



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

August 8, 2012

Mr. Michael S. Copeland
Utility Attorney
City of Denton
215 East McKinney
Denton, Texas 76201

OR2012-12449

Dear Mr. Copeland:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 461490.

The City of Denton (the "city") received a request for the most recent billing information for nonresidential Denton Municipal Electric ("DME") customers, including customer billing names, billing addresses, service addresses, and bill amounts. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.133 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.133 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure a public power utility's information that is "reasonably related to a competitive matter." Gov't Code § 552.133(b). Section 552.133 provides in relevant part:

(a) In this section, "public power utility" means an entity providing electric or gas utility services that is subject to the provisions of this chapter.

(a-1) For purposes of this section, "competitive matter" means a utility-related matter that is related to the public power utility's competitive activity, including commercial information, and would, if disclosed, give advantage to competitors or prospective competitors. The term:

(1) means a matter that is reasonably related to the following categories of information:

...

(F) customer billing, contract, and usage information, electric power pricing information, system load characteristics, and electric power marketing analyses and strategies[.]

Id. § 552.133(a), (a-1)(1)(F). Section 552.133(a-1)(2) provides fifteen categories of information that are not competitive matters. *Id.* § 552.133(a-1)(2).

You state the city owns and operates DME, its municipally-owned electric utility, which is a public power utility subject to section 552.133. You assert the submitted information pertains to DME's competitive activity, specifically identified by subsection 552.133(a-1)(1)(F). You assert, and we agree, the information at issue is not among the fifteen categories of information expressly excluded from the definition of "competitive matter" by section 552.133(a-1)(2). Based on your representations and our review, we find the submitted customer billing information relates to competitive matters as defined by section 552.133(a-1). Thus, we conclude the city must withhold the submitted information, which consists of customer billing names, billing addresses, service addresses, and bill amounts, under section 552.133 of the Government Code.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Ana Carolina Vieira
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

ACV/ag

Ref: ID# 461490

Enc. Submitted documents

**c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)**