

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

PUGET SOUND ENERGY,

Respondent.

DOCKETS UE-230320 and UG-
230323 (*Consolidated*)

ORDER 01

COMPLAINT AND ORDER
SUSPENDING TARIFF REVISIONS;
ORDER OF CONSOLIDATION

BACKGROUND

- 1 On April 28, 2023, Puget Sound Energy (PSE or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) revisions to its currently effective electric and natural gas tariff Schedules 141N and 141R in Dockets UE-230320 and UG-230323, respectively. PSE characterizes its filing as tariff revisions necessary to implement PSE's recommendation in the Company's compliance filing made pursuant to the Commission's final order in Dockets DE-220066 and UG-220067 (Final Order), PSE's last general rate case (2022 GRC). The Company's proposed tariff revisions provide an effective date of May 28, 2023.
- 2 In the Commission's Final Order in PSE's 2022 GRC, the Commission approved a settlement subject to conditions that authorized the provisional recovery of plant projected to go into service from 2022 to 2024 subject to later review and possible refund. The settlement requires PSE to make a filing by March 31 of each year, which is subject to a four-month review process. PSE made this filing to effectuate the transfer related to 2022 plant. PSE asserts that no refunds are due to customers, and requests that the Commission issue an order suspending the proposed tariff revisions during the four-month review period.

DISCUSSION AND DECISION

3 PSE's proposed tariff revisions might injuriously affect the rights and interests of the public, and PSE has not demonstrated that the proposed changes would result in rates that are fair, just, reasonable, equitable, and sufficient. Pursuant to RCW 80.04.130(1), the Commission, therefore, suspends the tariff filing and will hold public hearings, if necessary, to determine whether the proposed increases are fair, just, reasonable, equitable, and sufficient.

4 The matters in the two Dockets appear to involve related facts and principles of law. It is appropriate that they be consolidated for hearing and determination pursuant to WAC 480-07-320.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate rates, regulations, and practices of public service companies, including electric companies and gas companies.

6 (2) PSE is an electric company, a gas company, and a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.

7 (3) The tariff revisions PSE filed on April 28, 2023, might injuriously affect the rights and interests of the public.

8 (4) PSE has not yet demonstrated that the tariff revisions would result in rates that are fair, just, reasonable, equitable, and sufficient.

9 (5) The Commission should exercise its discretion to consolidate Dockets UE-230320 and UG-230323 for hearing.

10 (6) In order to carry out the duties imposed upon the Commission by law, and as authorized in RCW 80.04.130, the Commission believes it is necessary to investigate PSE's books, accounts, practices and activities; to make a valuation or appraisal of PSE's property; and to investigate and appraise various phases of PSE's operations.

- 11 (7) The Commission finds that these Dockets meets the criteria of WAC 480-07-400(2)(b)(iii) and that the parties may conduct discovery pursuant to the Commission's discovery rules in WAC 480-07-400 – 425.
- 12 (8) As required by RCW 80.04.130(4), PSE bears the burden to prove that the proposed increases are fair, just, reasonable, equitable, and sufficient.
- 13 (9) PSE may be required to pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to such an investigation, consistent with RCW 80.20.020.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 14 (1) The tariff revisions Puget Sound Energy filed on April 28, 2023, are suspended.
- 15 (2) Dockets UE-230320 and UG-230323 are consolidated for hearing and determination under WAC 480-07-320.
- 16 (3) The Commission will hold hearings at such times and places as may be required.
- 17 (4) Puget Sound Energy must not change or alter the tariffs filed in these Dockets during the suspension period unless authorized by the Commission.
- 18 (5) The Commission will institute an investigation of Puget Sound Energy's books, accounts, practices, activities, property, and operations as described above.
- 19 (6) The parties may conduct discovery pursuant to the Commission's discovery rules in WAC 480-07-400 – 425.
- 20 (7) Puget Sound Energy shall pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to the Commission's investigation consistent with RCW 80.20.020.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective May 5, 2023.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAVID W. DANNER, Chair

ANN E. RENDAHL, Commissioner

MILTON H. DOUMIT, Commissioner