

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON  
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND  
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

AVISTA CORPORATION, d/b/a  
AVISTA UTILITIES,

Respondent.

DOCKETS UE-240006 and  
UG-240007 (*Consolidated*)

ORDER 01

COMPLAINT AND ORDER  
SUSPENDING TARIFF REVISIONS;  
ORDER OF CONSOLIDATION

**BACKGROUND**

- 1 On January 18, 2024, Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities (Avista or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) revisions in Docket UE-240006 to its currently effective electric service tariff, Tariff WN U-28, and in Docket UG-240007 to its natural gas service tariff, Tariff WN U-29, as listed in the appendix attached to this Order. The purpose of these filings is to increase rates and charges for electric and natural gas service provided to customers in the state of Washington.
- 2 In this filing, Avista proposes electric and natural gas rate increases based on a proposed rate of return of 7.61 percent (with 48.5 percent equity and a 10.40 percent return on equity). Avista also proposes a Two-Year Rate Plan, which would begin with new base rates effective in December 2024 (Rate Year 1) and December 2025 (Rate Year 2).
- 3 For Rate Year 1, Avista proposes an increase to electric base revenue of \$77.1 million, or 13.0 percent, and an overall increase to natural gas base revenue of \$17.3 million, or 13.6 percent. For Rate Year 2, Avista proposes an increase to electric base revenue of \$53.7 million, or 11.7 percent, and an overall increase to natural gas base revenue of \$4.6 million, or 3.2 percent.

### DISCUSSION AND DECISION

4 The Commission may, in its discretion, consolidate two or more proceedings in which the facts or principles of law are related. Here, the matters in the two dockets appear to involve related facts and principles of law. It is therefore appropriate that they be consolidated for hearing and determination pursuant to WAC 480-07-320.

5 Avista's requested rate increases might injuriously affect the rights and interests of the public, and Avista has not demonstrated that the increases would result in rates that are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient. In addition, Avista has requested that the Commission "immediately suspend the operation of the general tariff revisions" proposed by the Company and set the matter for hearing.<sup>1</sup> The Commission, therefore, suspends the tariff filings and will hold public hearings, if necessary, to determine whether the proposed increases are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate rates, regulations, practices, accounts, securities, transfers of property, and affiliated interests of public service companies, including electric and natural gas companies.
- 7 (2) Avista is an electric and natural gas company and a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.
- 8 (3) The Commission may consolidate proceedings that involve related facts and principles of law.
- 9 (4) The matters in Dockets UE-240006 and UG-240007 involve related facts and principles of law and the dockets should, therefore, be consolidated for hearing and determination pursuant to WAC 480-07-320.
- 10 (5) The tariff revisions Avista filed on January 18, 2024 would increase charges and rates for service provided by Avista and might injuriously affect the rights and interest of the public.

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<sup>1</sup> Avista Cover Letter dated January 20, 2022, and received by the Commission January 21, 2022, at 2 (emphasis from original).

- 11 (6) Avista has requested that the Commission suspend the tariff revisions and set the matters for hearing.
- 12 (7) Avista has not yet demonstrated that the tariff revisions would result in rates that are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.
- 13 (8) Avista's rates and charges for electric or natural gas services shown on any tariffs that Avista does not propose to revise may also be investigated to determine if they are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.
- 14 (9) In order to carry out the duties imposed upon the Commission by law, and as authorized in RCW 80.04.130, the Commission finds it is necessary to investigate Avista's books, accounts, practices, and activities; to make a valuation or appraisal of Avista's property; and to investigate and appraise various phases of Avista's operations.
- 15 (10) The Commission finds that this docket meets the criteria of WAC 480-07-400(2)(b)(i) and that the parties may conduct discovery pursuant to the Commission's discovery rules in WAC 480-07-400 – 425.
- 16 (11) As required by RCW 80.04.130(4), Avista bears the burden to prove that the proposed increases are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient.
- 17 (12) Avista may be required to pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to such an investigation, consistent with Chapter 80.20 RCW.

## ORDER

### THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 18 (1) Dockets UE-240006 and UG-240007 are consolidated for hearing and determination under WAC 480-07-320.
- 19 (2) The tariff revisions Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities filed on January 18, 2024 are suspended.
- 20 (3) The Commission shall hold hearings at such times and places as may be required. Such hearings may also examine Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities' rates and charges for electric or natural gas service shown on any tariffs that Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities does not propose to revise.

- 21 (4) Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities shall not change or alter the tariffs filed in these dockets during the suspension period, unless authorized by the Commission.
- 22 (5) The Commission shall institute an investigation of Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities' books, accounts, practices, activities, property, and operations as described above.
- 23 (6) Discovery shall be conducted pursuant to the Commission's discovery rules in WAC 480-07-400 – 425.
- 24 (7) Avista Corporation d/b/a Avista Utilities shall pay the expenses reasonably attributable and allocable to the Commission's investigation, consistent with Chapter 80.20 RCW.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective January 31, 2024.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAVID W. DANNER, Chairman

ANN E. RENDAHL, Commissioner

MILTON H. DOUMIT, Commissioner

**Appendix**  
**Proposed Tariff Revisions Effective Rate Year 1**

<b>Tariff WN U-28, Electric</b>		
19th Revision Sheet 1	Canceling	18 <sup>th</sup> Revision Sheet 1
1st Revision Sheet 7	Canceling	Original Sheet 7
1st Revision Sheet 8	Canceling	Original Sheet 8
19th Revision Sheet 11	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 11
4th Revision Sheet 13	Canceling	3rd Revision Sheet 13
2nd Revision Sheet 17	Canceling	1st Revision Sheet 17
2nd Revision Sheet 18	Canceling	1st Revision Sheet 18
19th Revision Sheet 21	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 21
4th Revision Sheet 23	Canceling	3rd Revision Sheet 23
19th Revision Sheet 25	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 25
15th Revision Sheet 25A	Canceling	14th Revision Sheet 25A
19th Revision Sheet 31	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 31
18th Revision Sheet 42	Canceling	17th Revision Sheet 42
12th Revision Sheet 42A	Canceling	11th Revision Sheet 42A
4th Revision Sheet 42B	Canceling	3rd Revision Sheet 42B
18th Revision Sheet 44	Canceling	17th Revision Sheet 44
7th Revision Sheet 44A	Canceling	6th Revision Sheet 44A
19th Revision Sheet 45	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 45
19th Revision Sheet 46	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 46
5th Revision Sheet 46A	Canceling	4th Revision Sheet 46A
18th Revision Sheet 47	Canceling	17th Revision Sheet 47
19th Revision Sheet 47A	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 47A
5th Revision Sheet 47B	Canceling	Substitute 4th Revision Sheet 47B
6th Revision Sheet 75D	Canceling	Substitute 5th Revision Sheet 75D
3rd Revision Sheet 75E	Canceling	Substitute 2nd Revision Sheet 75E
<b>Tariff WN U-29, Natural Gas</b>		
20th Revision Sheet 101	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 101
20th Revision Sheet 111	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 111
20th Revision Sheet 112	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 112
5th Revision Sheet 116	Canceling	4th Revision Sheet 116
20th Revision Sheet 131	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 131
10th Revision Sheet 131A	Canceling	9th Revision Sheet 131A
20th Revision Sheet 132	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 132
10th Revision Sheet 132A	Canceling	9th Revision Sheet 132A
20th Revision Sheet 146	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 146
6th Revision sheet 175D	Canceling	Substitute 5th Revision Sheet 175D
3rd Revision Sheet 175E	Canceling	Substitute 2nd Revision Sheet 175E

**Proposed Tariff Revisions Effective Rate Year 2**

<b>Tariff WN U-28, Electric</b>		
20th Revision Sheet 1	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 1
2nd Revision Sheet 7	Canceling	1st Revision Sheet 7
2nd Revision Sheet 8	Canceling	1st Revision Sheet 8
20th Revision Sheet 11	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 11
5th Revision Sheet 13	Canceling	4th Revision Sheet 13
3rd Revision Sheet 17	Canceling	2nd Revision Sheet 17
3rd Revision Sheet 18	Canceling	2nd Revision Sheet 18
20th Revision Sheet 21	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 21
5th Revision Sheet 23	Canceling	4th Revision Sheet 23
20th Revision Sheet 25	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 25
16th Revision Sheet 25A	Canceling	15th Revision Sheet 25A
20th Revision Sheet 31	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 31
19th Revision Sheet 42	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 42
13th Revision Sheet 42A	Canceling	12th Revision Sheet 42A
19th Revision Sheet 44	Canceling	17th Revision Sheet 44
20th Revision Sheet 45	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 45
20th Revision Sheet 46	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 46
6th Revision Sheet 46A	Canceling	5rd Revision Sheet 46A
19th Revision Sheet 47	Canceling	18th Revision Sheet 47
20th Revision Sheet 47A	Canceling	19th Revision Sheet 47A

<b>Tariff WN U-29, Natural Gas</b>		
21st Revision Sheet 101	Canceling	20th Revision Sheet 101
21st Revision Sheet 111	Canceling	20th Revision Sheet 111
21st Revision Sheet 112	Canceling	20th Revision Sheet 112
6th Revision Sheet 116	Canceling	5th Revision Sheet 116
21st Revision Sheet 131	Canceling	20th Revision Sheet 131
11th Revision Sheet 131A	Canceling	10th Revision Sheet 131A
21st Revision Sheet 132	Canceling	20th Revision Sheet 132
11th Revision Sheet 132A	Canceling	10th Revision Sheet 132A
21st Revision Sheet 146	Canceling	20th Revision Sheet 146