

UTILITIES

NATURAL GAS BILLING BY A ROLL OF THE DICE

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) A note on my Oklahoma Natural Gas (ONG) bill for February says my gas bill has been "adjusted" 66 cents for temperature that was three percent warmer than normal. What that explanation doesn't say is that "adjusted" means "increased."

This confusing note varies on customer bills because ONG is divided into 13 "temperature" regions inside Oklahoma.

The statement on each of our bills about temperature results from ONG rate case No. PUD-477. In that rate case, the Corporation Commission, on June 19, 1995, approved a "temperature adjustment clause" on our bills based on National Weather Service data spanning the latest 30-year period.

In other words, we now pay according to temperature averaged over the last 30 years.

If the actual temperature is colder than normal, we win because we pay less; but if the actual temperature is warmer than normal, we lose because we pay more.

Rep. Dwayne Steidley, D-Claremore, filed House Bill 2926 this session to "solve" the temperature adjustment problem for his complaining constituents. His bill requires that ONG be more specific about how the temperature adjustment amount is calculated.

I amended Steidley's bill to say that customers have the right to pay for actual usage.

Seems to me that getting rid of the adjusted usage based on temperature would solve the problem, at least for ONG customers.

FROM: REP. WANDA JO PELTIER, D-OKLAHOMA CITY

DATE: 03/04/96

WILDLIFE

LAND CLASSIFICATION BILL HELPS HUNTING PRESERVES

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) A bill currently making its way through the legislative process would benefit landowners who have created hunting or nature preserves on their property or are considering doing so. Specifically, the bill would make sure there is not a tax penalty to convert agricultural land to a hunting or nature preserve.

Senate Bill 1004, by Don Williams of Balco, would, for ad valorem tax purposes, specify that agriculture land that has been converted to a nature or hunting preserve would retain its previous classification as agriculture.

Williams said that he decided to introduce this legislation after looking at how the issue was handled in Texas.

"They had to pass a constitutional amendment to do this in Texas," he said. "I don't want the tax issue to discourage landowners from converting agricultural land to hunting or nature preserves and that's why I'm bringing this bill."

Senate Bill 1004 was debated and passed by the Senate on Feb. 27. The bill now goes to the House of Representatives.

FROM: DEPT. OF WILDLIFE

DATE: 03/04/96