

**Avista Corporation**  
1411 East Mission P.O. Box 3727  
Spokane, Washington 99220-3727  
Telephone 509-489-0500  
Toll Free 800-727-9170



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STATE OF WASH.  
UTIL. AND TRANSP.  
COMMISSION

June 16, 2000

Carole J. Washburn, Secretary  
Washington Utilities and  
Transportation Commission  
P.O. Box 47250  
Olympia, WA 98504-7250

**RE: Docket No. UG-990473—Response to Staff’s Request for Information.**

Dear Ms. Washburn:

Avista Utilities provides the following responses to the Customer Notice Questionnaire dated June 2, 2000 in the above-cited docket.

- 1. Please describe how your company currently meets the commission’s policy providing customers 30 days prior notice of proposed rate increases?*

For Avista Utilities’ 1999 electric and natural gas rate increase filings, all customers received written notice in the Company’s 28 day billing cycle months prior to the public hearing. Staff’s Penny Hansen and Avista’s Brian Hirschhorn discussed the content of these notices prior to printing and distributing this information. This was done pursuant to WAC 480-09-310(1).

For all other tariff filings, the Company included a paragraph in its advice letter that stated (or had language similar to): “Also enclosed is a ‘Notice of Tariff Change’ which will be posted in all company offices coincident with the date of this filing.” This was done pursuant to WAC 480-08-120. The Company has respected the Staff Public Involvement Coordinator’s request to include notices in customers’ bills on some selected issues.

By way of clarification, the Company reads the applicable existing rules (WAC 480-80-120) to require that the Company “...must place on file the tariff containing such modification or change at its listed business offices in the territory affected thereby for a period of at least thirty days prior to the expiration of statutory notice in connection therewith. A notice, coincident with or immediately prior to the date of such filing, that such tariff is on file at said offices shall be posted at the cashier's windows or other places where the customers pay their bills at the aforesaid offices. Said posted notice shall give anyone viewing same a brief summary as to the content of the tariff; state that the tariff is

being submitted to the Washington utilities and transportation commission at Olympia; indicate the inserted effective date thereof; and relate that a copy of the tariff is available for inspection.”

2. *By using this method do all affected customers receive notice 30 days in advance of the effective date?*

All affected customers receive notification of the above-stated rate increases more than 30 days in advance of the public hearings. The Company believes that the existing rules do not support a proposition that noticing customers through bill inserts is either required or must be completed 30 days prior to the effective date of any tariff filing (not including rate increases over 3% as defined by WAC 480-09-310).

3. *On average, how many customers use pay stations to pay bills a month?*

Approximately 6% of Avista customers provide payments through pay stations.

4. *Is your business office open to the general public? If so, does the business office accept payment from walk-in customers?*

Customers of Avista Utilities may drop off payments at the Company’s business offices. Avista Utilities’ main business offices have telephones directly routed to the Company’s Call Center to respond to walk-in customers.

5. *How many billing cycles does your company have?*

21

6. *Please list each billing cycle’s start date.*

Please see the attached meter reading schedule. The billing cycle generally starts two business days later.

7. *How many customers are in the last complete billing cycle?*

Approximately 336,457, Washington jurisdiction.

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8. *How are your customers billed? Monthly or bi-monthly?*

Monthly.

9. *What do you estimate the costs to issue the following types of notices?*

A. *Direct mail notice:*

The incremental non-labor costs would be approximately: \$115,404  
Postage (\$0.243) x Materials—envelope&letter (\$0.10) x customers 336,457

This estimate assumes a one-page letter, black ink on white paper.

Design and labor costs would be extra and dependent on contents.

B. *Bill Insert:*

The incremental non-labor costs would be approximately: \$17,000  
Materials(\$0.05) x customers

This estimate assumes that there is extra “space” in the bill and that incremental postage costs would not be triggered.

Design and labor costs would be extra and dependent on contents.

C. *Bill Message:*

For purposes of this response, the Company assumes no incremental cost. The message box is already established in the customer information system (computer) and there would be no incremental programming cost. The set-up costs to place a message on the bill would be minimal.

10. *How were these costs derived?*

See response to question 9 for derivation of these costs.

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11. *How many customers does your company currently serve? A current estimate is fine.*

	'99 Washington Electric	'99 Washington Gas
Residential	182,871	106,484
Commercial	20,628	11,743
Industrial	674	182

Please contact Bruce Folsom at (509) 495-8706 if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,



Thomas D. Dukich, Director  
Rates and Regulation



ITRON METER READING SCHEDULE - 2000

READ DAY	Jan	SVC Days	Feb	SVC Days	Mar	SVC Days	Apr	SVC Days	May	SVC Days	Jun	SVC Days	Jul	SVC Days	Aug	SVC Days	Sep	SVC Days	Oct	SVC Days	Nov	SVC Days	Dec	SVC Days
1	Jan-3	34	Feb-1	29	Mar-1	29	Mar-30	29	Apr-28	29	May-30	32	Jun-28	29	Jul-28	30	Aug-29	32	Sep-28	30	Oct-27	29	Nov-29	33
2	Jan-4	34	Feb-2	29	Mar-2	29	Mar-31	29	May-1	31	May-31	30	Jun-29	29	Jul-31	32	Aug-30	30	Sep-29	30	Oct-30	31	Nov-30	31
3	Jan-5	34	Feb-3	29	Mar-3	29	Apr-3	31	May-2	29	Jun-1	30	Jun-30	29	Aug-1	32	Aug-31	30	Oct-2	32	Oct-31	29	Dec-1	31
4	Jan-6	34	Feb-4	29	Mar-6	31	Apr-4	29	May-3	29	Jun-2	30	Jul-3	31	Aug-2	30	Sep-1	30	Oct-3	32	Nov-1	29	Dec-4	33
5	Jan-7	32	Feb-7	31	Mar-7	29	Apr-5	29	May-4	29	Jun-5	32	Jul-5	30	Aug-3	29	Sep-5	33	Oct-4	29	Nov-2	29	Dec-5	33
6	Jan-10	34	Feb-8	29	Mar-8	29	Apr-6	29	May-5	29	Jun-6	32	Jul-6	30	Aug-4	29	Sep-6	33	Oct-5	29	Nov-3	29	Dec-6	33
7	Jan-11	34	Feb-9	29	Mar-9	29	Apr-7	29	May-8	31	Jun-7	30	Jul-7	30	Aug-7	31	Sep-7	31	Oct-6	29	Nov-6	31	Dec-7	31
8	Jan-12	34	Feb-10	29	Mar-10	29	Apr-10	31	May-9	29	Jun-8	30	Jul-10	32	Aug-8	29	Sep-8	31	Oct-9	31	Nov-7	29	Dec-8	31
9	Jan-13	34	Feb-11	29	Mar-13	31	Apr-11	29	May-10	29	Jun-9	30	Jul-11	32	Aug-9	29	Sep-11	33	Oct-10	29	Nov-8	29	Dec-11	33
10	Jan-14	32	Feb-14	31	Mar-14	29	Apr-12	29	May-11	29	Jun-12	32	Jul-12	30	Aug-10	29	Sep-12	33	Oct-11	29	Nov-9	29	Dec-12	33
11	Jan-17	34	Feb-15	29	Mar-15	29	Apr-13	29	May-12	29	Jun-13	32	Jul-13	30	Aug-11	29	Sep-13	33	Oct-12	29	Nov-10	29	Dec-13	33
12	Jan-18	34	Feb-16	29	Mar-16	29	Apr-14	29	May-15	31	Jun-14	30	Jul-14	30	Aug-14	31	Sep-14	31	Oct-13	29	Nov-13	31	Dec-14	31
13	Jan-19	34	Feb-17	29	Mar-17	29	Apr-17	31	May-16	29	Jun-15	30	Jul-17	32	Aug-15	29	Sep-15	31	Oct-16	31	Nov-14	29	Dec-18	34
14	Jan-20	31	Feb-18	29	Mar-20	31	Apr-18	29	May-17	29	Jun-16	30	Jul-18	32	Aug-16	29	Sep-18	33	Oct-17	29	Nov-15	29	Dec-19	34
15	Jan-21	31	Feb-21	31	Mar-21	29	Apr-19	29	May-18	29	Jun-19	32	Jul-19	30	Aug-17	29	Sep-19	33	Oct-18	29	Nov-16	29	Dec-20	34
16	Jan-24	33	Feb-22	29	Mar-22	29	Apr-20	29	May-19	29	Jun-20	32	Jul-20	30	Aug-21	30	Sep-20	30	Oct-19	29	Nov-17	29	Dec-21	34
17	Jan-25	33	Feb-23	29	Mar-23	29	Apr-21	29	May-22	31	Jun-21	30	Jul-21	30	Aug-22	30	Sep-21	30	Oct-20	29	Nov-20	31	Dec-22	32
18	Jan-26	30	Feb-24	29	Mar-24	29	Apr-24	31	May-23	29	Jun-22	30	Jul-24	32	Aug-23	30	Sep-22	30	Oct-23	31	Nov-21	29	Dec-26	35
19	Jan-27	30	Feb-25	29	Mar-27	31	Apr-25	29	May-24	29	Jun-23	30	Jul-25	32	Aug-24	30	Sep-25	32	Oct-24	29	Nov-22	29	Dec-27	35
20	Jan-28	30	Feb-28	31	Mar-28	29	Apr-26	29	May-25	29	Jun-26	32	Jul-26	30	Aug-25	30	Sep-26	32	Oct-25	29	Nov-27	33	Dec-28	31
21	Jan-31	32	Feb-29	29	Mar-29	29	Apr-27	29	May-26	29	Jun-27	32	Jul-27	30	Aug-28	32	Sep-27	30	Oct-26	29	Nov-28	33	Dec-29	31

THE NUMBER OF SERVICE DAYS WILL CHANGE IF ACTUAL READ DATE VARIES FROM SCHEDULED READ DATE.

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