



Puget Sound Energy
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PSE.com

July 30, 2021

Filed Via Web Portal

Mr. Mark L. Johnson, Executive Director and Secretary
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
621 Woodland Square Loop SE
Lacey, WA 98503

**Re: PSE Electric and Natural Gas Schedules 171 Status Reporting
Per Order 01 of Dockets UE-180860 and UG-180861**

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Pursuant to Order 01 of Dockets UE-180860 and UG-180861, Puget Sound Energy (“PSE”) provides its fourth report of its electric and natural gas Schedules 171 implementation status. PSE’s electric and natural gas Schedules 171 provide the Optional Non-Communicating Meter (“NCM”) Service for residential customers, which is consistent with the Commission’s Policy on Customer Choice for Smart Meter Installation under Docket U-180117. The enclosed Meter Upgrade Project and Schedules 171 Implementation Status Report reflects the status of PSE’s Meter Upgrade Project and Schedules 171 customer requests and accounting records as of June 30, 2021.

For the past 20 years, PSE has been on an automated meter reading (“AMR”) platform. With the exception of a small group of specialized or isolated meters that require manual reading, nearly 100% of the electric and natural gas meters have been read automatically. Because the AMR infrastructure is aging and metering technology is advancing, PSE is in the process of exchanging its AMR network and metering equipment with advanced metering infrastructure (“AMI”) *i.e.*, PSE’s Meter Upgrade Project. It is a six-year project and scheduled to be completed in 2023. This project will eventually replace approximately 1.2 million AMR electric meters and 840,000 natural gas AMR modules across all ten counties in PSE’s service territory with facilities that are compatible with AMI technology.

In order to make the optional NCM service ready on July 1, 2019, PSE’s preparation started in 2018. PSE has established the manual meter reading process that works with the existing information technology infrastructure and available resource. In addition to those tailored information systems changes for metering, tracking, billing, and reporting, PSE also has set up dedicated customer care staff and communication processes to support residential Customers who are interested in a non-communicating meter.

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As indicated in the January 2020 Meter Upgrade Project and Schedules 171 Implementation Status Report, PSE has moved forward with contracting out manual meter reading services with an independent contractor. In this report, PSE includes the costs regarding the one-time set up fee and the annual fixed charge associated with this manual meter reading services contract and the costs associated with the ongoing manual metering reading that PSE has been invoiced as of June 30, 2021.

The attached report provides, as of June 30, 2021, the results and discussions pertaining to the implementation of electric and natural gas Schedules 171 for the following topics:

1. status of PSE's Meter Upgrade Project, including geographic areas where AMI meters have been installed and the number of meters installed;
2. information on customer communications, including the number of customers who have informed PSE of their Initial Request for service under Schedule 171;
3. the number of customers on electric and natural gas Schedules 171, including a) the number disconnected for non-payment, b) the number receiving bill payment assistance, and c) status of their Schedule 171 One-Time Charge payment;
4. PSE costs associated with the implementation of electric and natural gas Schedules 171, including capital costs and maintenance costs for information systems, meter exchange, meter reading, and other related costs;
5. revenues associated with electric and natural gas Schedules 171;
6. the number of Initial Requests that did not result in a submitted and completed Service Request;
7. the number of electric and natural gas Schedules 171 customers who discontinued service on Schedule 171; and
8. a discussion of other issues associated with providing service under electric and natural gas Schedules 171.

Please contact Mei Cass at (425) 462-3800 or Veronica Martin at (425) 457-5624 for additional information about this filing. If you have any other questions please contact me at (425) 456-2142.

Sincerely,

/s/ Jon Piliaris

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Mr. Mark L. Johnson

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cc: Lisa Gafken, Public Counsel
Amy White, UTC
Andrew Roberts, UTC

Attachment:

4th Meter Upgrade Project Schedule 171 Status Report