

BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,)	
)	DOCKET NOS. UE-011570 and
Complainant,)	UG-011571 (consolidated)
)	
v.)	
)	SEVENTH SUPPLEMENTAL ORDER:
PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC.,)	AMENDING PROCEDURAL
)	SCHEDULE
Respondent.)	
)	
.....)	

1 **PROCEEDINGS:** This proceeding concerns a general rate case filing by Puget Sound Energy, Inc. (PSE or the Company) by which the Company seeks permanent increases in both electric and gas rates. PSE’s filing also requests an interim rate increase, subject to refund, for its electric rates. The Commission convened a prehearing conference in Olympia, Washington, on December 20, 2001, before Chairwoman Marilyn Showalter, Commissioner Richard Hemstad, Commissioner Patrick J. Oshie, and Administrative Law Judge Dennis J. Moss.

2 **PROCEDURAL SCHEDULE/AMENDMENT:** The procedural schedule for both the interim rate phase (Docket No. UE-011570 only) and the general rate phase in Docket Nos. UE-011570/UG-011571 was established by the Commission’s Second Supplemental Order in this proceeding. Dates for public comment hearings were set by our Fifth Supplemental Order as follows:

- February 21, 2002: public comment hearing in Olympia from 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. on interim rates and prudence;
- April 11, 2002: public comment hearing in Bellingham from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on general rates;
- April 18, 2002: public comment hearing in Federal Way from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. on general rates.

3 Several parties petitioned the Commission to change the dates for the public comment hearings, suggested alternative locations for the hearings, and requested additional hearings. All parties are aware that the Commission's resources are constrained during the relevant period due to an unusual press of business, including interim and general rate proceedings not only for PSE, but also for Avista, and Olympic Pipe Line. Several other quasi-judicial proceedings are pending in the energy and telecommunications sectors and will require significant Commission resources through much of the year. The number of public comment hearings in this proceeding will remain at three. However, the locations selected for these hearings, Olympia, Federal Way, and Bellingham, are designed to maximize the convenience to the largest numbers of PSE's customers. Customers and other interested persons also have the opportunity to submit written comments that can be made part of the Commission's record and many already have taken advantage of this opportunity.

4 On the question of timing, the trade-off has been between having the public comment hearings earlier in the process than might be ideal given the development of the case, or having them later in the process—in the August time-frame—at the risk of lower turn-out due to that being the traditional vacation “season” in Washington. The parties have considered that trade-off and have expressed through their filings a definite preference for the second option. We will reschedule two of the public comment hearings into the later time-frame. One of the hearings will be in late August; the Commission has rearranged other business to permit one of the public hearings to be in early September.

5 **Accordingly, the procedural schedule is amended by eliminating the April 11 and April 18 public comment hearing dates and substituting the following dates:**

- **August 22, 2002: public comment hearing on general rates in Bellingham beginning at 6:00 p.m.**
- **September 9, 2002: public comment hearing on general rates in Federal Way beginning at 6:00 p.m.**

Additionally, for purposes of administrative convenience and the convenience of the parties, the procedural schedule is amended to eliminate the prehearing conferences previously scheduled for February 15, 2002, and April 1, 2002, and to establish February 14, 2002, and March 29, 2002, as the dates for prehearing conferences that will be convened in the Commission's hearing room at 9:30 a.m.

for the purposes of receiving and exchanging cross-examination exhibits, and marking all exhibits prior to evidentiary proceedings. Other business may be conducted at the February 14, 2002, and March 29, 2002, prehearing conferences.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this 31st day of January, 2002.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DENNIS J. MOSS,
Administrative Law Judge