

**Mushuau Innu First Nation**  
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**Mushuau Innu Government Vision Statement**

To provide good government, that responds to the needs of the people and fosters unity, understanding and fairness to the Mushuau Innu.

Ms. G. Cheryl Blundon, Board Secretary  
Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities  
120 Torbay Road  
P.O. Box 21040  
St. John's NL A1A 5B2

16 June 2015

Dear Members of the Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities:

My name is Gregory Rich and I have been Chief of Mushuau Innu First Nation since 2013. My community, as part of Innu Nation, is making submissions before the Newfoundland and Labrador Public Utilities Board about electricity services in my community of Natuashish. I would like to take this opportunity to share some of my knowledge with the Board about my community's situation.

Almost ten years ago, Mushuau Innu were located at Davis Inlet, at a site chosen for us by missionaries. It was not a good situation for us. The location of our community at Davis Inlet made many of our problems worse, and created many new problems for us as well.

Ever since our First Nation relocated to Natuashish, things have gotten better for us. With better infrastructure, and a better location for our community, our community is getting stronger.

One of the most important issues facing our people, though, is the issue of electricity services in our community.

Right now, Natuashish is the only community in all of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador that is not part of the regulated rate system. This means that the Public Utilities Board is not there to look after our electricity system. It also means Natuashish is the only rural community in the whole Province that does not receive any money through the rural deficit allocation to subsidize electricity costs, the way that every other rural community in the Province does.

We think that is unfair. We also think that is not a good way to operate electricity service for Natuashish.

It is true that we receive some money from the federal government that pays for electricity services in Natuashish, but that is not enough to pay for the whole cost of electricity. Our community must use our own money to make up the difference. That money is also not guaranteed as part of any contract or policy, so our community is vulnerable at any time to running out of money to pay for electricity services.

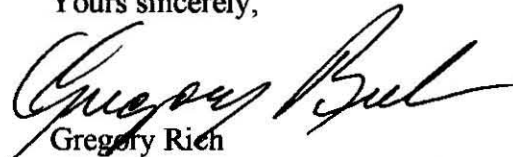
We would rather be spending our own money to build houses for our people. Our community is growing, and our people are crowded into existing housing because we do not have enough housing for them. We could also be spending the money to run camps for our children where we can teach them traditional skills. All of these things are made harder because we must spend our money on Hydro.

Unlike Hydro, we do not have any expertise in collecting bills from individual households. We are not an electricity utility. We do not even know the first thing about printing bills.

But the federal government is not an electricity utility either. Neither they, or us, have nearly enough knowledge to properly run an electricity system. For instance, our community is growing, but we do not really know whether our electricity system will need to be upgraded to handle the growth. We are trying our best to work with Hydro to make sure that Hydro is doing a good and efficient job of providing electricity to our community on a day-to-day basis. However, like any other small community, we do not have the expertise that the Public Utilities Board has to supervise Hydro's operations, and to make long term plans that will ensure that our electricity system will work well in the long run. We need the Board's help with managing our electricity system.

On behalf of my community, I would like to ask that the Public Utilities Board put Natuashish on the regulated rate system and help us on our way to rebuilding our community.

Yours sincerely,



Gregory Rich  
Chief, Mushuau Innu First Nation