

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of	DOCKET UG-190011
NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS COMPANY,	ORDER 01
Seeking Permanent Exemption from the Provisions of WAC 480-90-275, Requesting a Perennial Extension of the deadline for Filing Fourth Quarter Results of Operations	ORDER GRANTING PERMANENT EXEMPTION FROM RULE; GRANTING EXTENSION TO FILE FOURTH QUARTER RESULTS OF OPERATIONS

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On January 8, 2019, Northwest Natural Gas Company (NW Natural or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) requesting exemption from WAC 480-90-275, which requires natural gas companies to file a report of actual results for Washington operations within forty-five days of the end of each quarter. On February 7, 2019, the Company supplemented its original Petition by requesting permanent exemption from WAC 480-90-275, pursuant to WAC 480-90-008 and WAC 480-07-110. In its supplemented Petition, NW Natural requests an extension until March 5 of each calendar year to file its fourth quarter report to prevent the disclosure of its results of operations on the Commission's website prior to the Company's official fourth quarter and full-year earnings release and conference call to the rating agencies. If the Commission does not grant the exemption on a permanent basis, then NW Natural requests an exemption to file its fourth quarter 2018 results on March 4, 2019.
- 2 Commission staff (Staff) reviewed the Company's Petition and recommends that the Commission grant the requested exemption. Staff believes that an 18-day extension is reasonable and will not impede the Commission's regulatory functions.

**DISCUSSION**

- 3 With respect to the Company's fourth quarter results only, we grant NW Natural's request for permanent exemption from WAC 480-90-275 and require the Company to file its fourth quarter results of operations report by March 5 of each calendar year. We agree with Staff that NW Natural's request is reasonable to ensure that the Company's results of operations are not released prior to the Company's scheduled conference call with

rating agencies. Accordingly, we find that granting the Company's request for a permanent exemption is in the public interest and consistent with both the purpose underlying the rule of timely submission of Washington operations reports and applicable statutes.

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 4 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate rates, rules, regulations, practices, accounts, securities, transfers of property and affiliated interests of public service companies, including natural gas companies.
- 5 (2) NW Natural is engaged in the business of providing gas services within the state of Washington and is a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.
- 6 (3) NW Natural is subject to WAC 480-90-275, which requires gas companies to file a report of actual results for Washington operations within 45 days of the end of each quarter.
- 7 (4) Under WAC 480-90-008 and WAC 480-07-110, the Commission may grant an exemption from the provisions of any rule in WAC 480-90 if consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying regulation, and applicable statutes.
- 8 (5) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 15, 2019.
- 9 (6) After reviewing NW Natural's Petition filed in Docket UG-190011 on January 8, 2019, and revised on February 7, 2019, and giving due consideration, the Commission finds that the permanent exemption is reasonable and should be granted.

**ORDER**

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS:**

- 10 (1) The Commission grants Northwest Natural Gas Company's Petition for a permanent exemption from WAC 480-90-275 and grants Northwest Natural Gas

Company an extension until March 5 of each calendar year to file its fourth quarter results of operations report.

- 11 (2) If Northwest Natural Gas Company fails to file its fourth quarter results of operations report by March 5 of any year hereafter, the Commission may assess penalties pursuant to RCW 80.04.405.
- 12 (3) The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter and Northwest Natural Gas Company to effectuate the provisions of this Order.

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

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this February 15, 2019.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MARK L. JOHNSON, Executive Director and Secretary