

P. O. BOX 1029 . EVERETT, WA 98206-1029 (425) 259-0044 • FAX (425) 339-4196

March 11, 2004

**Betty Young** Attn. Deborah Reynolds Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission PO Box 47250 Olympia WA 98504-7250

Re: Docket #TG032075

Dear Ms. Young:

We wish to apply for an exemption of the rule stating that no late fees may be applied to accounts prior to the first of the month when the account becomes delinquent. As was stated in the previous letter for this docket, we prepare our bills so that they may be mailed on the last work day of the month. Therefore, the only accounts that would be affected by this rule are those accounts which will be delinquent on the 1st of the month and are paid between the beginning of the billing process and the last day of the month, i.e. after the 23rd of the month. We propose that any accounts on which a delinquent charge has been assessed at the beginning of the billing process, and a payment is received before the first of the month, will have the delinquent charge reversed. In addition, upon the next printing of our billing stock, we will clearly state this in our delinquent policy.

I might add that, based on the number of payments that come into our office at the end of the month, and the small percentage of those that will be delinquent, the number of customers that this will affect will be very small. Furthermore, I suspect that you will find that there are no complaints in your files relative to the policy that we have been utilizing. If anyone ever complains about late charges we are very quick to accommodate our customers and write off such fees.

If you need further information, please contact me.

Sincerely.

MM (e V Jordo