Lafleur
Dale Hartling

Joe Repoff
Jennifer Clougherty

Laura Scott
Cameron McKennitt

Nan Okarma
Don Kupka

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83853970051?pwd=akVzemJRQk8vNTJRUnNlOS9NNDFuQT09>

Meeting ID: 838 5397 0051

Passcode: 661712

Link to view recordings of previous Light Board Meetings:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1TTzrWEKOOOn0RIJ2MdE2SnNZMWYeoat>

Link to view the Director's Updates (in meeting packets):

<https://concordma.gov/1106/Municipal-Light-Board>

Link to view the Broadband Monthly Updates:

<https://www.concordma.gov/3148/Monthly-Updates>

Minutes for Approval

Concord Municipal Light Board Minutes

02/11/2026

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Concord Municipal Light Board was held on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 7:30 am, via a Zoom meeting. Present were Board Members: Warren Leon, John Dalton, Brian Foulds, Bianca Taylor, and Chris Schaffner. Also in attendance were Jason Bulger, CMLP Director; Laura Scott, Assistant Director of Power Supply and Energy Management; Joe Repoff, Assistant Director of Engineering and Operations; Nan Okarma, Financial Manager; Donna De Gray, Customer Service Supervisor; Ann Breitenwischer, Meter Supervisor; Karin Farrow, Office Administrator; Jennifer Clougherty, Customer Service Manager; Jesse Wooster, AMI Analyst; Carole Hilton, Project Consultant; Cameron McKennitt, Select Board member; Town Manager, Kerry Lafleur; and residents Karlen Reed, Jim Terry, Andy Puchrik, Pamela Dritt, and Gordon Brockway.

Definitions for acronyms used in these minutes:

- **CMLP:** Concord Municipal Light Plant
- **TOD:** Time of Day

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Leon called the meeting to order at 7:33. Meeting recording will be posted to the Minuteman Media Network YouTube page as soon as it is available.¹

MEETING MINUTES (0:14)

Mr. Dalton moved to approve the regular session minutes for 01/14/2026 as distributed. Mr. Schaffner offered a second, and the motion passed, with members Foulds, Dalton, Leon and Schaffner voting in favor (Ms. Taylor arrived after the vote).

DIRECTOR'S UPDATE (0:53)

Jason Bulger thanked the staff who assisted during a power outage the previous Friday. An underground conductor failed near Main and Walden Streets, and the Line crew, Engineering, and Broadband staff worked in extremely cold and challenging conditions to restore power. Mr. Bulger noted that the business community was patient and that the outage was likely due to aging infrastructure.

Mr. Bulger reported progress on the 2024 and 2025 audits. Draft financial statements for 2024 have been received, and the auditors will present to the Financial Audit Advisory Committee on February 26th. While there was an issue with cash reconciliation due to a town financial migration, the draft audit does not currently list it as a major concern. A new firm, Goulet, Salvidio & Associates, has begun the 2025 audit process.

Mr. Bulger highlighted the success of the midwinter home tours, where 75 people viewed solar panels, EV charging, heat pumps, and more in action. Feedback from the tours was very positive, and we are grateful for the staff preparation and work.

Regarding the middle school solar project, Mr. Bulger addressed concerns about roof penetrations after a discussion at a recent School Committee meeting. He clarified that the design will either use a ballasted system or one that chemically adheres the racks to the roof so that the roof membrane remains intact. This was the design

¹ Minuteman Media YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Y9MtFY5k1U>

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from the beginning and, while it may have a minor impact on the number of bidders and cost, it is not a barrier to the project moving forward. The school is applying for a Green School Works grant for the rooftop solar, which would significantly defray costs.

Finally, retirements were discussed. John McGarry is retiring after 46 and a half years of service as of April 1. Anne Breitenwischer and Donna De Gray are also retiring from the organization (as of March 2). CMLP thanks them for their dedicated service. Bianca Taylor and other Board members expressed their gratitude for the service of these employees.

Mr. Schaffner noted that flat roof installations at schools are typically self-ballasted, and he asked if there was a discussion about a battery. Mr. Bulger responded that CMLP did not currently hold a site license for energy storage at the site. Mr. Foulds expressed concern about the time it took to get site licenses and suggested moving forward with the project as a whole. Mr. Leon asked if the grant would affect ownership of the solar system. Mr. Bulger explained that if the grant is successful, the benefits would likely be split between the school and the Municipal Light Plant based on the resources each party brings to the project.

BROADBAND REPORT (15:01)

Mr. Bulger provided an update on the XGS-PON migration, which is scheduled for the end of February into March. The project will involve four maintenance windows to move fibers to new equipment. Customers will be notified directly and can expect brief service interruptions between midnight and 6:00 am. A maintenance window people will go down for around 15 minutes as their fiber is moved. Once the migration is complete, residential customers will receive a free increase in speed.

TIME-OF-DAY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATES (18:09)

Mr. Leon opened the discussion by framing the upcoming transition to Time-of-Day (TOD) rates on April 1st. He emphasized that given the limited time remaining, the Board's goal should be to keep the transition as simple and straightforward as possible to avoid unnecessary complications.

Mr. Bulger presented a timeline of TOD discussions dating back to January 2023 to illustrate the iterative process staff and the Board have undertaken to understand the implications and interdependencies of various rates. He noted that CMLP's software provider frequently reminds staff that our rate structure is among the most complicated of its customers, and unwinding that complexity has been a big challenge. Mr. Bulger specifically credited Donna and a former employee (Carole) for returning after her retirement to assist with building the new rates into the system. The rate changes as recently as January of this year have been of particular concern in getting a complete snapshot of all the rates going forward.

In the area of bill print, CMLP's vendor had long ago scheduled a complete bill refresh for December of 2026, so the TOD changes needed to fit inside "minor" adjustments, limiting possibilities. This step of the process is entirely handled by the software vendor, NISC. It's a black box that CMLP has little visibility into and represents the largest schedule risk for TOD rates going live on time. The amount of time between bill completion and bill configuration testing will be smaller than is ideal.

Regarding customer outreach, Mr. Bulger reported that bill inserts and emails from the marketing firm Questline have seen high engagement, with open rates exceeding industry standards. He explained that staff are now working on individualized outreach for specific groups, such as solar, heat pump, and rate assistance customers, to

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address their unique use cases without overwhelming the general public with irrelevant details. To further reduce the burden on the customer service team during this transition, the Board was informed that rate assistance participation will be automatically extended this year and the delinquency process will be modified to be less resource-intensive. Staff have and will continue to attend public events through the month of March to discuss TOD.

On the “Tools and Resources” front, Mr. Bulger outlined some of the “set-it-and-forget” options for customers, like the Connected Homes program, and cost calculator that are both simple and complex. Mr. Leon asked about making it easy to opt-in after already opting out. Staff agree this is important to find and will make sure that’s clear. Mr. Dalton raised a concern regarding the tools provided to customers, referencing Ms. Taylor’s earlier experience where her smart thermostat defaulted to a different utility’s settings. He asked if guidance could be provided for popular smart thermostats to ensure they correctly reflect the new TOD rates. Ms. Scott explained that thermostat manufacturers are not allowing the Connected Homes program to throttle the settings every day (but will allow a few changes per month to hit monthly transmission peaks). Communication going out directly to customers in these programs, and it does include specific language regarding the programming of different models. Ms. Scott clarified that heat pump users should not take any action to try to avoid the evening peak since those devices are intended to run steadily throughout the day.

Mr. Foulds requested that the Board members be sent the templated outreach emails to better understand the information being shared with the public. Mr. Bulger agreed to provide these along with an updated version of the online rate comparison tool.

Finally, Mr. Bulger outlined the criteria for the “go-live” decision, which will be finalized around March 1st. He stated that the fundamental requirement is that the system accurately flows data from meters to billing. Beyond technical functionality, he emphasized that the decision would also depend on whether the number of expected errors is within a tolerance that maintains public trust. He assured the Board that staff would be open and honest about any glitches discovered during final testing and would prepare contingency plans if the vendor or system is not ready by the deadline. Mr. Dalton expressed his preference for a short delay rather than a roll-out that had major issues.

LIGHT BOARD TOD FORUM PLANNING (1:05:16)

Mr. Bulger introduced the planning for the upcoming Time-of-Day (TOD) public forum by detailing a proposed agenda that included an introduction, a section on the “why” and benefits of TOD rates, a “what you can do to save” segment, and a timeline for next steps. This structure allows the Board take a lead role in introducing sections of the forum to make it more of a community-oriented event rather than just a staff presentation. Mr. Bulger proposed that Board members speak on the foundational reasons for the change and the associated benefits, such as lower system-wide costs, reduced peak usage, more consumer control over bills, and less pollution.

Mr. Foulds agreed to take the lead on explaining the “why” behind the transition. He suggested that the presentation should include revenue-neutral values from the cost of service study to help the public understand the long-term impacts. Mr. Foulds thought that showing these figures would illustrate that while the first phase might only have a small bill impact, the 2027 phase would involve a more significant peak rate increase, highlighting the importance of behavioral changes now. Mr. Bulger agreed that this was a good suggestion for providing customers with clearer context.

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Ms. Taylor agreed to speak on the specific benefits of the TOD rates. Mr. Bulger noted that staff would provide supporting materials and example language but encouraged Board members to put the points into their own words or speak off the cuff to maintain a personal connection with the audience. He also mentioned that this collaborative approach would allow staff and individual Board members to coordinate their sections without violating open meeting laws.

The background and history section will explain that this Time-of-Day initiative has been a decade in the making, with planning extending back to at least 2017 in previous Light Plant Strategic Plans. It took time implementing a new billing system and deploying new meters, and now that those phases are complete, TOD is ready to take effect. Mr. Dalton offered to introduce this topic.

Staff will then cover an overview of the program, including specifics like timing, rates.

Mr. Schaffner agreed to assist in any section, so being that there was only one left, he will introduce the section on what customers can do to save under the new Time-of-Day rates.

The Board then discussed the logistical details of the forum. Mr. Bulger confirmed it would be a hybrid event with a Zoom component to ensure accessibility in case of poor March weather. He explained that after the formal presentation and recorded question-and-answer session, the Board could adjourn the official meeting and stop the recording. This would allow for an informal period where attendees could mill about and speak with staff and Board members individually to address unique concerns or follow-up questions. Mr. Leon concluded the topic by agreeing with the plan and confirming that staff would reach out to individual Board members to workshop their specific presentation points.

RATE HEARING (1:22:38)

Mr. Schaffner moved to suspend the meeting in progress and enter into a rate hearing for the purpose of discussing the rates listed in the posted agenda, and with a second by Mr. Foulds, the Board voted unanimously to enter into the rate hearing.

Mr. Leon opened the session by reminding the Board that the goal was to keep the transition as straightforward as possible.

Assistant Director of Power Supply and Energy Management Laura Scott presented two rates for current Residential Rate Assistance customers. For the first, as requested by the Board, the service/meter charge \$0 per month, and the Time-of-Day rates in each period have been lowered such that the total cost of the program, including the waived service/meter fee, is equal to the total program cost the year earlier.

The next rate discussed was the Opt Out rate for those who qualify for Rate Assistance. This remains a rider and mimics the current structure, showing a credit equal to the service/meter charge and a discount of \$0.08185/kWh for the first 657kWh. Mr. Foulds asked that the Opt out information provided to customers mention that the credit ends after 657kWh, and Ms. Scott said that was possible.

While the Residential Service – Electric Vehicle Charging Separate Meter rate was initially expected to go away, it became clear that doing so would penalize those customer due to the phased approach of Time-of-Day rates.

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The rate is currently about \$0.17/kWh, and the lowest rate under Time-of-Day is around \$0.20/kWh until Phase 2, when it drops down to the \$0.16-0.17 range. The proposal is to maintain the current rate of \$0.17056/kWh until Phase 2 takes effect and then retire the rate at that time. Mr. Foulds said that since the Board continued the ETS rates a while longer, doing this extension was logical. The service/meter charge was removed from the rate so that it could be added to the Terms and Conditions.

The Board briefly discussed the multiple meter fee, and they agreed to keep it at the current level of \$6.50/meter until a future rate change when they would consider moving it toward the cost of service, which is \$9.00/meter.

Regarding the New York Power Authority (NYPA) residential credit, Ms. Scott explained that the state requires the benefits of cheap NYPA power to be allocated strictly to residential customers. Today that credit is given to the first 75kWh on residential customer accounts. She recommended shifting from the current variable credit to a fixed monthly dollar credit for administrative simplicity due to complexities of the TOD bill programming. Ms. Scott noted that this change would mean a small number of solar customers, who previously might not have received the credit because they weren't receiving 75 or more kWh from the grid each month, would now see a consistent monthly credit on their bills. Mr. Foulds voiced his support, calling it a small but good change.

Bianca Taylor praised the level of detail in the presentation. Mr. Leon then asked if there were any public comments specifically regarding the tariff sheets; hearing none, he entertained a motion to close the hearing.

Mr. Foulds moved to adjourn the Rate Hearing and resume the regular meeting with a second by Mr. Dalton, the Board voted unanimously to close the rate hearing.

Mr. Foulds moved to approve the rates presented (starting on page 50 of the materials packet): Residential Rate Assistance TOD Rate; Residential Rate Assistance Opt-out Rider; Residential Electric Vehicle Charging Separate Meter; and NYPA Power Credit Rate. With a second by Ms. Taylor, the Board voted unanimously to approve the rates.

PUBLIC COMMENT (1:40:00)

- Pamela Dritt stated she strongly approved any rate changes that increase the cost of electricity for only those residences still using fossil fuel as heat sources; since that is not possible, she supported lowering the cost of electricity for heat pump and EV customers.

ADJOURN (1:44:00)

Mr. Foulds moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Schaffner offered a second, and members voted the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:17am.

Respectfully submitted,
Mr. Dalton, Clerk

Concord Municipal Light Plant Updates

March 11, 2026

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Organization and Industry

- **House Passage of Energy Affordability Bill H.5151 (Late Feb 2026)**
 The Massachusetts House approved a landmark energy bill aimed at saving ratepayers over \$9 billion over the next decade. Key provisions include cutting \$1 billion from the Mass Save marketing budget, expanding clean energy procurement authority, and repealing a decades-old voter law to ease the path for future nuclear development.
- **Major Restoration Effort Following February Blizzard (Feb 22–24)**
 A historic blizzard and "bomb cyclone" brought hurricane-force winds and heavy snow to the region, leaving over 300,000 Massachusetts residents without power. Utilities including National Grid and Eversource mobilized thousands of crews for a multi-day restoration effort, with coastal areas like Nantucket and Cape Cod facing the longest delays due to blocked roads.

Fortunately Concord fared quite well. Despite large snow fall totals, we experienced only 3 minor incidents impacting 3 customers from Sunday to Monday night.
- **APPA Governance and Bylaw Modernization**
 The American Public Power Association (APPA) Board of Directors approved a comprehensive update to its bylaws, marking the most significant governance change in its recent history. The new "principle-based" model streamlines membership categories and ensures more direct regional representation on the board for municipal utilities.

Learn more about these changes here: <https://www.appa.org/news/what-to-know-about-appas-2026-bylaws>

- **Energy New England (ENE) EV Leadership Initiative**
Energy New England released a mid-February update highlighting its expanded leadership in electric vehicle (EV) program development for municipal utilities. The initiative focuses on community outreach and "Recharge America" partnerships to help MLPs navigate the infrastructure demands of transportation electrification.



You can learn more here: <https://ene.org/ev-program-leadership-massachusetts/>

- Discussed CMLP governance with the Town Manager. We expect to have a conversation about this topic with the Select Board after Town Meeting.

Time-of-Day Rollout



- The 30-day email communication went out on 3/4. This message had an open rate of nearly 24%

- The Light Board held a Public Forum on the new Time-of-Day rates on March 4th at the Main Library. Thanks to our friends at Minuteman Media Network, the recording of the event can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfmsKY1SLEc>

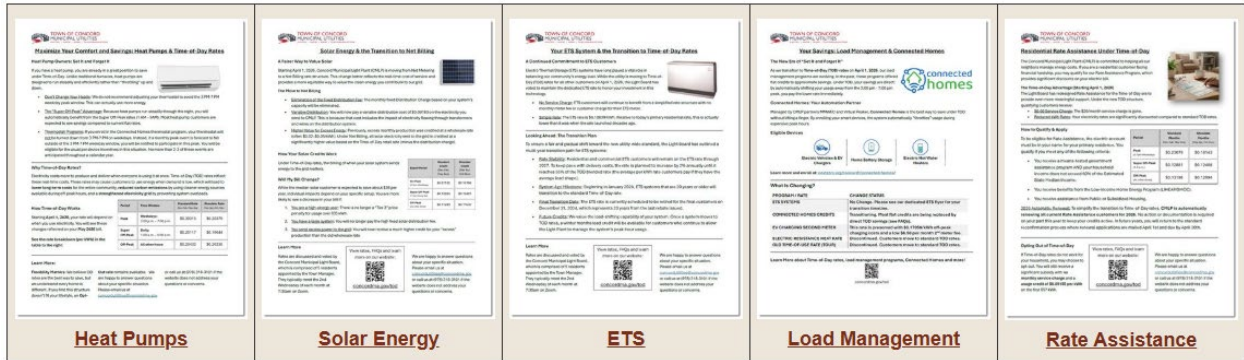
- New information sheets for Heat Pumps, Solar, ETS, Load Management, and Rate Assistance are live on our website here:

<https://concordma.gov/4127/Time-of-Day-Resources>

- CMLP staff will be presenting at the Council on Aging (Harvey Wheeler) on March 18th at 2:30pm for our final in-person outreach event. This brings the total to seven:
 1. League of Women Voters
 2. Climate Coffee with Natural Resources
 3. Climate Action Committee
 4. ConcordCAN
 5. Concord Greene
 6. Light Board Forum
 7. Council on Aging

Additionally, there have been discussion at two all-staff meetings, plus internal department meetings for each group working at CMLP.

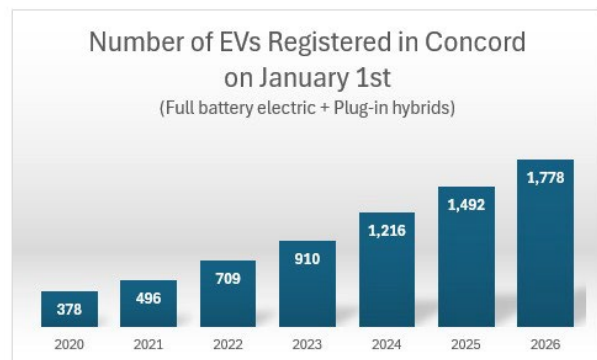
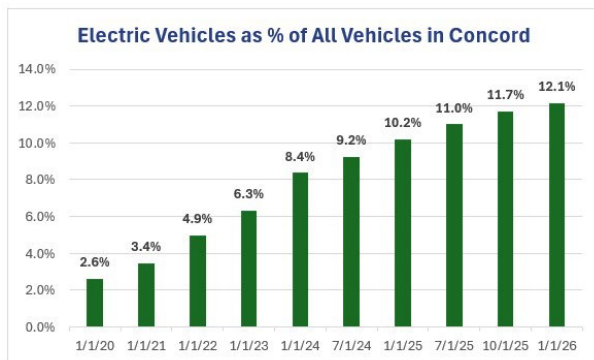
- Staff are preparing the individual emails and letters that go out to people in specific situations that might require additional guidance.



<https://concordma.gov/4127/Time-of-Day-Resources>

Energy Management

- The Concord Bridge published an [article](#) about CMLP’s Mid-Winter Home Tour in their February 27th edition.
- Energy Management staff is updating heat pump, electric vehicle and solar website material to reflect the new time-of-day rate schedule, and the elimination of the EV Miles Program and the Electric Resistance Heat Pump Heating Rate. We are preparing a TOD/net billing explainer to help solar customers and installers adapt to TOD rates, and assisting with the preparation of FAQs for heat pump owners.
- We shared a case study describing the [West Concord Union Church’s](#) conversion to heat pump heating with the other faith communities in Town.
- Electric vehicles as a percentage of all vehicles in Concord exceeded 12% as of 1/1/26, reaching 1,778 in total.



Battery Storage and Solar Project Updates

- School Administration applied for a MassCEC Green School Works grant for the middle school solar project. Follow-up interviews and questions, if needed, will happen in February and March. Announcements for grant winners should be announced in May.
- CMLP Director Jason Bulger attended the February 25th School Committee meeting to discuss the current status of the project and answer questions. A recording of the meeting is available here, with the link bringing you to this topic:
https://youtu.be/Y_HqCdWR26s?si=QLZbCTj6ShD25loT&t=2086
- CMLP is exploring alternative funding options in the event the grant opportunity does not pan out.
- CMLP met with a solar developer and Planning / Building staff to discuss requirements and timelines for filing for a special permit to add additional solar and energy storage to the landfill site. Meetings with Public Works and the Fire Department should take place soon.

Finance Updates

- We have received the final 2024 financial statements from our auditors. The document can be viewed here: <https://www.concordma.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/810> The document also includes the material weakness of our difficulty reconciling cash
- CLA continues the forensic cash reconciliation work between CMLP's cash records and the Town of Concord's financial records. At last update, they had reconciled into November 2024, just a month from their final goal.
- The Finance Department is preparing to kick off an Accounts Payable Automation project in April that will allow for invoices to automatically be entered into the financial system.
- Nan Okarma prepared the Enterprise Hearing presentation and Budget Book drafts for the Town Budget cycle. She also prepared the street light billing and PILOT calculations and transmitted them to the Town's Finance Department.

Engineering and Operations

- Issues were reported with the ChargePoint charging stations, and one ended up needing repairs (Stow St).
- The CMLP headquarters experienced multiple roof leaks that required patching. The roof is likely due for replacement in the near future.
- The new barcode system is undergoing testing with the vendor.
- HVAC issues that have persisted for years are being addressed with collaboration between multiple vendors.
- There was a very large outage near the corner of Walden and Main (underground area) that required a full-day of repairs.
- CMLP staff are having pre-construction planning meetings for the 40B project on Forest Ridge.
- Staff are attending excavations and trenching safety training.
- CMLP Engineering and Line teams continue to discuss the possibility of substation upgrades to allow for participation in transmission with Eversource collaboration.
- Line workers to take state hydraulic license test.
- The team is reviewing MassDOT plans for changes to the Assabet River Multi-Use Trail.
- SCADA work is ongoing. New fabricated doors should arrive in the next 1-2 months for both substations.



Power Supply

- Worked on preparing updates to rates for the February Light Board meeting.
- Made changes to the Connected Homes web pages as a result of program changes after CMLP requests.
- Set the end of the EV Miles program and updated the website.
- Researched submeters and did analysis on EV charging with submeters.
- Met with staff to review goal progress.
- Attended annual insurance review with PURMA and invited Assistant CFO Ryan Ferrara.
- Met with 15-20 residents of Concord Greene to discuss TOD rates and implications in an area where most services are limited to 60amps

- Applied Q4 Connected Homes credits to 159 customer accounts.
- Processed Weatherization, DriveEV and Home Energy Assessment rebates.

Customer Service

- Meter Supervisor Annie Breitenwischer and Customer Service Supervisor Donna De Gray both retired on March 2. We wish them the absolute best in their retirement and thank them for their years of service!
- Worked on multiple TOD topics, including rate configuration, bill print, and customer outreach.
- Made progress on job postings, interviews and next steps to fill vacancies.
- Sent EV Miles emails to customers letting them know of the program's future under TOD.
- Prepared the 30-day email for TOD rates
- Worked on Opt-out policy and customer communication for TOD
- Dealt with water/stormwater billing issues
- Had team lunch to thank them for their work for Stormwater and TOD.



TOWN OF CONCORD MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

ELECTRIC | WATER | SEWER | TELECOMMUNICATIONS

February 2026 – Broadband Updates

Concord Broadband is pleased to share the following updates and information from the past month. Please do not hesitate to contact us at broadband@concordma.gov should you have any questions, concerns, or feedback.

Operations

- The Broadband team responded to the power issue at Walden and Main St in early February. Fiber was present in the conduit where a conductor failed, so it had to be pulled out and re-run. It was spliced that afternoon/evening, and final repairs were completed the following day before 11am.
- Gateways continue to fail on the Yukon system. Broadband staff have been resetting the gateways and communicating with Eaton.
- A fiber link connecting Harvey Wheeler with other Town buildings failed. There was a redundant fiber present, so the failed link was disabled until troubleshooting could occur. Fiber patch cables were replaced, and service resumed as expected.
- The XGS-PON migration has taken a lot of staff time. You can read more about this in the lengthy article below.

XGS-PON Migrations in Progress

As we continue our journey to bring next-generation connectivity to Concord, we want to provide a transparent update on our XGS-PON rollout. Our goal is to provide the fastest, most reliable fiber network possible, and sometimes that means hitting the pause button to ensure everything is perfect.

What Happened During the First Phase?

On February 18, we successfully migrated the first group of customers (roughly one-sixth of our network) to the new XGS-PON devices. While nearly all residents experienced a smooth transition with immediate access to the new hardware, we did encounter some hurdles.

Specifically, a few municipal and business accounts with multiple locations experienced connectivity issues between sites. Our team immediately worked to find the root cause.

Upcoming Maintenance

There will be additional maintenance windows in March/April of 2026. When the dates are chosen, we will update the maintenance page here:

<https://concordma.gov/3144/Broadband-Maintenance>

Troubleshooting and Resolutions

After extensive investigation, we identified two primary issues:

- **Software Bug:** We traced the connectivity drops in multi-site accounts to a specific software error. Working with our vendors, we have identified the fix to ensure these accounts remain stable. We will test these newer releases extensively to ensure this issue is addressed and that it does not introduce any other errors.
- **Optics Hardware:** We also discovered a hardware inconsistency in some of the optics (the components that transmit light through the fiber). This could have potentially affected performance for outdoor ONTs (what people often call “modems” that are in basements or the sides of buildings), so we are proactively replacing that hardware. This particular issue did not manifest in the first wave of migrations, but we did want to replace the hardware as a preventative measure.

Why the Schedule has Shifted

Because we refuse to compromise on the reliability of your service, we have temporarily paused the migration schedule. We are currently in a phase of rigorous, extensive testing to confirm that the software fixes and hardware replacements meet our high standards. We believe it is better to take the time now to get it right than to rush a rollout that isn't 100% ready.

Looking Ahead: Late March and April

We know many of you are eager for your upgrade! We anticipate resuming the migration schedule in late March or April. We don't have the exact dates for the remaining neighborhoods just yet, but as soon as the testing phase is complete, we will send out direct communications to let you know exactly when your area is scheduled for the switch.

Our Commitment: We appreciate your patience as we work through these technical refinements. Our priority remains delivering a world-class fiber network that Concord can rely on for years to come.

Meet the Team: A Day in the Life of a Concord Broadband Technician

While much of the magic of a high-speed fiber network happens behind the scenes in server rooms and through miles of underground cabling, the real connection to our community happens on the ground. Whether they are climbing a ladder, navigating a dusty basement, or precision-splicing a strand of glass the width of a human hair, our three dedicated Senior Technicians Marc, Rob, and Dan are the backbone of Concord Broadband.

If you've seen one of our trucks in your neighborhood, here is a glimpse into what their day looks like.

The Art of the "Walk-Through"

Before a single foot of fiber optic cable is laid, a technician's day often begins with a site survey. Marc, Rob, or Dan will meet with residents and business owners to map out the "path of least resistance." They determine where the fiber enters the building, where the Optical Network Terminal (ONT) will sit, and how to ensure the installation is as unobtrusive as possible. It's a mix of engineering and customer service, ensuring the technical needs of the network align with the aesthetics of your home.

Precision Under Pressure: Splicing Fiber

Fiber optics transmit data using pulses of light, which means every connection must be perfect. Our technicians handle two types of splicing:

- **Outdoor Splicing:** Often performed in varied weather conditions, this involves connecting the main distribution lines to the individual drop cables that head toward your home. While fiber systems usually overbuild the fiber with enough slack to bring the splice case into a warm van, Concord's fiber system was not designed in this manner, so nearly everything is spliced in the air.
- **Indoor Splicing:** This is the finish work. Once the fiber is pulled inside, the team uses specialized fusion splicers to join the glass strands. This process uses an electric arc to melt two glass ends together with microscopic precision.

The Heavy Lifting: Pulling Cable

Not every day is spent doing delicate desk work. Much of the job involves pulling cable—physically threading fiber through conduits and over aerial attachments. It's a physically demanding task that requires coordination and a deep understanding of Concord's unique utility infrastructure. Whether it's a standard residential install or a complex municipal building, the team ensures the fiber is secure and protected from the elements.

The Detectives: Troubleshooting

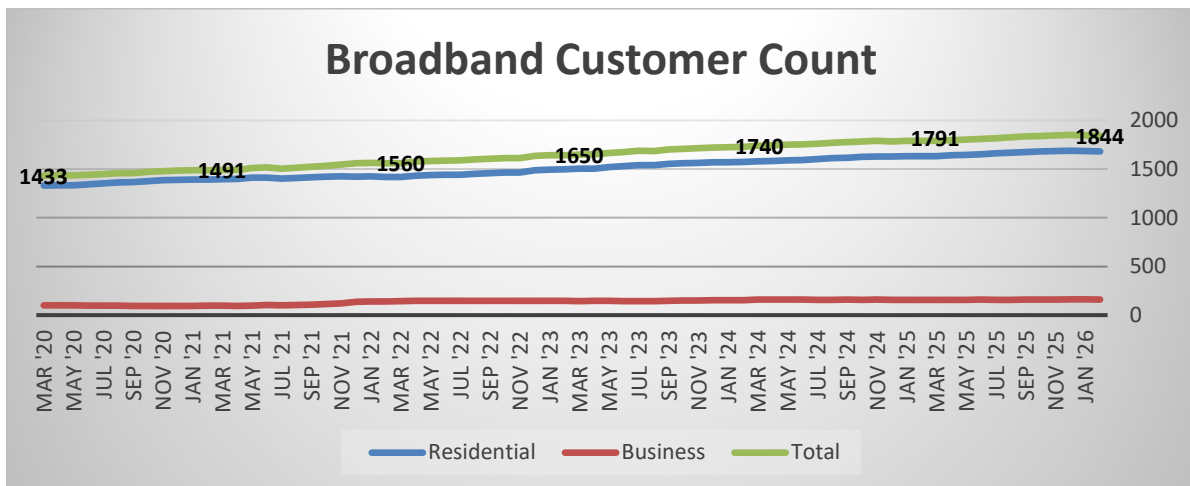
Perhaps the most critical part of the job is when things *don't* go as planned. When a customer reports an issue, Marc, Rob, or Dan become detectives. They use specialized tools like OTDRs (Optical Time-Domain Reflectometers) to see into the fiber and find exactly where a signal might be bending, breaking, or experiencing interference. Their goal is always the same: get the customer back online as quickly as possible.

Fun Fact: Because fiber uses light rather than electricity, our technicians are often looking for “micro-bends,” which are tiny kinks in the cable that can cause light to leak out and slow down your video stream!

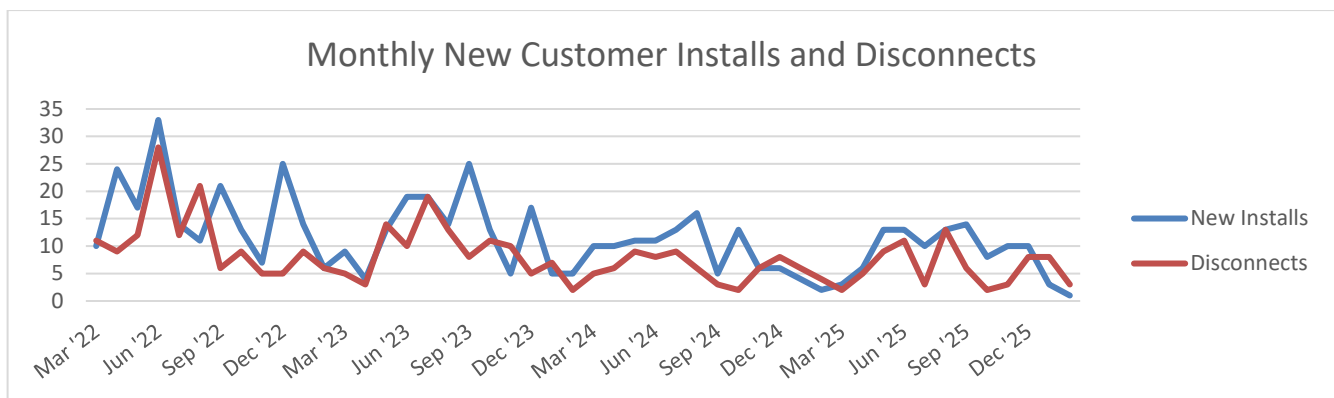
A Local Team for a Local Network

What sets Concord Broadband apart is that when you call for support, you aren’t reaching a massive call center in another time zone. You’re reaching a team that knows our streets and our infrastructure inside and out. The next time you see Marc, Rob, or Dan out in the field, feel free to give them a wave—they’re the ones keeping Concord connected, one splice at a time.

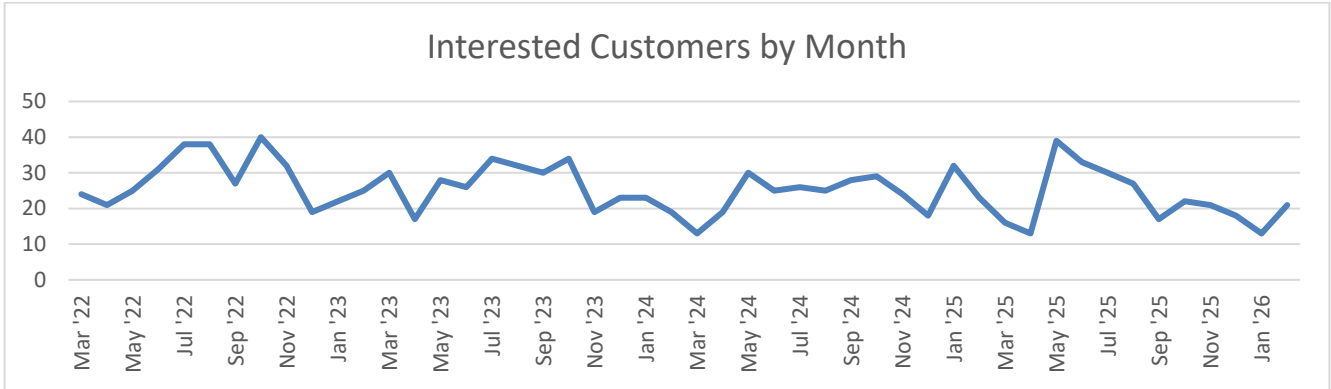
Monthly Metrics and Business Data



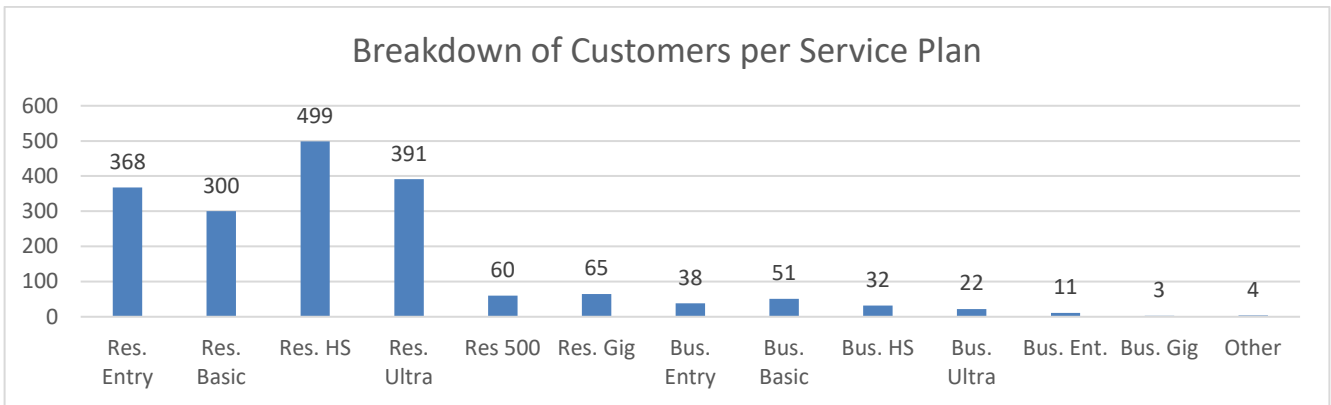
(Customer count: March 2020 – Present)



(The number of new installations and disconnects completed each month.)

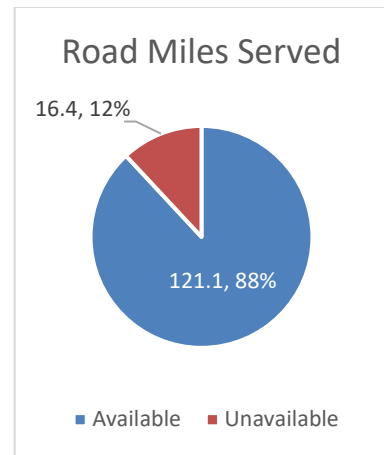
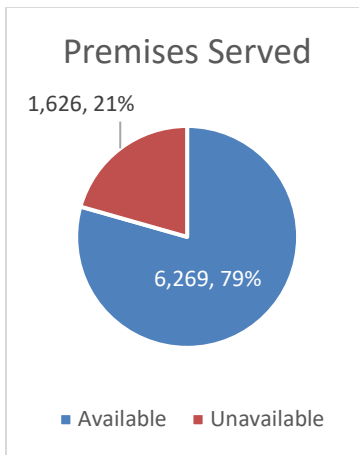
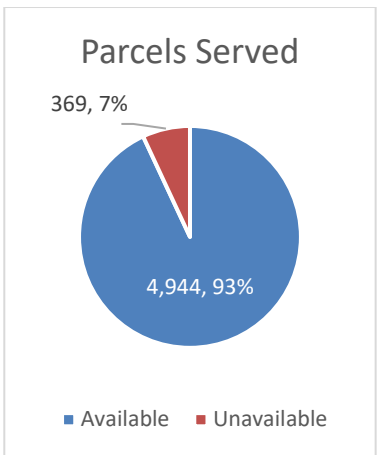


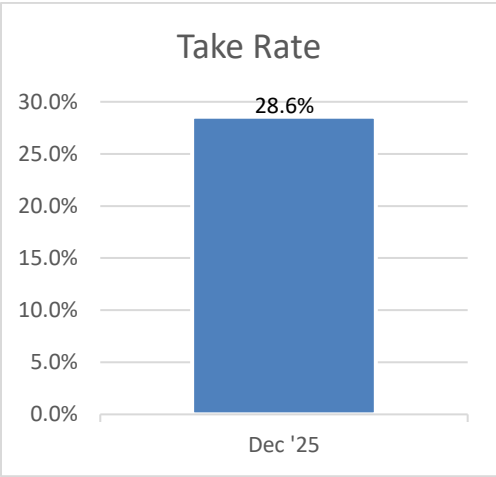
(This is the number of individuals who submit the Broadband interest form, whether they are in the current service area or not.)



(This is the number of each customer on our different service plans as of 2/28/2026.)

Other Metrics





(As of 2/15/2025)

Appendix

Fiber Broadband Completion Task Force's Report Goals

Goal	Type	Priority	Responsible Party	Additional Info.
Policies (p.39)				
• Universal Access	Policy	Highest	Select Board/Town Meeting	
• Expansion outside current territory	Policy	Low	Select Board/Town Meeting	Conversations happening
• Support Economic Vitality, Sustainability, Equity & Inclusion	Policy	High	Select Board/Light Board/TM Economic Development	Rate subsidy planned
• Affordable Housing	Policy	Medium	Select Board/Housing Groups	Rate subsidy planned; working on Concord Housing Authority properties
• Public Safety	Policy	Medium	Select Board/Town Manager	
• Education	Policy	Medium	Select Board/School Dept.	
• Government Access (PEG)	Policy	Medium	Select Board/PAAC	
Recommended metrics for tracking (p.41)				
• Parcels served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Premises served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Road miles served	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Subscribers	Metric	High	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report monthly
• Take rate	Metric	Medium	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report quarterly
• Churn	Metric	High	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; included in monthly report
• Installations	Metric	Highest	Town Staff/Light Board	Complete; will report monthly
Governance (p.39)				
• Track progress against completion	Metric	Highest	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Rate of return policy	Policy	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Financial goals with regular reporting	Policy	High	Light Board/FinCom	Working on this
• Retained earnings and reserve policy	Policy	High	Light Board/FinCom	Working on this

Goal	Type	Priority	Responsible Party	Additional Info.
Strategic Planning Goals (p.43)				
• Marketing and growth	Metric	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Business return	Policy	High	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
Budgeting Process for Fiber Expansion (p.41)				
• Expand to fill existing opportunities	Planning	High	Light Board/Town Staff	
• External funding sources	Research	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• ARPA Relief Funds Allocation, incl. Lost Revenue	Finance	Highest	Select Board/Town Manager	Complete
• Review/Confirm Internal Loan Findings	Finance	Highest	Financial Audit Comm/Staff	Complete
• Review and Rescind PILOF to MMN	Finance	High	Select Board/Town Manager	Complete
Capital Planning Process (p.42)				
• Review/Revise Debt financing schedule	Policy	Highest	Light Board/Town Staff	In progress; due to positive financial situation, anticipating being able to repay faster.
• Quantifying cost of expansion	Planning	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• How to fund expansion	Planning	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
• Revise/refine methods for computing ROI	Planning	Medium	Light Board/Town Staff	Working on this
Construction and Logistics (p.42)				
• Vibratory plow – direct buried fiber cables	Operations	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• Revise/Refine Communication conduit construction standards and guidance	Policy	Medium	Town Staff	Working on this
• Integrate Fiber construction with the Roads Program – focus on Streets without fiber that already have underground electric	Planning	High	Town Staff	Working on this

**CONCORD MUNICIPAL LIGHT PLANT
ELECTRIC RATE SCHEDULES**

RATE R-7

RESIDENTIAL SERVICE – ELECTRIC RESISTANCE & HEAT PUMP HEATING SYSTEMS/DHW

Mass DPU No. 499

Effective: January 1, 2025

Replaces Mass DPU No. 481

The Concord Municipal Light Plant (the "**CMLP**") shall charge and collect for residential service on the basis of this rate schedule. The Purchased Power Cost Adjustment Clause, the Underground Utilities Charge and the CMLP Rules and Regulations are incorporated by reference as a part of this rate schedule.

Availability

This rate schedule is available throughout the entire territory served by the CMLP Electric System (the "**CMLP System**").

Applicability

This rate schedule is applicable to all electric service required by the Customer exclusively for domestic purposes for individual (single family) private residences, condominium units, condominium common area facilities and individually metered apartment units.

The electric resistance and heat pump space heating equipment and uncontrolled domestic water heating equipment installed must be approved by the CMLP and used exclusively for domestic purposes for individual (single family) private residences, condominium units, condominium common area facilities and individually metered apartment units.

This rate schedule is not applicable to businesses, licensed boarding or rooming houses, educational institutions or facilities, apartment houses including the common facility requirements, or the common facility requirements of residences also used for business purposes, evidenced by any form of advertising, which will be served under the appropriate general service rate schedule.

Character of Service

Service under this rate schedule shall be alternating current, 60 Hertz, single phase, at CMLP's option of the standard voltages available from the CMLP System. The CMLP may, at its option, require three-phase service when individual motors rated at 5.0 horsepower or larger are connected to the CMLP System. Standby or resale service is not permitted under this rate schedule.

A separate meter will be installed by the CMLP which will record the usage of the electric resistance and/or heat pump space heating system. Use recorded on this meter from October 1st through April 30th will be billed at the rate indicated below. From May 1st through September 30th, the use through this meter will be added to the usage recorded by the house meter and billed under the Rate R-1 or appropriate tariff.

Monthly Rate

Capacity and Transmission Charge:	\$0.05619 per kWh
Distribution Charge	\$0.06561 per kWh
Energy Charge	\$0.08393 per kWh

The above rate per kWh will be adjusted plus or minus in accordance with the formulae specified in the Purchased Power Cost Adjustment Clause. The amount computed at the Monthly Rate shall be subject

to taxes, assessments or surcharges imposed by any governmental authority which is assessed on the basis of revenues from electric service or volumes of electricity purchased or sold by the CMLP.

Terms

The Monthly Rates are net and bills are due on presentation. Bills will be rendered monthly.

Effective Date

This rate schedule is effective for all consumption on or after the effective date shown above.

Interruption of Service

The CMLP will make reasonable provisions to assure satisfactory and continuous service, but does not guarantee a continuous supply of electric power and energy from the CMLP System facilities and shall not be liable for damage occasioned by interruptions of service or failure to commence delivery caused by acts of God, or the public enemy, or for any cause reasonably beyond the control of the CMLP, including, but not limited to, the failure or breakdown of facilities, floods, fire, strikes, or actions or orders of any agency having jurisdiction in the premises, or for interruptions which are necessary for inspection, repair, or changes in the equipment and facilities of the CMLP or the bulk power supplier(s) to the CMLP System.

The Customer shall notify the CMLP immediately of any defects, troubles or accident which may in any way affect the delivery of electric service by the CMLP from the CMLP System.

Term of Contract

Service under this rate schedule is subject to termination at any time upon the CMLP's receipt of written notice from the Customer, subject to the provisions of the Rules and Regulations for Electric Service.

CANCELLED