

Small Business Economic Impact Statement (SBEIS)
Docket No. UE-990473

December __, 2000

Small Business Economic Impact Statement (SBEIS)

Docket No. UE-990473

1. Introduction

In March 1999, the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) initiated a review of the rules in chapter 480-100 WAC regarding electric companies. The Commission initiated this review in Docket No. UE-990473 pursuant to Executive Order 97-02, which requires agencies to review existing rules for readability and content with attention being paid to clarity, intent, statutory authority, need, effectiveness, efficiency, coordination, cost, and fairness. Commission Staff also conducted a general revision of the rules to analyze whether they provided the results that they were originally intended to achieve and whether the rules are consistent with laws and with appropriate and lawful policies. New rules were added to ensure clear communication of policies, processes, and procedures or to provide complete information important to regulated companies and the customers they serve.

Over the last one and a half years, Commission Staff held four workshops with interested persons to discuss draft rule language, receive comments, and explore options. With the last formal draft rules, the Commission mailed a survey to interested persons to assist staff in preparing a Small Business Economic Impact Statement (SBEIS). An SBEIS is intended to evaluate any disproportionate impacts of the rule-making on small businesses.

2. Regulatory Fairness Act Requirements

Administrative rules implemented by State agencies can have a disproportionate impact on small businesses, compared to large business, simply because of the size of those businesses. This disproportionate impact may affect competition, innovation, employment, economic growth, and threaten the very existence of some small businesses. Thus, the Regulatory Fairness Act, chapter 19.85 RCW, was enacted with the intent of reducing any disproportionate impact of state administrative rules on small businesses.

The Regulatory Fairness Act requires agencies to prepare an SBEIS if the proposed rule will impose "more than minor costs on businesses in an industry." An agency must then compare the costs of compliance with the proposed rule for large and small businesses within an industry, and then consider how to mitigate any disproportionate impact on small businesses. A business is categorized as "small" under the Regulatory Fairness Act if the business employs 50 or fewer employees.

3. Background

Pursuant to chapter 19.85 RCW, Staff determined that it was necessary to prepare an SBEIS for

electric rules in Docket No. UE-990473 as the proposed rules may impose more than minor costs on electric companies operating in Washington State. None of the electric companies operating in the state, however, fit the definition of "small" businesses under the Regulatory Fairness Act, and thus there is no requirement to consider mitigation proposals to minimize disproportionate impact on small businesses in the industry. Thus, Staff prepared the SBEIS in order to evaluate the magnitude of the economic impact of the proposed rules for chapter 480-100 on electric companies operating in Washington State, but not to propose mitigation strategies for small businesses.

4. Study Procedure

To perform the SBEIS, Staff prepared a survey instrument and mailed the survey to the three electric companies regulated by the Commission: Puget Sound Energy, Avista Corp., and PacifiCorp. A copy of the survey is attached to this SBEIS as Attachment 1. Simultaneously, Staff prepared and mailed a survey to four natural gas companies to prepare an SBEIS in a rulemaking involving natural gas companies operating in Washington State. Staff received completed surveys in Docket No. UE-990473 from two electric companies, one of which also operates as a natural gas company. The latter company combined its responses to electricity and natural gas questions contained in the survey.

The three regulated electric companies are relatively large, and not considered "small businesses" for the purpose of this analysis. Because the Commission is not required to mitigate the economic impacts of the proposed rules on large businesses, large companies do not have great incentive to respond to the survey instrument or to provide detailed information. Staff believes that development of more comprehensive data would require an in-depth investigation of all activities of the companies and could take a significant amount of financial and human resources. Therefore, the results from this study should be interpreted with an understanding that the study is based upon very limited data.

5. Results of the Analysis

Two of the three electric companies responded to the survey mailed by the Commission. The two companies provided lump sum cost information that is difficult to disaggregate and verify. Determining whether the data supplied by the companies is correct would require an in-depth analysis and a breakdown of costs that would then be subjected to detailed analysis and peer review. Although Staff is concerned that the companies may have overestimated the costs of compliance with the proposed rules, Staff believes they are within a reasonable order-of-magnitude of the actual costs of compliance.

From the companies' perspective, the costs incurred to comply with regulations can be viewed as money that could have been invested in activities that bring greater earnings. An SBEIS is intended to examine the economic implications of the proposed rules from the companies' perspective as opposed to from a societal perspective. It is expected that companies would

evaluate the economic impact of proposed rules by comparing earnings from spending amounts equal to the regulatory compliance cost of "X" dollars in different activities. The source of funds for these expenditures might be retained earnings or borrowed money. Accordingly, to capture the volatility in earnings from alternative forms of investment, Staff used a range of discount factors (9%, 10%, 10.5% and 11%) to estimate the present alternative value of the estimated spending on regulatory costs by the companies.

A review of pertinent literature concerning the economic impact of regulation indicates that if the increased (additional) costs of regulatory compliance exceeds approximately 2% of the total operating expenses of a business, the cost of regulation is likely to be significant to that business. Staff used this benchmark (i.e., 2%) to draw conclusions about the magnitude of the economic impact of implementing the rules proposed in Docket No. UE-990473.

The estimated costs of compliance submitted by the companies is based on data from records, interviews, and experience, rather than from a detailed on-site study of the impact of each rule. Empirical evidence derived from this kind of information is considered to be an order-of-magnitude estimate. The literature on the study of engineering-economics indicates that order-of-magnitude estimates are accurate within $\pm 40\%$. The 2% rule of thumb indicated above is thus better stated as a range from 1.2% to 2.8% (i.e., $2\% * 40\% = .8\%$; $2\% - .8\% = 1.2\%$; $2\% + .8\% = 2.8\%$).

Staff's evaluation of the magnitude of the compliance costs submitted by the companies is set forth below in Table 1. The results indicate that the percentage of the present value of the cost of implementing the rules with respect to the present value of gross operating revenue (GOR) and total operating expense (TOE) for the electric companies is 0.3%. The results also indicate that, on average, the costs imposed as a result of these rules are in fact not only within $\pm 40\%$ of the 2% benchmark obtained from the literature with respect to the economic impact of regulations, but are much less than 2%.

Table 1: Summary of the Economic Impacts of the Proposed Rules on Electric Companies

Parameters	Discount Factors				Average
	9%	10%	10.50%	11%	
Cost	\$37,907	\$34,124	\$32,502	\$29,680	\$33,553
Total	\$37,907	\$34,124	\$32,502	\$29,680	\$33,553
Overall company cost	\$192,341,996	\$173,150,889	\$164,921,088	\$150,602,050	\$170,254,006
Gross Operating revenue	\$226,828,556	\$204,196,519	\$194,491,130	\$177,604,716	\$200,780,230
Net Revenue	\$34,486,560	\$31,045,630	\$29,570,042	\$27,002,666	\$30,526,224
Cost /Gross Operating revenue	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%
Cost/Overall Company cost	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%	0.02%
Total cost/Overall Net Revenue	0.11%	0.11%	0.11%	0.11%	0.11%
Total cost of rules/employee	\$12	\$11	\$10	\$12	\$11.32
Total cost of rules/customer	\$0.06	\$0.06	\$0.05	\$0.06	\$0.06

The proposed rules are intended to provide for safe, adequate, and efficient electric service as well as to define the rights and responsibilities of electric company customers. Thus, the proposed rule may have not only economic costs and benefits, but social costs and benefits. The social costs and benefits of implementing the proposed rules need to be based on the principle of incremental costs and benefits.

In order to assess the social costs and benefits of these proposed rules, it is important to assess which components of these costs are passed on to customers, and which ones are shareholder costs. However, due to time and resource constraints it is not possible to determine the social costs of implementing the proposed rules. Staff believes that the rules generate welfare gains (benefits) to society as a whole, as well as financial benefits to the regulated companies. However, the companies did not provide any measurable estimated benefits attributed to the implementation of these rules. Thus, it is difficult to compare the social and economic costs and benefits of implementing the proposed rules. Nevertheless, Staff believes that implementation of the proposed rules will to generate social benefits that are at least equal to the estimated costs of compliance.

In summary, 1) even if the costs of regulatory compliance with the proposed rules have not been overestimated by the companies responding to Staff's survey, the economic costs of compliance remain negligible, 2) the changes in rules are expected to generate substantial benefits that can not be readily quantified, and thus not compared with estimated compliance costs, 3) although it was not possible to directly compare the costs and benefits of implementing the proposed rules, Staff believes that the benefits of implementing the proposed rules related to public health, safety, and fairness are at least equal to the costs of compliance, and 4) there is no need for the Commission to consider mitigation or other relief measures because the costs are negligible, and there are no small businesses affected by the proposed rules.

6. Conclusion

Chapter 19.85 RCW requires that a SBEIS be prepared to assess whether the proposed rules more than minor costs on businesses in an industry," in this case, electric companies. Staff mailed surveys designed to obtain information about the cost of compliance with the proposed rules to all three electric companies regulated by the Commission. Staff received responses from two companies.

Staff reviewed pertinent literature, and relied on benchmarks suggested in the literature to determine whether the regulatory costs reported by the companies are considered to be significant. Staff believes that the cost data submitted by the companies overestimates the costs of compliance. Nevertheless, Staff's analysis indicates that the estimated compliance costs provided by the companies are negligible when compared with total operating costs and revenues. Staff's analysis indicates that implementing the proposed rules should not affect the viability of the large electric companies operating in the State of Washington, nor customers served by these companies

Small Business Economic Impact Statement Questionnaire

For each revised or new rule in Docket UE 990473, please, provide the following:

1. A summary of rules and their WAC number with respect to whether or not (i) it was part of company's operating practice, thus would not introduce practices that are newer; (ii) it's new and your assessment of the rule with respect to how it may affect the viability of your business
2. For each revised or new rule, indicate the WAC number & provide description or list of:
 - (i) benefits (monetary and non-monetary), and
 - (ii) costs categories or items.
3. Estimation of benefits: For each new or revised rule, provide (i) direct and indirect quantifiable and non-quantifiable estimates of benefits, (ii) an assessment of how these benefits may change over time. Please note that the benefits may include possible reduction in formal complaints and litigation that would have been experienced in the absence of each of the rules.
4. Estimation of costs: For each new or revised rule: provide direct and indirect quantifiable and non-quantifiable estimates of costs. These costs should be broken down into: capital costs (major investment such as production capital costs), operating and maintenance costs (further broken into sub-accounts which includes but not limited to human capital costs such as administrative and government, professional or consultants, laborers, etc., costs; operating cost; maintenance cost) and opportunity costs. In addition these costs should also be accompanied by classification such as fixed or incremental, duration of costs incurred (one-time, cyclical or annual). Furthermore, costs should be presented in appropriate units such as (\$/yr, \$/hr, \$/customer, \$/kW, \$/kWh, etc.)
5. For each estimate of benefits and costs, please indicate the percentage of time that the rule may be utilized by a customer (for each class) or company per year.
6. For each estimate of benefits and costs (in 3 and 4 above), indicate the data and methodology used for the calculations, citing engineering cost estimating manual that you may have utilized.
7. Please provide your response (text and tables) in hard and electronic version.

PART I--GENERAL RULES

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-001 Purpose. The legislature has declared that operating as an electric utility in the state of Washington is a business affected with the public interest and that such utilities should be regulated. The purpose of these rules is to administer and enforce chapter 80.28 RCW by establishing rules of general applicability and requirements for:

- Consumer protection;
- Financial records and reporting;
- Electric metering; and
- Electric safety and standards.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-003 Application of rules. (1) The rules in this chapter apply to any electric utility that is subject to the jurisdiction of the commission under RCW 80.04.010 and chapter 80.28 RCW. These rules also include various requirements of the utility's customers and applicants.

(2) The tariff provisions filed by utilities must conform with these rules. If the commission accepts a tariff that conflicts with these rules, the acceptance does not constitute a waiver of these rules unless the commission specifically approves the variation consistent with WAC 480-100-008, Exemptions from rules in chapter 480-100 WAC. Tariffs that conflict with these rules without approval are superseded by these rules.

(3) Any affected person may ask the commission to review the interpretation of these rules by a utility or customer by posing an informal complaint under WAC 480-09-150, Informal complaints, or by filing a formal complaint under WAC 480-09-420, Pleading and briefs--Application for authority--Protests.

(4) No deviation from these rules is permitted without written authorization by the commission. Violation will be subject to penalties as provided by law.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-008 Exemptions from rules in chapter 480-100 WAC.

(1) The commission may grant an exemption from the provisions of any rule in this chapter, if consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying regulation, and applicable statutes.

(2) To request a rule exemption, a person must file with the commission a written request identifying the rule for which an exemption is sought, giving a full explanation of the reason for requesting the exemption.

(3) The commission will assign the request a docket number, if it does not arise in an existing docket, and will schedule the request for consideration at one of its regularly scheduled open meetings or, if appropriate under chapter 34.05 RCW, in an adjudication. The commission will notify the person requesting the exemption, and other interested persons, of the date of the hearing or open meeting when the commission will consider the request.

(4) In determining whether to grant the request, the commission may consider whether application of the rule would impose undue hardship on the petitioner, of a degree or a kind different from hardships imposed on other similarly situated persons, and whether the effect of applying the rule would be contrary to the purposes of the rule.

(5) The commission will enter an order granting or denying the request, or setting it for hearing, pursuant to chapter 480-09 WAC.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-013 Additional requirements. (1) These rules do not relieve any electric utility from any of its duties and obligations under the laws of the state of Washington.

(2) The commission retains the authority to impose additional or different requirements on any electric utility in appropriate circumstances, consistent with the requirements of law.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-018 Severability. If any provision of this chapter or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the chapter or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-023 Definitions. "Applicant" means any person, corporation, partnership, government agency, or other entity that applies for service with an electric utility or who reapplies for service at a new or existing location after service has been discontinued.

"Business day" means Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m., except for official state holidays.

"Commission" means the Washington utilities and transportation commission.

"Customer" means any person, corporation, partnership, government agency, or other entity that has applied for, has been accepted, and is currently receiving service.

"Electric utility (utility)" means any business entity (e.g., corporation, company, association, joint stock association, or partnership) or person, including a lessee, trustee, or court appointed receiver that meets the following conditions:

Owns, controls, operates, or manages any electric plant for hire in Washington state; and

Is subject to the commission's jurisdiction.

Terms used in this chapter and defined in the public service laws of Washington state (i.e., principally Title 80 RCW) have the same meaning here as in the statutes. Terms not defined in these rules or the applicable statutes have the meaning generally accepted in the electric industry, or their ordinary meaning if there is no meaning generally accepted in the electric industry.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-028 Tariffs and special contracts. An electric utility must publish its rate schedules and rules and regulations governing service, and file special contracts, in accordance with chapter 480-80 WAC, Utilities general--Tariffs, price lists, and contracts.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-033 Distribution line extension tariff. Each electric utility must file, as a part of its tariff, a distribution line extension rule setting forth the conditions under which it will extend its facilities to make service available to an applicant.

PART II--CONSUMER RULES

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-103 Information to consumers. (1) An electric utility must make available at each of its listed business offices information regarding rates, rules, and regulations needed for its customers and applicants to obtain adequate and efficient service.

(2) The utility must maintain a toll-free telephone number available for its applicants and customers during business hours to receive information relating to services and rates, to accept and process orders for service, to explain charges on customer bills, to adjust charges made in error, to respond to customer inquiries and complaints, and to generally act as representatives of the utility.

(3) The utility must provide to each applicant relevant rate information and a brochure that explains the rights and responsibilities of a utility customer. The brochure must include, at a minimum, information about the utility's regular business hours, the utility's mailing address, the utility's toll-free number, the twenty-four-hour emergency number(s), and an explanation of the utility's processes to establish credit, deposits, billing, delinquent accounts, disconnection of service initiated by the utility, cancellation of service by the customer, the dispute process, and the commission's informal complaint procedures to be followed if the customer remains dissatisfied with the utility's dispute process.

(4) At least once each year, the utility must directly advise each of its customers how to obtain:

(a) A copy of the consumer brochure described in subsection (3) of this section;

(b) A copy of the customer's applicable rate information;

(c) A copy of the electric rules, chapter 480-100 WAC; and

(d) A copy of the utility's current rates and regulations.

(5) The utility must provide an applicant, upon request, the high and low bills for the requested service premises during the prior calendar year, if such data is available.

(6) The utility must provide a customer, upon request, a detailed account of the customer's actual electric usage at the service premises for the previous twelve-month period, if such data is available.

(7) The utility must provide customers information comparing energy usage for the current month and same billing month of the previous year, if available, either on the customers' bills or upon request, as follows:

(a) Number of days in billing period;

(b) Kilowatt hours used; and

(c) Average kilowatt hours used per day.

(8) The utility must provide the commission with electronic or paper copies of all pamphlets, brochures, and bill inserts of regulated service information at the same time the utility delivers such material to its customers.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-108 Application for service. (1) When an applicant orders service from an electric utility, the applicant will be responsible for conforming to the rules and regulations that are in effect and on file with the commission.

(2) The utility may require the following information when an applicant applies for service:

(a) The applicant's name, address, and telephone number, and an alternative contact telephone number, if applicable, of the responsible party at the service premises;

(b) The date the service is requested to be effective;

(c) The type of service requested, such as residential or commercial service, and the type of equipment to be served at the service premises;

(d) Proof of identification. The utility must allow the applicant to choose from a list, provided by the utility, of at least five sources of identification. The list must include a current driver's license or other picture identification; and

(e) Any additional information the utility may reasonably require for billing or service.

(3) The utility must offer, if available, a service-order tracking number so the customer can easily identify the service request in subsequent interactions with the utility.

(4) The utility must provide the following service dates to the applicant:

(a) For service at a location where utility service facilities exist and will not have to be modified in any way to serve the applicant, the utility must provide a service date at the time of application. If the utility becomes aware that the service date cannot be met, it must notify the applicant prior to the service date;

(b) For service at a location where utility service facilities do not exist or require modification, the utility will provide the following service dates:

(i) Upon request by the applicant, prior to signing a service agreement, the utility must provide a range of dates by which service can be made available;

(ii) Upon signing a service agreement with the applicant, the utility must provide a date by which service will be made available. If the utility becomes aware that the service date cannot be met, it must notify the applicant on or prior to the service date.

(5) A customer may not resell electricity unless specifically authorized in the utility's tariff.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-113 Residential services deposit requirements.

(1) **Deposit criteria for current residential customers.** An electric utility may collect a deposit from its own customers for residential service only if:

(a) At any time during the prior twelve months, the utility has sent the customer three or more delinquency notices;

(b) The utility has disconnected the customer's residential service for nonpayment; or

(c) There is a prior customer living at the residence who owes a past due bill to the utility at that address.

(2) **Deposit criteria for residential applicants.** A utility may collect a deposit from an applicant for residential service, only if:

(a) The applicant has met the conditions described in subsection (1) of this section with another electric utility;

(b) The applicant is not able to demonstrate continuous employment during the prior twelve consecutive months and neither is currently employed nor has a regular source of income;

(c) The applicant does not own or is not purchasing the premises to be served;

(d) There is a prior customer living at the residence who owes a past due bill to the utility at that address; or

(e) The applicant has an unpaid, overdue balance owing to any electric or gas utility for residential service.

(3) **Deposit amount.** The utility may require a deposit not to exceed the amount of:

(a) **For utilities billing monthly,** two-twelfths of the service location's most recent twelve months' usage, or if service did not exist, two-twelfths of the estimated annual usage; or

(b) **For utilities billing bimonthly,** three-twelfths of the service location's most recent twelve months' usage or, if service did not exist, three-twelfths of the estimated annual usage.

(4) **Deposit payment arrangements.** The utility must allow an applicant or customer the option of paying fifty percent of the deposit prior to service, and paying the remaining balance in equal amounts over the next two months, on the dates mutually agreed upon between the applicant or customer and the utility. The utility and applicant or customer may make other mutually acceptable deposit payment arrangements.

(5) **Alternative to deposit.** The utility must allow any applicant or customer who indicates an inability to pay a deposit:

(a) To prepay any service initiation fees and reasonably estimated regular service charges or budget billings at periods

corresponding to the utility's regular billing periods for the length of time during which a deposit would ordinarily be required. The utility must then bill the applicant or customer in a normal fashion; or

(b) To furnish a satisfactory guarantor. A guarantor will be considered satisfactory if the guarantor has at least established credit with the utility as outlined in this section. A utility may, at its discretion, accept a guarantor that does not meet the requirements of this section. If the customer has been disconnected, the guarantor is responsible for the amount stated on the disconnection notice, not to exceed the amount of the deposit as defined in subsection (3) of this section unless the guarantor has agreed to guarantee an additional amount as specified in subsection (7) of this section; or

(c) To notify the utility of the inability to pay a deposit as provided in WAC 480-100-143, Winter low-income payment program; or

(d) The opportunity to provide a reference from a similar utility that can be quickly and easily checked if the conditions in subsection (1) of this section cannot be met.

(6) **Transfer of deposit.** When a customer moves to a new address within the utility's service territory, the deposit, plus accrued interest and less any outstanding past-due balance owing from the old address, must be transferred or refunded.

(7) **Additional deposit.** If a deposit or additional deposit amount is required after the service is established, the reasons must be specified to the customer in writing. Any request for a deposit or additional deposit amount must comply with the standards outlined in subsection (1) of this section. If the original deposit was secured by a guarantor and the guarantor does not agree to be responsible for the additional deposit amount, the customer will be held responsible for paying the additional deposit.

(8) **Deposit payment date.** Any deposit or additional deposit amount required after service is established is due and payable not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the sixth business day after notice, if the deposit requirement notice is mailed from within the states of Washington, Oregon, or Idaho, or the ninth business day if mailed from outside the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. If the utility delivers the notice to the customer in person, the deposit or additional deposit amount is due and payable not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the sixth business day from the date of delivery.

(9) **Interest on deposits.** Interest on deposits collected from applicants or customers must:

(a) Accrue at the rate calculated as a simple average of the effective interest rate for new issues of one-year treasury bills, computed from December 1st of each year through November 30th of the following year. The commission will advise the utility each year of the specific rate;

(b) Earn the calculated interest rate as determined in (a) of this subsection during January 1st through December 31st of the subsequent year;

(c) Be computed from the date of deposit to the date of refund or when applied directly to the customer's account; and

(d) Be compounded or paid annually.

(10) **Refund of deposit.** Deposits plus accrued interest must be applied to the customer's account or refunded at the customer's request when there has been satisfactory payment or upon termination of service.

(a) Satisfactory payment. Satisfactory payment is established when the customer has paid for service during twelve consecutive months in a prompt and satisfactory manner as evidenced by the following:

(i) The utility has not initiated disconnection proceedings against the customer; and

(ii) The utility has sent no more than two delinquency notices to the customer.

(b) Termination of service. Upon termination of service, the utility must return to the customer the deposit amount plus accrued interest, less any amounts due the utility by the customer.

(11) **How deposits are refunded.** Any deposit plus accrued interest must be made available to the customer no later than fifteen calendar days following completion of twelve months of satisfactory payment or the cancellation of service. Refunds must be:

(a) Applied to the customer's account for service beginning in the thirteenth month; or

(b) At the customer's request, paid in the form of a check either delivered by mail or given to the customer in person at the utility's local business office.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-118 Nonresidential service deposit requirements.

(1) **Deposit criteria for nonresidential customers.** An applicant for nonresidential service may be required to demonstrate that it is a satisfactory credit risk by reasonable means appropriate under the circumstances.

(2) **Deposit amount.** The electric utility may require a deposit not to exceed the amount of:

(a) **For utilities billing monthly,** two-twelfths of the service location's most recent twelve months' usage, or if service did not exist, two-twelfths of the estimated annual usage; or

(b) **For utilities billing bimonthly,** three-twelfths of the service location's most recent twelve months' usage or, if service did not exist, three-twelfths of the estimated annual usage.

(3) **Transfer of deposit.** When a customer moves to a new address within the utility's service territory, the deposit, plus accrued interest and less any outstanding past-due balance owing from the old address, must be transferred or refunded.

(4) **Additional deposit.** If a deposit or additional deposit amount is required after the service is established, the reasons

must be specified to the customer in writing. Any request for a deposit or additional deposit amount must comply with the standards outlined in this section.

(5) **Deposit payment date.** Any deposit or additional deposit amount required after service is established is due and payable not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the sixth business day after notice, if the deposit requirement notice is mailed from within the states of Washington, Oregon, or Idaho, or the ninth business day if mailed from outside the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. If the utility delivers the notice to the customer in person, the deposit or additional deposit amount is due and payable not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the sixth business day from the date of delivery.

(6) **Interest on deposits.** Interest on deposits collected from applicants or customers must:

(a) Accrue at the rate calculated as a simple average of the effective interest rate for new issues of one-year treasury bills, computed from December 1st of each year through November 30th of the following year. The commission will advise the utility each year of the specific rate;

(b) Earn the calculated interest rate as determined in (a) of this subsection during January 1st through December 31st of the subsequent year;

(c) Be computed from the date of deposit to the date of refund or when applied directly to the customer's account; and

(d) Be compounded or paid annually.

(7) **Refund of deposit.** Deposits plus accrued interest must be applied to the customer's account or refunded at the customer's request when there has been satisfactory payment or upon termination of service.

(a) Satisfactory payment. Satisfactory payment is established when the customer has paid for service during twelve consecutive months in a prompt and satisfactory manner as evidenced by the following:

(i) The utility has not initiated disconnection proceedings against the customer; and

(ii) The utility has sent no more than two delinquency notices to the customer.

(b) Termination of service. Upon termination of service, the utility must return to the customer the deposit amount plus accrued interest, less any amounts due the utility by the customer.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-123 Refusal of service. (1) An electric utility may refuse requests to provide service to a master meter in a building with permanent occupants when all of the following conditions exist:

(a) The building or property has more than one dwelling unit;

(b) The occupants control a significant part of the electricity used in the individual units; and

(c) It is cost-effective for the occupants to have the utility purchase and install individual meters considering the long-run benefits of measuring and billing each occupant's electric use separately.

(2) The utility may refuse to provide service if:

(a) Providing service will cause an adverse affect on other customers or does not comply with government regulations or the electric industry accepted standards;

(b) In the utility's judgment, there are hazardous conditions at the premises, or the applicant's or customer's wiring or electrical equipment is hazardous or of such nature that safe and satisfactory service cannot be provided;

(c) The applicant or customer does not comply with the utility's request to provide protective devices to protect the utility's or other customers' properties from theft or damage;

(d) The utility is unable to obtain all necessary rights of way, easements, approvals, and permits;

(e) It is not economically feasible to provide service; or

(f) The customer is known by the utility to have fraudulently obtained service as described in WAC 480-100-128, Disconnection of service;

(3) The utility may not refuse to provide service to a residential applicant or residential customer because there are outstanding amounts due from a prior customer at the same premises, unless the utility can determine, based on objective evidence, that a fraudulent act is being committed, such that the applicant or customer is acting on behalf of the prior customer with the intent to avoid payment.

(4) The utility may not refuse service to a residential applicant or residential customer who has three or fewer prior obligations in any one calendar year. A prior obligation is the dollar amount the utility has billed to the customer and for which the utility has not received payment at the time the service has been disconnected.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-128 Disconnection of service. (1) Customer-directed. The utility may require customers to give at least three days' notice prior to the date service is to be discontinued. The customer is not responsible for usage after the requested date for discontinuance of service, provided the customer gave proper notice. If the customer moves from the service address and fails to request that service be discontinued, the customer will be responsible to pay for service taken at that service address until the utility can confirm either that the customer has vacated the

premises and can access the meter or that a new responsible party is taking service.

(2) **Utility-directed without notice or without further notice.** The utility may discontinue service without notice or without further notice when:

(a) After conducting a thorough investigation, the utility determines that the customer has tampered with or stolen the utility's property, has used service through an illegal connection, or has fraudulently obtained service. The utility has the burden of proving that fraud occurred. For the purpose of this section, a nonsufficient funds check or dishonored electronic payment alone will not be considered fraud.

(i) First offense. The utility may disconnect service without notice when it discovers theft, tampering, or fraud, unless the customer immediately pays all of the following:

(A) The tariffed rate for service that the utility estimates was used as a result of the theft, tampering, or fraud;

(B) All utility costs resulting from such theft, tampering, or fraud; and

(C) Any required deposit.

(ii) Second offense. The utility may disconnect service without notice when it discovers further theft, tampering, or fraud. The utility may refuse to reconnect service to a customer who has been twice disconnected for theft, tampering, or fraud, subject to appeal to the commission.

(b) After conducting a thorough investigation, the utility determines that the customer has vacated the premises;

(c) The utility identifies a hazardous condition in the customer's facilities or in the utility's facilities serving the customer;

(d) A customer pays a delinquent account with a check or electronic payment the bank or other financial institution has dishonored after the utility has issued appropriate notice as described in subsection (6) of this section;

(e) The customer has not kept any agreed-upon payment arrangement for payment of a delinquent balance after the utility has issued appropriate notice as described in subsection (6) of this section; or

(f) The utility has determined a customer has used service prior to applying for service. The utility must charge the customer for service used in accordance with the utility's filed tariff.

This section should not be interpreted as relieving the customer or other person of civil or criminal responsibility.

(3) **Utility-directed with notice.** After properly notifying the customer, as explained in subsection (6) of this section, the utility may discontinue service for any one of the following conditions:

(a) For delinquent charges associated with regulated electric service (or for regulated electric and gas service if the utility provides both services), including any required deposit. However, the utility cannot disconnect service when the customer has met the

requirements of subsection (5) of this section for medical emergencies, or has agreed to or maintains agreed-upon payment arrangements with the utility, as described in WAC 480-100-143, Winter low-income payment program;

(b) For use of electric service for purposes or properties other than those specified in the customer's service application;

(c) Under flat-rate service for nonmetered load, for increased electric use without the utility's approval;

(d) For refusing to allow the utility's representatives access to the customer's premises as required in WAC 480-100-168, Access to premises;

(e) For violating rules, service agreements, or filed tariff(s); or

(f) For use of equipment that detrimentally affects the utility's service to its other customers.

(4) Electric service may not be disconnected for amounts that may be owed the utility for nonregulated service.

(5) **Medical emergencies.** When the utility has cause to disconnect or has disconnected a residential service, it must postpone disconnection of service or must reinstate service for a grace period of five business days after receiving either verbal or written notification of the existence of a medical emergency. The utility must reinstate service during the same day if the customer contacts the utility prior to the close of the business day and requests a same-day reconnection. Otherwise, the utility must restore service by 12:00 p.m. the next business day. When service is reinstated the utility will not require payment of a reconnection charge and/or deposit prior to reinstating service but must bill all such charges on the customer's next regular bill or on a separate invoice.

(a) The utility may require that the customer, within five business days, submit written certification from a qualified medical professional stating that the disconnection of electric service would aggravate an existing medical condition of a resident of the household. "Qualified medical professional" means a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant authorized to diagnose and treat the medical condition without supervision of a physician. Nothing in this section precludes a utility from accepting other forms of certification, but the maximum the utility can require is written certification. If the utility requires written certification, it may not require more than the following information:

(i) Residence location;

(ii) An explanation of how the current medical condition will be aggravated by disconnection of service;

(iii) A statement of how long the condition is expected to last; and

(iv) The title, signature, and telephone number of the person certifying the condition;

(b) The medical certification is valid only for the length of time the health endangerment is certified to exist but no longer than sixty days, unless renewed;

(c) A medical emergency does not excuse a customer from having to pay delinquent and ongoing charges. The utility may require the customer to do the following within a five-business-day grace period:

- (i) Pay a minimum of ten percent of the delinquent balance;
- (ii) Enter into an agreement to pay the remaining delinquent balance within one hundred twenty days; and
- (iii) Agree to pay subsequent bills when due.

Nothing in this section precludes the utility from agreeing to an alternate payment plan, but the utility may not require the customer to pay more than this subsection prescribes. The utility must send a notice to the customer confirming the payment arrangements within two business days of having reached the agreement;

(d) If the customer fails to provide an acceptable medical certificate or ten percent of the delinquent balance within the five-business-day grace period, or if the customer fails to abide by the terms of the payment agreement, the utility may not disconnect service without first mailing a written notice providing a disconnection date not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the third business day after the date of mailing, if mailed from within the states of Washington, Oregon, or Idaho, or the sixth business day, if mailed from outside the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, or by personally delivering a notice providing a disconnection date of not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the second business day following the date of delivery;

(e) A customer may claim medical emergency and be entitled to the benefits described in this subsection only twice within any one hundred twenty-day period.

(6) **Disconnection notification requirements.** The utility must notify customers before disconnecting their service, except as described in subsection (2) of this section. Notification consists of the following requirements:

(a) The utility must serve a written disconnection notice to the customer either by mail or by personal delivery to the customer's address with notice attached to the primary door. If the disconnection notice is for nonpayment during the winter months, the utility must advise the customer of the payment plan described in WAC 480-100-138, Payment arrangements, and WAC 480-100-143, Winter low-income payment program. Each disconnection notice must include:

(i) A disconnection date that is not less than eight business days after the date of personal delivery or mailing, if mailed from inside the states of Washington, Oregon, or Idaho, or a disconnection date that is not less than eleven business days, if mailed from outside the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

(ii) All relevant information about the disconnection action including the cause for disconnection, the amount owing, and how to avoid disconnection;

(iii) All relevant information about any charges that may be assessed; and

(iv) The utility's name, address, and toll-free telephone

number by which a customer may contact the utility to discuss the pending disconnection of service;

(b) If the utility discovers the notice information in (a) of this subsection is inaccurate, the utility must issue another notice to the customer as described in subsection (6)(a) of this section;

(c) If the utility has not disconnected service within ten business days of the disconnection date stated in (a) of this subsection, the disconnection notice will be considered void unless the customer and the utility have agreed to a payment arrangement. Upon a void notice, the utility must provide a new disconnection notice to the customer as described in (a) of this subsection;

(d) In addition to the notice required by (a) of this subsection, a second notice must be provided by one of the three options listed below:

(i) Delivered notice. The utility must deliver a second notice to the service premises and attach it to the customer's primary door. The notice must state a scheduled disconnection date that is not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the second business day after the date of delivery;

(ii) Mailed notice. The utility must mail a second notice which must include a scheduled disconnection date that is not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the third business day after the date of mailing, if mailed from within the states of Washington, Oregon, or Idaho; or the sixth business day, if mailed from outside the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho; or

(iii) Telephone notice. The utility must attempt at least two times to contact the customer during regular business hours. A log or record of the calls must be kept for a minimum of ninety calendar days showing the telephone number called, the time of the call, and details of the results of each attempted call. If the utility is unable to reach the customer by telephone, a written notice must be mailed to the customer providing a disconnection date not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the third business day after the date of mailing, if mailed from within the states of Washington, Oregon, or Idaho, or the sixth business day, if mailed from outside the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, or written notice must be personally delivered providing a disconnection date of not earlier than 5:00 p.m. of the second business day following the date of delivery.

For utilities billing for electric and gas service, each type of notice listed above must provide the information contained in (a)(iii) of this subsection;

(e) If the utility discovers the written notice information required under the options in (d) of this subsection is inaccurate, the utility must issue another notice to the customer as described in (a) of this subsection;

(f) If the utility provides a second notice within ten business days of the disconnection date required by (a)(i) of this subsection, the disconnection date is extended an additional ten working days from the disconnection date of the second notice. If the utility does not disconnect service within the extended ten-business-day period, the notice will be considered void unless the

customer and the utility have agreed upon a payment arrangement. Upon a void notice, the utility must provide an additional notice as required under (d) of this subsection;

(g) If the utility provides a second notice after the ten business days of the disconnection date required by (a)(i) of this subsection, the notice will be considered void unless the customer and the utility have agreed upon a payment arrangement. Upon a void notice, the utility must provide a new disconnection notice to the customer as described in (a) of this subsection;

(h) When the service address is different from the billing address, the utility must determine if the customer of record and the service user are the same party. If not, the utility must notice the service user as described in (a) of this subsection prior to disconnecting service;

(i) Except in case of danger to life or property, the utility may not disconnect service on Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, or on any other day on which the utility cannot reestablish service on the same or following day;

(j) A utility representative dispatched to disconnect service must accept payment of a delinquent account at the service address, but will not be required to give change for cash paid in excess of the amount due and owing. The utility must credit any over-payment to the customer's account. The utility may charge a fee for the disconnection visit to the service address if provided for in the utility's tariff;

(k) When service is provided through a master meter, or when the utility has reasonable grounds to believe service is to other than the customer of record, the utility must undertake reasonable efforts to inform the occupants of the service address of the impending disconnection. Upon request of one or more service users, where service is to other than the customer of record, the utility must allow five days past the original disconnection date to permit the service users to arrange for continued service;

(l) Medical facilities. When service is known to be provided to:

(i) A hospital, medical clinic, ambulatory surgery center, renal dialysis facility, chemical dependency residential treatment facility, or other medical care facility licensed or certified by the department of health, a notice of pending disconnection must be provided to the secretary of the department of health and to the customer. The department of health secretary or designee may request to delay the disconnection for five business days past the original disconnection date to allow the department to take the necessary steps to protect the interests of the patients residing at the facility; or

(ii) A nursing home, boarding home, adult family home, group care facility, intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded (ICF/MR), intensive tenant support residential property, chemical dependency residential treatment facility, crisis residential center for children or other group home or residential care facility licensed or certified by the department of social and health services, a notice of pending disconnection must be provided to the secretary of the department of social and health services

and to the customer. The department of social and health services secretary or designee may request to delay the disconnection for five business days past the original disconnection date to allow the department to take the necessary steps to protect the interests of the patients residing at the facility;

(m) Any customer may designate a third party to receive a disconnection notice or notice of other matters affecting the customer's service. The utility must offer all customers the opportunity to make such a designation. If the utility believes that a customer is not able to understand the effect of the disconnection, the utility must consider a social agency to be the third party. In either case, the utility must delay service disconnection for five business days past the original disconnection date after issuing a disconnection notice to the third party. The utility must determine which social agencies are appropriate and willing to receive the disconnection notice, the name and/or title of the person able to deal with the disconnection, and provide that information to the customer.

(7) For purposes of this section, the date of mailing a notice will not be considered the first day of the notice period.

(8) **Payments at a payment agency.** Payment of any past-due amounts to a designated payment agency of the utility constitutes payment when the customer informs the utility of the payment and the utility has verified the payment.

(9) **Remedy and appeals.** Service may not be disconnected while the customer is pursuing any remedy or appeal provided by these rules or while engaged in discussions with the utility's representatives or with the commission. Any amounts not in dispute must be paid when due and any conditions posing a danger to health, safety, or property must be corrected. The utility must inform the customer of these provisions when the customer is referred to a utility's supervisor or to the commission.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-133 Reconnecting service after disconnection.

(1) An electric utility must make every reasonable effort to restore a disconnected service within twenty-four hours, or other time mutually agreeable between the customer and the company, after the customer has paid, or at the time the utility has agreed to bill, any reconnection charge, and:

(a) The causes for disconnection not related to a delinquent account are removed and the customer pays any delinquent regulated charges, plus any required deposit; or

(b) The customer has entered into an agreed-upon payment arrangement for a delinquent account and pays any required deposit as defined in WAC 480-100-113, Residential service deposit requirements or WAC 480-100-118, Nonresidential service deposit

requirements; or

(c) The customer has paid any account that is not a prior obligation account as defined in WAC 480-100-123, Refusal of service, and the customer has paid any required deposit as defined in WAC 480-100-113, Residential service deposit requirements or WAC 480-100-118 Nonresidential service deposit requirements;

(2) The commission may require reconnection pending resolution of any bona fide dispute between the utility and the customer over the propriety of disconnection.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-138 Payment arrangements. (1) If an electric utility is delayed in billing a residential customer, the utility must offer payment arrangements that are equal to the length of time the bill was delayed, unless the utility determines the customer used service prior to applying for service as outlined in WAC 480-100-128 (2)(f), Disconnection of service.

(2) The utility must offer all residential customers the option of an equal-payments plan.

(a) An equal-payments plan allows the customer to pay the same amount each month based on historical usage. If historical information is not available, the utility must base the amount on projected usage;

(b) The utility may refuse to offer an equal-payments plan to customers who have been removed from the equal-payments plan for nonpayment within the past six months or have more than a two-month past-due balance on their current account. However, the utility may offer the equal-payments plan to any customer when the utility believes this would be in the best interest of all parties concerned;

(3) The utility must provide a receipt to customers for all payments made in cash.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-143 Winter low-income payment program. (1) During the winter months, between November 15th and March 15th, an electric utility may not discontinue residential space heating service if the customer does all of the following:

(a) Notifies the utility of the inability to pay the bill and any required deposit. This notice should be provided within five business days of receiving a delinquency notice unless there are extenuating circumstances. If the customer does not notify the

utility within five business days and service is disconnected, the customer can receive the protections of this chapter, by paying reconnection charges, if any, and by otherwise fulfilling the requirements of this section;

(b) Provides self-certification of household income for the prior twelve months to a grantee of the department of community, trade, and economic development or its successor. For the purposes of this section, the grantee is a contractor operating low-income energy assistance programs for the department of community, trade, and economic development. The grantee will determine that the household income is not higher than the maximum allowed for eligibility under the state's plan for low-income energy assistance. The grantee will, within thirty days, provide a dollar figure to the utility that is seven percent of the household income. For the purposes of this section, household income is defined as the total income of all household members as determined by the grantee. The grantee may verify information provided in the self-certification;

(c) Applies for home energy assistance from appropriate government and/or private sector organizations and certifies that any assistance received will be applied to the customer's current and future utility bills;

(d) Applies to the utility or other appropriate agencies for low-income weatherization assistance if such assistance is available for the dwelling;

(e) Agrees and abides by that agreement to:

(i) Pay by the following October 15th all amounts owed to the utility and pay for continued service; and

(ii) Pay a monthly payment during the winter period. The utility may not require payment of more than seven percent of the customer's monthly income. In addition, the customer must pay one-twelfth of any billings from the date application is made through March 15th. A customer may agree to pay a higher percentage of income during this period, but the customer's account will not be considered past-due unless payment during this period is less than seven percent of the monthly income plus one-twelfth of any past-due amounts accrued from the date application is made and thereafter. If the customer does not pay the past-due bill by the following October 15th, the customer will not be eligible for protections under this section until the past-due bill is paid;

(f) Notifies and provides documentation to the utility, if requested, that the customer has received any home heating assistance payment from government and/or private sector organizations after being approved for the plan. When the utility receives this information it must recalculate the payments for the customer; and

(g) Pays all amounts owed even if the customer moves.

(2) The utility:

(a) Must help the customer to fulfill the requirements under this section;

(b) Must transfer an account to a new residence when a customer who has established a plan under this section moves from one residence to another within the utility's service area;

(c) May disconnect service in accordance with WAC 480-100-128, Disconnection of service, if the customer has not kept the payment arrangements as described in subsection (1) of this section. The utility must include in the customer's disconnection notice:

(i) A description of the customer's duties outlined in subsection (1) of this section; and

(ii) An explanation that the utility must restore service if the customer contacts the utility and satisfies the other requirements of this section;

(d) May disconnect service for practices authorized by law other than for nonpayment as stated in this section;

(e) Must allow customers who qualified under subsection (1) of this section and who default on their payment plan and are disconnected in accordance with WAC 480-100-128, Disconnection of service, to reconnect and maintain the protection afforded under this chapter when the customer:

(i) Pays any reconnection charges; and

(ii) Pays all amounts that would have been due and owing on the date the service is reconnected; and

(f) Must provide a written copy of the extended payment plan to the customer.

(3) Any customer who has a past-due amount owing under this payment plan will not be eligible to reapply for a new extended payment plan unless authorized by the utility.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-148 Service responsibility. (1) **Customer responsibility.** The customer must notify the electric utility, in writing, prior to all changes to the customer's equipment or usage that will materially affect the service to be rendered. The customer must give such notice within a reasonable time so the utility can provide the necessary facilities and acquire additional power supply, if needed. The charge for such necessary facilities, if any, must be in accordance with the utility's filed tariff.

(2) **Electric utility responsibility.** Each electric utility:

(a) Must install and maintain equipment within its system that may be necessary to operate the electric system. The commission may require the utility to provide additional equipment in connection with performing special investigations, if economically feasible;

(b) Must promptly notify all affected customers of a change to the service that would affect the efficiency of operation or the adjustment of the customer's equipment. If an adjustment to the customer's equipment is necessary, the cost may be recovered in accordance with the utility's tariff, except that, when the customer has been notified of a change in service prior to receiving service or when such change is required by law, the

customer must bear all costs in connection with making changes to the customer's own equipment.

(c) Must maintain its plant in such a condition that will enable it to furnish safe, adequate, and efficient service and meet applicable state and federal standards.

(d) Must make all reasonable efforts to avoid interruptions of service and, when such interruptions occur, must endeavor to reestablish service with the shortest possible delay. Interruptions as used in this subsection do not refer to the discontinuance of service to those customers receiving service under an interruptible service schedule.

When it is necessary for an electric utility to make repairs to or to change its facilities other than meters, the utility may, without incurring any liability, suspend service for such periods as may be reasonably necessary and in such a manner as to minimize the inconvenience to customers. The utility must individually notify police and fire departments affected by such a suspension. All customers affected by a scheduled interruption associated with facilities other than meters, will be given notification through newspapers, radio announcements, or other means at least one day in advance.

(e) Must keep a record of all interruptions of service affecting a substantial number of customers, including in such record the location, the date and time, the duration, and, as accurately as possible, the cause of each interruption. Utilities must submit copies of such records to the commission upon request.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-153 Disclosure of private information. (1) An electric utility may not disclose, permit access to, or use private consumer information, as defined in subsection (3) of this section, for the purposes of marketing unregulated services or products offerings to a customer who does not already subscribe to that service or product, unless the utility has first obtained the customer's written permission to do so.

(2) A utility may not share or sell private consumer information with or to its affiliates, subsidiaries, or any other third party for the purposes of marketing services or product offerings to a customer who does not already subscribe to that service or product, unless the utility has first obtained the customer's written permission to do so.

(3) Private consumer information includes the customer's name, address, telephone number, and any other personally identifying information, as well as information related to the quantity, technical configuration, type, destination, and amount of use of service or products subscribed to by a customer of a regulated utility that is available to the utility solely by virtue of the

customer-utility relationship.

(4) This section does not prevent disclosure of the essential terms and conditions of special contracts as provided for in WAC 480-80-335, Special contracts for electric, water, and natural gas utilities.

(5) This section does not prevent the utility from inserting any marketing information into the customer's billing package.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-163 Service entrance facilities. (1) An electric utility may require customers to:

(a) Provide entrance facilities at the easiest access point to the utility's distribution system; and

(b) Comply with reasonable requirements to keep those facilities free from tampering or interference.

(2) In order to permit the required clearances, utilities may require their customers to provide a structurally sound point of attachment for the utility's service conductors pursuant to the National Electric Code. Information about the National Electric Code regarding the version adopted and where to obtain it is set out in WAC 480-100-999 Adoption by reference.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-168 Access to premises; identification. (1) Authorized representatives of an electric utility have the right to enter a customer's property during reasonable hours to perform necessary functions such as meter reading, maintenance, repairs, testing, installation, or removal of the utility's property. Utilities must provide photo identification to utility representatives who are authorized to enter customers' premises. Customers have the right to see the utility-provided identification of electric utility representatives before allowing entry to the customer's property.

(2) When performing maintenance, repairs, testing, installation, or removal of the utility's property, the utility must restore the customer's property as close as reasonably practicable to the condition prior to the utility's action, unless otherwise defined in the utility's tariff or through a separate agreement with the customer.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-173 Electric utility responsibility for complaints and disputes. (1) When an electric utility receives a complaint in any form from a customer or an applicant for service, the utility must acknowledge receipt of the complaint and:

(a) Upon request, identify the utility's contact to the complainant;

(b) Investigate the complaint promptly as required by the particular case;

(c) Report the results of the investigation to the complainant;

(d) Take corrective action, if warranted, as soon as possible under the circumstances;

(e) If the complainant is dissatisfied with the results or decision, inform the complainant that the decision may be appealed to a supervisor at the utility; and

(f) If the complainant is dissatisfied after speaking with the utility's supervisor, the supervisor must inform the complainant of the complainant's right to file a complaint with the commission and provide the commission's address and toll-free telephone number.

(2) Applicants, customers, or their representatives may file with the commission:

(a) An informal complaint as described in WAC 480-09-150; Informal complaints; or

(b) A formal complaint against the utility as described in WAC 480-09-420, Pleadings and briefs--Applications for authority--Protests.

(3) When the commission refers an informal complaint to the utility, the utility must:

(a) Investigate and report the results to the commission within two business days. The commission may grant an extension of time for responding to the complaint, if requested and warranted;

(b) Keep the commission informed of progress toward the solution and the final result; and

(c) Respond to the commission's request for additional informal complaint information within three business days of the request or at a date specified by the commission. The commission may grant an extension of time for responding to the complaint, if requested and warranted.

(4) Each electric utility must keep a record of all complaints for at least three years and, upon request, make them readily available for commission review. The record must contain:

(a) The complainant's name and address;

(b) The date and nature of the complaint;

(c) The action taken;

(d) The final result; and

(e) All official documents regarding the complaint.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-178 Billing requirements and payment date. (1)
Customer bills must:

(a) Be issued at intervals not to exceed two one-month billing cycles, unless the utility can show good cause for delaying the issuance of the bill. The utility must be able to show good cause if requested by the commission;

(b) Show the total amount due and payable;

(c) Show the date the bill becomes delinquent if not paid;

(d) Show the utility's business address, business hours, and a toll-free telephone number and an emergency telephone number by which a customer may contact the utility;

(e) Show the current and previous meter readings, the current read date, and the total amount of kilowatt hours used;

(f) Show the amount of kilowatt hours used for each billing rate, the applicable billing rates per kilowatt, the basic charge or minimum bill;

(g) Show the amount of any municipal tax surcharges or their respective percentage rates;

(h) Clearly identify when a bill has been prorated. A prorated bill must be issued when service is provided for a fraction of the billing period. Unless otherwise specified in the utility's tariff, the charge must be prorated in the following manner:

(i) Flat-rate service must be prorated on the basis of the proportionate part of the period the service was rendered;

(ii) Metered service must be billed for the amount metered. Any basic or minimum charge must be billed in full.

(i) Clearly identify when a bill is based on an estimation.

(i) The utility must detail its method(s) for estimating customer bills in its tariff;

(ii) The utility may not estimate for more than four consecutive months, unless the cause of the estimation is inclement weather, terrain, or a previous arrangement with the customer;

(j) Clearly identify determination of maximum demand. A utility providing service to any customer on a demand basis must detail in its filed tariff the method of applying charges and of ascertaining the demand.

(2) The minimum time allowed for payment after the bill's mailing date must be fifteen days, if mailed from within the states of Washington, Oregon, or Idaho, or eighteen days if mailed from outside the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

(3) The utility must allow a customer to change a designated payment-due date when the customer has a satisfactory reason for the change. A satisfactory reason may include, but is not limited to, adjustment of a designated payment-due date to parallel receipt of income. The preferred payment date must be prior to the next billing date.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-183 Complaint meter tests. (1) An electric utility must test and report to the customer the accuracy of a meter within twenty business days after receiving an initial request from a customer. The utility must allow the customer to order one meter test free of charge during a twelve-month period. The utility may appeal to the commission to waive the responsibility of performing the meter test, to request an extension to perform the meter test, or to be allowed to charge for the meter test. If the customer disputes the accuracy of the meter, the customer must allow the utility access for meter testing.

(2) The customer may, at the customer's option, either witness the meter test or designate a representative to witness the test. The customer may require the meter to be sealed upon removal in the presence of the customer or the customer's representative. The seal must not be broken until the test is made in the presence of the customer or the customer's representative, or until permission to break the seal has been granted by the commission. The utility must report the results of the meter test to the customer.

(3) A customer may request the utility to perform additional meter tests within twelve months of the last meter test, but additional meter tests will not delay disconnection of service under WAC 480-100-128(9), Disconnection of service. The utility must immediately inform the customer of any additional meter test charges. If the customer elects to have the meter test performed, the utility must perform the test and report the test results to the customer within twenty business days. If the additional meter test results show the meter is performing accurately as described in WAC 480-100-338(2), Accuracy requirements for electric meters, the utility may charge the customer for performing the additional meter tests. The charge of the meter test must be listed in the utility's tariff.

(4) If the customer disputes any meter test result, the utility or the customer may contact the commission to review the complaint. When the commission has notified the utility that a complaint has been received regarding the customer's meter, the utility may not change the meter in any manner unless authorized by the commission. If the utility violates this provision, the commission may consider it as supporting the customer's dispute since the change might affect the proof of the dispute. The commission may require the utility to perform an additional test and report the test results to the commission within ten business days.

(5) If a meter test reveals a meter error greater than specified as acceptable in WAC 480-100-338(2), Accuracy requirements for electric meters, the utility must repair or replace the meter at no cost to the customer. The utility must adjust the bills to the customer based on the best information available to determine the appropriate charges. The utility must offer payment arrangements in accordance with WAC 480-100-138(2),

Payment arrangements.

(a) If the utility can identify the date the customer was first billed for a defective meter, the utility must refund or bill the customer for the proper usage from that date;

(b) If the utility cannot identify the date the customer was first billed for a defective meter, the utility must refund or bill the customer for the proper usage, not to exceed six months.

(6) Reports. The commission may require the utility to provide meter test results to the commission in response to a customer's complaint. These reports must contain the name or address of the customer, the meter manufacturer's name, the manufacturer's and utility's meter number, the size or capacity of the meter, the date the meter was tested, the reading of the meter when tested, the accuracy of the meter as found, and the accuracy of the meter after adjustment.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-188 Payment locations. (1) An electric utility must provide payment agencies in locally accessible locations where applicants and customers can make payments at no charge to the applicants and customers. Payment agencies must clearly post and maintain regular business hours.

(2) The utility and its payment agencies must provide receipts for any cash payments made by applicants or customers.

(3) The utility must provide written or electronic notice to the commission's consumer affairs section at least thirty days prior to the closing of any business office, customer service center, or payment agency. In the event that a payment agency is closed on less than thirty days' notice, written or electronic notification is required as soon as the utility becomes aware of the closure. At a minimum, the following information is required:

(a) The communities affected by the closing;

(b) The date of the closing;

(c) A listing of other methods and facility locations available for payment of cash or urgent payments; and

(d) A listing of other methods and locations for obtaining business office and customer service center services.

(4) The utility must include on its regularly scheduled bills a statement referring its customers to a toll-free number for updated payment agency locations.

PART III--FINANCIAL RECORDS AND REPORTING RULES

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-203 Accounting systems. (1) Electric utilities in the state of Washington must use the uniform system of accounts applicable to major and nonmajor electric utilities as published by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in the Code of Federal Regulations. Information about the Code of Federal Regulations regarding the version adopted and where to obtain it is set out in WAC 480-100-999, Adoption by reference.

(2) Electric utilities having multistate operations must maintain records in such detail that the costs of property located, and business done, in the state of Washington can be readily ascertained in accordance with geographic boundaries.

(3) Any deviation from the uniform system of accounts, as prescribed by the FERC, will be accomplished only after due notice and order of this commission.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-208 Financial reporting requirements. (1) **Annual reports.**

(a) Electric utilities must use the annual report form (FERC Form No. 1) promulgated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for purposes of annual reporting to this commission. Data required by RCW 80.04.080 Annual reports, but not included in the FERC Form No. 1, must also be submitted with the annual report. Utilities must submit the annual report for the preceding calendar year, along with the regulatory fee, by May 1st of each year. If not presented in the prescribed FERC Form, the annual report must include the following data per customer class for the calendar year: Revenues, average customer count, and total unit sales. Information about the FERC Form No. 1 regarding the version adopted and where to obtain it is set out in WAC 480-100-999, Adoption by reference.

(b) Utilities must also submit to the commission, in essentially the same format and content as the FERC Form No. 1, a report that documents the costs incurred and the property necessary to furnish utility service to its customers and the revenues obtained in the state of Washington. The report must include the following data per customer class for the calendar year: Revenues, average customer count, and total unit sales;

(c) Combination and multistate utilities must submit with the annual report their cost allocation methods necessary to develop results of operations for the state of Washington. Approval of cost allocation schemes for rate-making purposes is accomplished only by commission order;

(d) The total utility results of operations reported by each utility in its annual report to the commission must agree with the

results of operations shown on the utility's books and records.

(2) **Commission basis reports (annual).**

(a) The intent of the "commission basis" report is to depict the electric operations of a utility under normal temperature and power supply conditions during the reporting period. The commission basis report must include the following:

(i) Booked results of electric operations and rate base, and all the necessary adjustments as accepted by the commission in the utility's most recent general rate case or subsequent orders;

(ii) Actual adjusted results of operations for out-of-period, nonoperating, nonrecurring, and extraordinary items or any other item that materially distorts reporting period earnings and rate base; and

(iii) Adjusted booked revenues and power supply expenses to reflect operations under normal temperature and power supply conditions before the achieved return on rate base is calculated;

(b) Commission basis reports should not include adjustments that annualize price, wage, or other cost changes during a reporting period, nor new theories or approaches that have not been previously addressed and resolved by the commission.

(c) Utilities must submit the basis of any cost allocations and the allocation factors necessary to develop the commission basis results of electric operations for the state of Washington;

(d) Commission basis reports are due within four months of the end of a utility's fiscal year.

(3) **Quarterly reports.** Electric utilities must file a report of actual results for Washington operations within forty-five days of the end of each quarter. The results of operations report must contain each of the three monthly balances and the latest twelve months ending balance for all accounts of the uniform system of accounts. The report must include the average customer count and total unit sales per customer class for each reported period.

(4) **Additional reports.** This section does not supersede any reporting requirement specified in a commission order or limit the commission's ability to request additional information.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-213 Expenditures for political or legislative activities. (1) The commission will not allow either direct or indirect expenditures for political or legislative activities for rate-making purposes.

(2) For purposes of this rule political or legislative activities include, but are not limited to:

(a) Encouraging support or opposition to ballot measures, legislation, candidates for a public office, or current public office holders;

(b) Soliciting support for or contributing to political action

committees;

(c) Gathering data for mailing lists that are generated for the purposes of encouraging support for or opposition to ballot measures, legislation, candidates for public office, or current office holders, or encouraging support for or contributions to political action committees;

(d) Soliciting contributions or recruiting volunteers to assist in the activities set forth in (a) through (c) of this subsection.

(3) Political or legislative activities do not include activities directly related to appearances before regulatory or local governmental bodies necessary for the utility's operations.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-218 Securities, affiliated interests, and transfers of property. (1) Before an electric utility issues stock, securities, or other evidence of indebtedness, the utility must comply with the requirements of chapters 80.08 RCW and 480-146 WAC.

(2) Before an electric utility enters into a contract or arrangement with an affiliated interest, the utility must file a copy or summary of the contract or arrangement with the commission in accordance with chapters 80.16 RCW and 480-146 WAC.

(3) Before selling, leasing, or assigning any of its property or facilities, or before acquiring property or facilities of another public utility, an electric utility must obtain an authorizing order from the commission in accordance with chapters 80.12 RCW and 480-143 WAC.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-223 Promotional advertising. (1) The commission will not allow expenses for promotional or political advertising for rate-making purposes. The term "promotional advertising" means advertising to encourage any person or business to select or use the service or additional services of an electric utility, to select or install any appliance or equipment designed to use the electric utility's service, or to influence consumers' opinions of the electric utility.

The term "political advertising" means any advertising for the purpose of influencing public opinion with respect to legislative, administrative, or electoral matters, or with respect to any controversial issue of public importance.

(2) As used in this section, the terms "promotional advertising" and "political advertising" do not include:

(a) Advertising which informs customers how to conserve energy or how to reduce peak demand for energy;

(b) Advertising required by law or by regulation, including advertising under Part 1 of Title II, of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act;

(c) Advertising regarding service interruptions, safety measures, or emergency conditions;

(d) Advertising concerning employment opportunities with the electric utility;

(e) Advertising which promotes the use of energy efficient appliances, equipment, or services;

(f) Announcements or explanations of existing or proposed tariffs or rate schedules; and

(g) Notices of meetings or commission hearings concerning electric utility rates and tariffs.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-228 Retention and preservation of records and reports. (1) Each electric utility must retain all records and reports for three years unless otherwise specified by the publication referenced in subsection (2) of this section. No records may be destroyed prior to the expiration of the time specified by the publication referenced in subsection (2) of this section.

(2) The commission adopts the publication, *Regulations to Govern the Preservation of Records of Electric, Gas, and Water Companies*, published by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners as the standards for utility records retention. Information about the *Regulations to Govern the Preservation of Records of Electric, Gas, and Water Companies* regarding the version adopted and where to obtain it is set out in WAC 480-100-999, Adoption by reference.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-233 Least cost planning. (1) Purpose and process. Each electric utility regulated by the commission has the responsibility to meet its load with a least cost mix of generating resources and improvements in the efficient use of electricity. Therefore, a "least cost plan" must be developed by each electric utility in consultation with commission staff. Provision for

involvement in the preparation of the plan by the public will be required. Each planning cycle must begin with a letter to the utility from the commission secretary. The content and timing of and reporting for the least cost plan and the public involvement strategy must be outlined in a work plan developed by the utility after consulting with commission staff.

(2) Definitions. "Least cost plan" or "plan" means a plan describing the mix of generating resources and improvements in the efficient use of electricity that will meet current and future needs at the lowest cost to the utility and its ratepayers.

(3) Each electric utility must submit to the commission on a biennial basis a least cost plan that must include:

(a) A range of forecasts of future demand using methods that examine the impact of economic forces on the consumption of electricity and that address changes in the number, type, and efficiency of electrical end-uses.

(b) An assessment of technically feasible improvements in the efficient use of electricity, including load management, as well as currently employed and new policies and programs needed to obtain the efficiency improvements.

(c) An assessment of technically feasible generating technologies including renewable resources, cogeneration, power purchases from other utilities, and thermal resources (including the use of combustion turbines to utilize better the existing hydro system).

(d) A comparative evaluation of generating resources and improvements in the efficient use of electricity based on a consistent method, developed in consultation with commission staff, for calculating cost-effectiveness.

(e) The integration of the demand forecasts and resource evaluations into a long-range (e.g., twenty-year) least cost plan describing the mix of resources that will meet current and future needs at the lowest cost to the utility and its ratepayers.

(f) A short-term (e.g., two-year) plan outlining the specific actions to be taken by the utility in implementing the long-range least cost plan.

(4) All plans subsequent to the initial least cost plan must include a progress report that relates the new plan to the previously filed plan.

(5) The least cost plan, considered with other available information, will be used to evaluate the performance of the utility in rate proceedings, including the review of avoided cost determinations, before the commission.

PART IV--METERING RULES

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-308 Meter location. (1) Subject to the utilities' requirements, customers must provide a place to install the metering equipment that is:

(a) Readily accessible to utility employees without risks of bodily harm; and

(b) Free from vibration, corrosive atmosphere, and abnormal temperatures.

(2) Upon request by a customer or a customer's representative, electric utilities must provide a written description of acceptable meter installation parameters applicable to the customer's electrical service needs.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-313 Meter charges. (1) An electric utility must make no charge for furnishing and installing the meter or meters required to determine the customer's usage for billing of electric service in accordance with the utility's filed tariff. The utility may charge for additional meters requested by the customer or required by the utility's tariff for service beyond determining the customer's bill.

(2) No meter may be required on unmetered load.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-318 Meter readings, multipliers, and test constants. (1) Electric utilities must use electric meters or other such devices to accurately record or indicate the quantity of electricity sold to customers. Such measuring devices will allow utilities to calculate a customer's consumption in units of kilowatt hours or other units as filed in the company's tariffs.

(2) Electric utilities that decide to either measure a customer's consumption with a device that employs a multiplier or calculate consumption from recording devices must provide customers, upon request, information sufficient to enable the customer to compute the quantity consumed.

(3) Indirect reading meters and those that operate from instrument transformers must have the multiplier plainly marked on the dial of the instrument or be otherwise suitably marked.

(4) The watt-hour constant for the meter itself must be placed on all watt-hour meters (as specified in ANSIC-12.1). Information about the ANSIC-12.1 regarding the version adopted and where to

obtain it is set out in WAC 480-100-999, Adoption by reference.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-328 Meter identification. Electric utilities must identify each meter by a unique series of serial numbers, letters, or combination of both, placed in a conspicuous position on the meter.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-333 Initial accuracy of electric meters. All meters must be in good order and adjusted to register as nearly correct as practicable prior to being put into service or returned to service following testing or other work. All meters in service must be sealed by the use of a sealing device acceptable to the commission.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-338 Accuracy requirements for electric meters.

(1) **Watt-hour meter accuracy.**

(a) The requirements for watt-hour meters used for measuring electrical quantities supplied include, but are not limited to:

(i) All meters must be of proper design for the circuit on which they are used, be in good mechanical and/or electronic condition, have adequate insulation, correct internal connections, and correct register;

(ii) Mechanical meters must not creep at "no load" more than one full revolution of the disk in five minutes:

(A) When the load wires are disconnected and potential is impressed; or

(B) In a shop test where the load wires are disconnected and the permissible voltage variation is impressed;

(b) All meters must be capable of registering no more than plus or minus 2.0 percent error when subject to a current ranging between five and ten percent of the meter's nameplate test current (ta) value, at the meter's rated voltage, and at unity power factor;

(c) All meters must be capable of registering no more than

plus or minus 2.0 percent error when subject to a current ranging between seventy-five and one hundred fifty percent of the meter's nameplate test current (ta) value, at the meter's rated voltage, and at unity power factor;

(d) All meters must be capable of registering no more than plus or minus 3.0 percent error when subject to approximately one hundred percent of the meter's nameplate test current (ta) value, at the meter's nameplate rated voltage, and at a fifty percent lagging power factor;

(e) All polyphase meters must have the elements in balance within 2.0 percent when subject to a current approximately one hundred percent of the nameplate test current value, at the meter's rated voltage, at both unity and fifty percent lagging power factor.

(2) Demand meter accuracy.

(a) The requirements for demand meters, demand registers, or demand attachments used to measure a customer's service include, but are not limited to:

(i) The device must be in good mechanical and electrical condition;

(ii) The device must have the proper multiplier, indicating scale, resetting apparatus, and contact device if used;

(iii) The device must not register at no load;

(b) The device must achieve the following accuracies:

(i) Curve-drawing meters that record quantity-time curves, and integrated-demand meters must be accurate to within plus or minus 2.0 percent of full scale throughout their working range;

(ii) Timing elements measuring specific demand intervals must be accurate to within plus or minus 2.0 percent and the timing element that provides the time of day record of when the demand occurs must be accurate to within plus or minus four minutes in twenty-four hours;

(iii) Lagged-demand meters must be accurate to within plus or minus 4.0 percent of final indication;

(c) Mechanical and lagged demand meters must be tested at load points above fifty percent of full scale as specified in ANSIC-12.1. Information about the ANSIC-12.1 regarding the version adopted and where to obtain it is set out in WAC 480-100-999, Adoption by reference.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-343 Statement of meter test procedures. Electric utilities must include in their tariffs a statement describing their practices under these rules covering:

(1) A description of methods used and frequency of tests for determining electric meter accuracy. The description must include, but is not limited to:

- (a) Test group detail and selection procedures;
- (b) Performance standard details for meters that exceed the maximum allowable tolerance for slow as well as fast meters;
- (c) The corrective action and time period in which such action will be implemented; and
- (d) Reference to an industry standard such as ANSIC-12.1 or ANSI/[isrt]ASQC-Z1.9 that will establish acceptable criteria for numerical analysis. Information about the ANSIC-12.1 regarding the version adopted and where to obtain it is set out in WAC 480-100-999, Adoption by reference.

(2) A description of meter testing equipment, including methods employed to ascertain and maintain accuracy of all testing equipment.

(3) If an electric utility does not maintain meter testing equipment, the electric utility must state that it will use a qualified testing laboratory for this purpose. The utility must notify the commission by separate correspondence of the name of the testing laboratory making meter tests if it does not maintain meter testing equipment.

(4) The testing and adjustment program used for meters prior to installation and periodically after installation, if applicable.

If an electric utility changes any portion of its meter test procedures after they have been approved by the commission, the utility must submit a revised tariff.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-353 Meter history records. (1) Electric utilities must keep records showing the history of each meter purchased and installed. Such records must be maintained for the life of the meter plus three months. The forms of such records are subject to commission approval and must contain the following information at a minimum:

- (a) The approximate date of purchase;
- (b) The manufacturer's name and meter number or the utility's own unique meter identification number;
- (c) The place(s) of installation; and
- (d) The readings at the time of each installation and each removal.

(2) The records must include the date of all tests made on the meter, together with data recorded and computations made to determine the meter's accuracy. If a test is a complaint test, the records must include the complainant's name and the meter's calculated accuracy before and after the test.

PART V--SAFETY AND STANDARDS RULES

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-358 Instrument transformers. (1) Instrument transformers used in conjunction with metering equipment to measure customers' service must:

(a) Be in proper mechanical condition and have electrical insulation satisfactory for the service in which they are used; and

(b) Have characteristics such that the combined inaccuracies of all transformers supplying one or more meters in a given installation will not exceed the following:

100% Power Factor		50% Power Factor	
10% Current	100% Current	10% Current	100% Current
1.5% error	0.75% error	3.0% error	2.0% error

(2) Meters used in conjunction with instrument transformers must be adjusted so that the overall accuracy of the meter installation (including both meter and instrument transformers) will meet the requirements specified in WAC 480-100-338, Accuracy requirements for electric meters. Instrument transformers may be tested with the meter with which they are associated, or separately. Except as provided in these rules, if transformers are tested separately, meters must also be tested to assure that the overall installation meets the prescribed accuracy requirements.

(3) Adjustment of the meter to correct instrument accuracy errors is not necessary when instrument transformers with the following accuracy characteristics are used:

(a) **Instrument current transformers.** The combined effect of ratio error and phase angle on the accuracy of the meter at any load power factor from sixty percent lagging to unity does not exceed six-tenths of one percent at ten percent rated current, or three-tenths of one percent at approximately one hundred percent rated current;

(b) **Instrument potential transformers.** The combined effect of ratio error and phase angle on the accuracy of the meter from ninety percent rated voltage to one hundred ten percent rated voltage, at any load power factor from sixty percent lagging to unity, does not exceed three-tenths of one percent.

(4) Electric utilities must keep instrument transformer test results on record and available for use when transformers are installed.

(5) Phase shifting transformers must have secondary voltages that are within plus or minus one percent of the voltage impressed on primary terminals, when tested under balanced line voltage conditions.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-363 Portable indicating instruments. (1)

Electric utilities must maintain in reasonable working order all portable indicating electrical instruments used to determine quality of electrical service, such as volt meters, ammeters, and watt meters, and all fixed-location meter testing equipment in use and, if in question, must check it against suitable reference standards. If suitable reference standards are not available within the utility, the utility must check its portable instruments at a standardizing laboratory meeting specifications recommended by the meter manufacturer.

(2) Electric utilities must adjust portable analog indicating instruments that are found appreciably in error at zero. If a portable analog indicating instrument is in error by more than one percent at commonly used scale deflections, the electric utility must adjust it, unless the instrument is accompanied by a calibration card.

(3) Electrical utilities must maintain in good working order, as specified by the manufacturer of such instruments, all portable indicating electrical instruments used for purposes other than determining the quality of electrical service, such as instruments primarily for the safety of workers.

(4) Electric utilities must keep history and calibration records for each portable indicating electrical instrument, as long as the instrument is in service.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-368 Standard frequency. Any electric utility supplying alternating current must design and maintain its distribution system for a standard operating frequency of sixty cycles per second under normal operating conditions.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-373 Standard voltage and permissible variation.

(1) Voltage means the voltage existing with loads operating under stable conditions. Each electric utility must adopt standard voltages for its different classes of standard voltage service and file these standards with the commission in the form of tariffs.

(2) Electric utilities must maintain the voltage on their distribution system reasonably constant and any allowed variation must be a gradual change in voltage as a result of normal changes

in load.

The voltage on each primary distribution feeder must be maintained as follows:

(a) Voltage variations may not be more than five percent above or below the standard voltage adopted; and

(b) The total voltage variation from minimum to maximum value may not exceed eight percent of the standard voltage.

A utility may allow greater voltage variation than that specified in this rule in case of emergency service or when service is supplied directly from a transmission line. A utility may also permit greater voltage variations in an area where the revenues received do not justify close voltage regulation. In such cases, electric utilities must provide the best voltage regulation that is economically and technically practicable under the circumstances.

(3) Voltage variations in excess of those specified, caused by the action of the elements, by infrequent and unavoidable fluctuations of short duration due to system operation, or by the operation of power apparatus on the customer's premises which necessarily requires large starting currents and only affects the user of such apparatus, will not be considered a violation of this rule.

(4) Customers must control and operate the equipment on their premises in such a way that its starting and operating characteristics will not cause an instantaneous voltage drop of more than four percent of the standard voltage as measured at the point of interconnection with the electric utility. Likewise, customers must control and operate their equipment in such a way that it does not cause damage or interfere with the normal operation of the electric utility's facilities or of the facilities or equipment of another customer, such as causing excessive flicker in other customers' lights. Utilities are not required to monitor customers' equipment and its interactions with third party or utility equipment on an ongoing basis.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-378 Accuracy of test standards. (1) Electrical utilities must provide the commission with a written statement of their practices under these rules covering:

(a) A description of test standards and meter testing equipment, if maintained by the electrical utility;

(b) A description of methods employed to ascertain and maintain the accuracy of the test standards and meter testing equipment, including the frequency of such tests, if the electrical utility chooses to maintain its own such standards and equipment rather than use the services of a certified testing laboratory.

(2) If an electrical utility chooses to maintain its own test standards and meter testing instruments, it must retain records

showing the date when each test standard and each meter testing instrument was tested, calibrated, or adjusted. Test standards must not be used in the field as working instruments.

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-383 Reports of accidents. Each electric utility must notify the commission orally or by electronic mail no later than the second business day following discovery of any accident that results in death or serious injury to any person occurring in its plant or through electrical contact with its facilities. Electric utilities must submit a follow-up written report to the commission within fifteen business days of initial notification that includes, at a minimum:

- (1) The name and address of the person or persons injured;
- (2) The time and place of the accident;
- (3) Whether the accident resulted in a fatality;
- (4) A brief description of how the accident occurred; and
- (5) A brief description of any necessary medical treatment that was provided.

PART VI--ADOPTION BY REFERENCE

NEW SECTION

WAC 480-100-999 Adoption by reference. In this chapter, the commission adopts by reference all or portions of regulations and standards identified below. They are available for inspection at the commission branch of the Washington state library. The publications, effective date, references within this chapter, and availability of the resources are as follows:

(1) Title 18 Code of Federal Regulations, cited as 18 CFR, is published by the United States Government Printing Office.

(a) The commission adopts the version in effect on April 1, 2000.

(b) This publication is referenced in WAC 480-100-203, Accounting system requirements and WAC 480-100-208, Financial reporting requirements;

(c) Copies of 18 CFR are available from the U.S. Government Printing Office in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

(2) The *Regulations to Govern the Preservation of Records of Electric, Gas, and Water Companies* is published by the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC).

(a) The commission adopts the version in effect in 1985.

(b) This publication is referenced in WAC 480-100-228, Retention and preservation of records and reports.

(c) The *Regulations to Govern the Preservation of Records of Electric, Gas, and Water Companies* is a copyrighted document. Copies are available from NARUC, in Washington, D.C.;

(3) The National Electric Code is published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

(a) The commission adopts the version published in 1999.

(b) This publication is referenced in WAC 480-100-163, Service entrance facilities;

(c) The National Electric Code is a copyrighted document. Copies are available from the NFPA, in Quincy, Massachusetts.

(4) The American National Standard for Electric Meters: Code for Electricity Metering, ANSIC-12.1 is published by the American National Standards Institute.

(a) The commission adopts the version published in 1995.

(b) This publication is referenced in WAC 480-100-318, Meter readings, multipliers, and test constants; WAC 480-100-338, Accuracy requirements for electric meters; and WAC 480-100-343, Statement of meter test procedures.

(c) The ANSIC-12.1 is a copyrighted document. Copies are available from Global Engineering Documents in Englewood, Colorado.

REPEALER

The following sections of the Washington Administrative Code are repealed:

WAC 480-100-011	Application of rules.
WAC 480-100-016	Saving clause.
WAC 480-100-021	Glossary.
WAC 480-100-026	Tariffs.
WAC 480-100-031	Accounting.
WAC 480-100-032	Accounting--Political information and political education activities.
WAC 480-100-036	Finance--Securities, affiliated interests, transfer of property.
WAC 480-100-041	Information to consumers.
WAC 480-100-043	Advertising.
WAC 480-100-046	Application for service.
WAC 480-100-051	Establishment of credit.
WAC 480-100-056	Refusal of service.
WAC 480-100-066	Distribution extensions.
WAC 480-100-071	Discontinuance of service.
WAC 480-100-072	Payment arrangements and

	responsibilities.
WAC 480-100-076	Service responsibilities.
WAC 480-100-081	Service entrance facilities.
WAC 480-100-086	Meter location.
WAC 480-100-091	Access to premises.
WAC 480-100-096	Complaints and disputes.
WAC 480-100-101	Form of bills.
WAC 480-100-111	Refund for inaccurate metering.
WAC 480-100-116	Responsibility for delinquent accounts.
WAC 480-100-121	Meter charges.
WAC 480-100-126	Meter readings.
WAC 480-100-131	Identification of meters.
WAC 480-100-136	Initial accuracy of meters.
WAC 480-100-141	Accuracy of watthour meters.
WAC 480-100-146	Accuracy of demand meters.
WAC 480-100-151	Instrument transformers.
WAC 480-100-156	Multipliers and test constants.
WAC 480-100-161	Portable indicating instruments.
WAC 480-100-166	Dispute as to accuracy of meters.
WAC 480-100-171	Complaint meter test.
WAC 480-100-176	Statement of meter test procedures.
WAC 480-100-181	Meter history records.
WAC 480-100-186	Standard frequency.
WAC 480-100-191	Standard voltage and permissible variation.
WAC 480-100-201	Accuracy of test standards.
WAC 480-100-206	Reports of accidents.
WAC 480-100-211	Filing of records and reports and the preservation of records.
WAC 480-100-251	Least cost planning.
WAC 480-100-311	Business offices and payment agencies.