

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of

NORTHWEST NATURAL GAS
COMPANY,

Petitioner,

Seeking Exemption from the Provisions
of WAC 480-90-275 Requiring Gas
Companies to File the 2017 Fourth
Quarter Results of Operations Report by
February 14, 2018

DOCKET UG-180048

ORDER 01

GRANTING
EXEMPTION FROM RULE;
GRANTING ADDITIONAL TIME
TO FILE THE FOURTH
QUARTER RESULTS OF
OPERATIONS

BACKGROUND

- 1 On January 16, 2018, Northwest Natural Gas Company (NW Natural or Company) filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition (Petition) requesting an exemption from WAC 480-90-275, which requires natural gas companies to file fourth quarter results of operations reports by February 14 of each calendar year. In its Petition, NW Natural requests an extension until February 26, 2018, to file its 2017 report to prevent the disclosure of its results of operations on the Commission's website prior to the Company's official fourth quarter and full-year earnings release and conference call to the rating agencies. The Commission construes the Company's request for an extension until February 26, 2018, as a request for an exemption from WAC 480-90-275.
- 2 Commission staff (Staff) reviewed the Company's Petition and recommends the Commission grant the requested exemption. Staff believes a 12-day extension is reasonable and will not impede the Commission's regulatory functions.

DISCUSSION

- 3 We grant NW Natural's request for an exemption from WAC 480-90-275 and require the Company to file its fourth quarter results of operations report by February 26, 2018. We agree with Staff that NW Natural's request is reasonable to ensure that the Company's results of operations are not released prior to the Company's scheduled conference call with rating agencies. Accordingly, we find that granting the Company's request for an

exemption is in the public interest and consistent with both the purposes underlying the rule and applicable statutes.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with the authority to regulate rates, rules, regulations, practices, accounts, securities, transfers of property and affiliated interests of public service companies, including gas companies.
- 5 (2) NW Natural is engaged in the business of providing gas services within the state of Washington and is a public service company subject to Commission jurisdiction.
- 6 (3) NW Natural is subject to WAC 480-90-275, which requires gas companies to file a report of actual results for Washington operations within 45 days of the end of each quarter.
- 7 (4) Under WAC 480-90-008, the Commission may grant an exemption from the provisions of any rule in WAC 480-90 if consistent with the public interest, the purposes underlying regulation, and applicable statutes. See also WAC 480-07-110.
- 8 (5) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 8, 2018.
- 9 (6) After reviewing NW Natural’s Petition filed in Docket UG-180048 on January 16, 2018, and giving due consideration, the Commission finds that the exemption is reasonable and should be granted.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 10 (1) The Commission grants Northwest Natural Gas Company’s Petition for an exemption from WAC 480-90-275, and grants Northwest Natural Gas Company an extension until February 26, 2018, to file its fourth quarter results of operations report for 2017.

- 11 (2) If Northwest Natural Gas Company fails to file its 2017 fourth quarter results of operations report by February 26, 2018, the Commission may assess penalties pursuant to RCW 80.04.405.
- 12 (3) The Commission retains jurisdiction over the subject matter and Northwest Natural Gas Company to effectuate the provisions of this Order.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective this February 8, 2018.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

STEVEN V. KING, Executive Director and Secretary