

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Request of  
  
PUGET SOUND ENERGY,  
  
Petitioner,  
  
For Less Than Statutory Notice in  
Connection with Tariff Revisions

DOCKETS UE-200165 &  
UG-200166  
  
ORDER 01  
  
GRANTING REQUEST FOR LESS  
THAN STATUTORY NOTICE;  
ALLOWING TARIFF REVISIONS TO  
BECOME EFFECTIVE

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On March 10, 2020, Puget Sound Energy (PSE or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) revisions to its currently effective electric Tariff WN U-60, designated as 2nd Revision of Sheet No. 80-Z.1 Schedule 80 General Rules and Provisions (Continued), and its currently effective natural gas Tariff WN U-2, designated as 4th Revision of Sheet No. 21-C, Rules and Regulations (Continued) Rule No. 9 Bills and Payment for Service (Continued). The Company filed replacement pages on March 12, 2020. The purpose of these tariff revisions is to suspend the application of PSE's Late Payment Fee in certain situations related to disconnection of both electric and natural gas service. Concurrent with the proposed revisions, the Company also filed a request to allow the tariff revisions to become effective with less than statutory notice as permitted by WAC 480-80-122.
- 2 RCW 80.28.060 and WAC 480-80-121 require 30 days' notice to the Commission prior to the tariff's stated effective date. The tariff sheets bear an effective date of April 10, 2020, consistent with the required 30-day statutory notice. The Company, however, requests a March 13, 2020, effective date to allow PSE to immediately respond to the rapidly changing conditions customers are facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3 Commission staff (Staff) reviewed the proposed tariff revisions and agree that they are appropriate in light of the emergent circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the potential adverse effects the virus may have on customers in PSE's service territory. In addition, PSE will post the proposed tariff changes, as required by law and the Commission's rules and regulations, and communicate them on its website, by

telephone, and by mail in accordance with WAC 480-90-193 and WAC 480-100-193.

4 Staff believes the proposed tariff revisions are reasonable and that less than statutory notice is consistent with the public interest. Staff recommends that the Commission grant PSE's request to allow the proposed tariff revisions to go into effect with less than statutory notice on March 13, 2020.

### **DISCUSSION**

5 We agree with Staff that the proposed revisions, which were filed in response to an emergency situation that has the potential to place a portion of PSE's most vulnerable customers at risk of disconnection, are decidedly in the public interest.

6 We also grant the Company's request for less than statutory notice. Pursuant to RCW 80.28.060 and WAC 480-80-122, the Commission may allow tariff changes, for good cause shown, without requiring 30 days' notice by order specifying the changes to be made and the time when the Order shall take effect. Here, we find that the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated issues that could result from disconnecting utility service during a state of emergency unequivocally constitutes good cause to permit the tariff revisions to become effective on less than statutory notice.

Accordingly, we allow the tariff revisions to become effective on less than statutory notice.

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 7 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate the rates, regulations, practices, accounts, securities, transfers of property and affiliated interests of public service companies, including electric and natural gas companies.
- 8 (2) PSE is an electric company, a natural gas company, and a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.
- 9 (3) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on March 12, 2020.
- 10 (4) Staff has reviewed PSE's request in Dockets UE-200165 and UG-200166 and recommends the Commission approve the proposed tariff revisions. Staff further

recommends that the Commission grant the Company's request to allow the revised tariff pages to become effective on less than statutory notice.

- 11 (5) PSE is subject to RCW 80.28.060 and WAC 480-80-121, which require electric companies to file changes in any rate, charge or service with 30 days' notice. For good cause shown, however, the Commission may allow changes without requiring 30 days' notice by order specifying the changes to be made and the time when the Order shall take effect.<sup>1</sup>
- 12 (6) Based on the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting state of emergency, the Commission finds good cause to allow the tariff revisions filed by PSE on March 10, 2020, as revised on March 12, 2020, to become effective with less than statutory notice on March 13, 2020.

### **ORDER**

#### **THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

- 13 (1) Puget Sound Energy's request for less than statutory notice is granted.
- 14 (2) The tariff revisions filed by Puget Sound Energy on March 10, 2020, as revised on March 12, 2020, shall become effective on less than statutory notice on March 13, 2020.
- 15 (3) The Commission retains jurisdiction over this matter for the purposes of effectuating this Order.

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<sup>1</sup> WAC 480-80-122.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective March 12, 2020.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MARK L. JOHNSON  
Executive Director and Secretary