

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of

PACIFICORP d/b/a
PACIFIC POWER & LIGHT COMPANY'S

Clean Energy Implementation Plan

Docket UE-210829

PacifiCorp's Petition for Five-Year
Exemption of WAC 480-100-
650(4)(a)(i)

1 PacifiCorp d/b/a Pacific Power & Light Company (PacifiCorp) respectfully petitions for a five-year exemption from the requirement to provide hourly retail sales information in the Company's 2025 Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA) clean energy progress report (Annual Progress Report), and future CETA compliance reports. As discussed below, until the Company installs Automatic Metering Infrastructure (AMI) or another similar system, an exemption is necessary given the Company's technological inability to report hourly Washington retail sales with current metering equipment.

I. Standard of Decision

2 Under WAC 480-100-650(4)(a)(i), PacifiCorp must report hourly Washington retail sales in its annual clean energy progress report unless otherwise ordered by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission). The Commission may exempt utilities from this requirement if it is consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying the regulation, and applicable statutes.¹ When determining whether a petition is in the public interest, the Commission can consider whether the rule imposes an undue hardship on the person that filed the petition that is different in degree or kind or from similarly

¹ WAC 480-100-008, 480-07-110(1).

situated persons.² The Commission has historically exempted PacifiCorp from this requirement.³

II. Argument

3 The Company updated its legacy metering infrastructure in the early 2010s, and currently close to 100 percent of PacifiCorp's Washington customer base have automatic meter reading (AMR) systems. However, these systems lack the ability to store and transmit hourly energy volumes. The Commission should grant PacifiCorp's Petition due to this technological inability, because PacifiCorp is not similarly situated to other Washington utilities, and because reporting monthly retail sales information is nonetheless consistent with the goals of CETA.

A. The public interest continues to support granting the Petition, because the Company lacks the appropriate technology to report hourly Washington retail sales.

4 In the early 2010s, PacifiCorp began replacing its legacy utility meters with AMR infrastructure for its Washington customers.⁴⁵ These legacy meters included physical, and in some circumstances digital, meters that recorded each customer's volumetric energy consumption. Each customer's meter was manually read by a PacifiCorp employee each month, then compared to the customer's consumption in the previous month, to inform that customer's bill for the current month.

5 In contrast, AMR meters greatly reduce the time and labor that is required to measure each customer's energy usage. The Company's AMR meters operate on the 900 megahertz

² WAC 480-07-110(2)(b).

³ *In re PacifiCorp's 2023 Petition*, Docket UE-210829, Order 01 (Jun. 29, 2023).

⁴ *In re PacifiCorp's 2020 Rate Case*, Dockets UE-191024, -190750, 190929, 190981, 180778, Final Order 09/07/12, ¶¶ 115–121 (Dec. 14, 2020).

⁵ Ex. No. RMM-1T, at 31 (Dec. 2019).

(MHz) radio frequency (the same frequency that the Federal Communications Commission allocated for cordless phones) and transmit a continuous one-way radio signal that includes two pieces of information: the AMR meter's identification number and the volume of energy consumed. This signal is broadcast across an approximate one quarter-mile, line-of-sight radius. The Company reads these meters by driving within this broadcasting radius, and an AMR receiver records the AMR ID number and volume of energy consumed. Similar to legacy meters, this monthly figure is then compared to the previous month's usage to inform the current monthly bill.

6 Besides eliminating the need for a meter reader, AMR systems also allow the Company to create a centralized interface for reading, monitoring, billing, and maintaining PacifiCorp's distribution network. Currently, close to 100 percent of the Company's service area is served by AMR meters, and these efforts complement the Company's work in other states to install similar AMR smart meters.⁶

7 However, AMR meters are similar to legacy meters in one important respect: they neither store nor record the volume of energy consumed in any specific time interval. The only usage information that could be recorded at any given time for both meters is the customer's aggregate consumption. This means that, while an improvement from legacy meters, AMR lacks the full functionality of AMI: the Company's AMR meters have one-way communication and lack on-board memory that stores information, where AMI has two-way communication capabilities that send and stores information through a secured wireless network. Relevant here, AMI allows utilities to track the volume of energy consumed in any

⁶ See generally <https://www.pacificpower.net/my-account/energy-usage/smart-meters.html>.

given hour, in any given day, but Company's AMR systems do not. And as the Company noted in 2019, the Company did not have current plans to deploy AMI in Washington.⁷

8 The Company represents that this technological inability to report hourly retail sales supports granting the Petition.

B. The public interest supports granting the Petition, because reporting monthly Washington retail sales is consistent with CETA's reporting requirements.

9 One of the many purposes of Washington's annual clean energy progress report is to track the Company's progress towards meeting CETA's decarbonization requirements. However these requirements (not considering interim targets) are not binding until 2026 when the Company must eliminate coal-powered resources from the energy that serves Washington customers, and until 2030 and 2045 for the greenhouse gas neutrality and 100 percent carbon free requirements.⁸ And while the ban on coal-fired resources becomes effective in 2026, this statute does not require hourly retail sales to verify compliance, because it will be accomplished through removing coal-fired resources completely from the allocation of energy that serves Washington. To these ends, the Company must file clean energy compliance reports beginning in 2026.⁹

10 Because these statutes do not require hourly reporting, the Company represents that monthly as opposed to hourly reporting is consistent with both Commission regulations and statutes: Monthly increments will still safeguard the Commission's ability to determine the percentage of PacifiCorp's energy that is comprised of non-emitting and renewable resources in any given year, and track the Company's progress towards the 2026, 2030, and 2045

⁷ *In re PacifiCorp's 2020 Rate Case*, Dockets UE-191024, -190750, 190929, 190981, 180778, Ex. No. RMM-1T, at 61 (Dec. 2019).

⁸ RCW 19.405.030–19.405.050.

⁹ WAC 480-100-650(1).

targets. This ensures that monthly reporting is still consistent with the purposes of WAC 480-100-650(4)(a)(i), and supports granting the Company's Petition.

C. To remove any ambiguity, PacifiCorp is requesting a five-year exemption of WAC 480-100-650(4)(a)(i).

11 PacifiCorp's prior petition for exemption from WAC 480-100-650(4)(a)(i) was ambiguous as to whether it requested an exemption for only the 2023 CEIP Progress Report, or until PacifiCorp installed AMI technology that allowed for hourly reporting.¹⁰ To remove any potential ambiguity from the Commission's approval of PacifiCorp's prior petition, PacifiCorp again requests the Commission waive WAC 480-100-650(4)(a)(i), and specifically grant a five-year term waiver of the hourly reporting requirement.

III. Conclusion

12 PacifiCorp requests the Commission exempt the Company from reporting hourly annual Washington retail sales information in future CETA Progress and Compliance Reports for the next five years, due to its current technological inability to do so.

Dated May 14, 2025,

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¹⁰ Compare *In re PacifiCorp's 2023 Exemption*, UE-210829, Petition ¶ 1 (Jun. 9, 2023) (requesting an exemption for the 2023 progress report, but also until the Company installs AMI technologies); *with Id.* ¶ 11 (requesting an exemption until the Company installs AMI technologies).