



UE-230408

Avista Corp.

1411 East Mission P.O. Box 3727
Spokane, Washington 99220-0500
Telephone 509-489-0500
Toll Free 800-727-9170

Received
Records Management
Jul 18, 2023

July 18, 2023

Amanda Maxwell
Executive Director and Secretary
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
621 Woodland Square Loop SE
Lacey, Washington 98503

Re: **Tariff WN U-28, Electric Service
Electric Decoupling Rate Adjustment
UE-230408 (Do Not Re-Docket)**

Dear Ms. Maxwell:

Attached for electronic filing with the Commission is the following tariff sheet proposed to be effective August 1, 2023:

Eighth Revision Sheet 75 Canceling **Substitute Seventh Revision Sheet 75**

This filing is the “Electric Decoupling Rate Adjustment”, filed in compliance with the Commission’s Order No. 05 in Docket UE-140188 and Order No. 9 in Docket UE-190334. In Docket UE-140188, the Commission approved an electric decoupling mechanism for Avista for a five-year period. In Docket UE-190334, the Commission extended the mechanism for an additional five-year period and approved moving the effective date of the annual decoupling tariff revisions from November 1 to August 1. This filing amortizes the 2022 deferral balances over the period August 1, 2023 – July 31, 2024.

The purpose of the electric decoupling mechanism is to decouple the Company’s Commission-authorized revenues from kilowatt-hour (“kWh”) sales, such that the Company’s revenues will be recognized based on the number of customers served under the applicable electric service schedules. The decoupling mechanism allows the Company to 1) defer the difference between actual decoupling-related revenue received from customers through volumetric rates, and the decoupling-related revenue approved for recovery in the Company’s last general rate case; and 2) file a tariff to surcharge or rebate, by rate group, the total deferred amount accumulated in the deferred revenue accounts for the prior January through December time period.

The proposed tariff reflects a rebate rate of 0.725 cents per kWh for the Residential Group served under Schedules 1 and 2, which is designed to rebate approximately \$18.6 million to the Residential Group. The present rebate rate of 0.234 cents per kWh is presently designed to rebate to customers approximately \$6.0 million. Therefore, the net overall change proposed for the Residential Group is a rate decrease of 0.491 cents per kWh, or a decrease of \$12.6 million (4.7%) for the Residential Group customers.

In addition, the proposed tariff reflects a rebate rate of 0.088 cents per kWh for the Non-Residential Group served under Schedules 11, 12, 13, 21, 22, 23, 31, and 32, which is designed to rebate approximately \$1.9 million to the Non-Residential Group. The present surcharge rate of 0.132 cents per kWh is presently designed to recover from customers approximately \$2.8 million. Therefore, the net overall change proposed for the Residential Group is a rate decrease of 0.220 cents per kWh, or a decrease of \$4.7 million (2.0%) for the Non-Residential Group customers.

	Expiring Present Decoupling Revenue	Proposed Decoupling Revenue	Proposed Decoupling Change
Residential Group	\$(6,018,215)	\$(18,646,179)	(\$12,627,964)
Non-Residential Group	\$2,833,115	(\$1,888,743)	\$(4,721,858)

Residential Group Rate Determination

The Company recorded \$16,125,774 in the rebate direction in deferred revenue for the electric Residential Group in 2022. The earnings test and the 3% incremental surcharge limitation, discussed later in this letter, had no impact on the 2022 electric balances. The proposed rebate rate of 0.725 cents per kWh is designed to rebate \$18,646,179 to the Company’s residential electric customers served under rate Schedules 1 and 2. The following table summarizes the components of the Company’s request for recovery:

2022 Deferred Revenue	\$(16,125,774)
Add: Earnings Sharing Adjustment	\$0
Add: Prior Year Carryover Balance	\$(361,979)
Add: Interest through 07/31/2024	\$(1,299,204)
Add: Revenue Related Expense Adj.	\$(859,222)
Total Requested Recovery	\$(18,646,179)
Customer Rebate Revenue	\$(18,646,179)
Carryover Deferred Revenue	\$0

Attachment A, page 1 shows the derivation of the proposed rebate rate to return the 2022 deferred revenue (including prior period unamortized deferred revenue), plus interest and revenue-related expenses, based on projected sales volumes for Schedules 1 and 2 during the surcharge/amortization period (August 2023 through July 2024). As identified in Tariff Schedule 75 under Step 7 of “Calculation of Monthly Deferral”, interest on the deferred balance accrues at

the quarterly rate published by the FERC.¹ If the proposed rebate is approved by the Commission, the 2022 deferral balance, less earnings sharing (if any), plus interest through July, will be transferred into a regulatory liability balancing account to be combined with the carryover balance approved for recovery in Docket UE-220382, Avista’s 2022 Electric Rate Adjustment filing. The balance in the liability account will be reduced each month by the revenue rebated under the tariff.

Non-Residential Group Rate Determination

The Company recorded \$384,924 in the surcharge direction in deferred revenue for the electric Non-Residential Group in 2022. The earnings test and the 3% incremental surcharge limitation, discussed later in this letter, had no impact on the 2022 electric balances. The proposed rebate rate of 0.088 cents per kWh is designed to rebate \$1,888,743 to commercial and industrial customers served under rate Schedules 11, 12, 13, 21, 22, 23, 31, and 32. The following table summarizes the components of the Company’s request for recovery:

2022 Deferred Revenue	\$384,924
Add: Earnings Sharing Adjustment	\$0
Add: Prior Year Carryover Balance	(\$2,145,962)
Add: Interest through 07/31/2024	(\$49,720)
Add: Revenue Related Expense Adj.	(\$77,985)
Total Requested Recovery	(\$1,888,743)
Customer Rebate Revenue	(\$1,888,743)
Carryover Deferred Revenue	\$0

Attachment A, page 3 shows the derivation of the proposed rebate rate to recover the 2022 deferred revenue (including prior period unamortized deferred revenue), plus interest and revenue-related expenses, based on projected sales volumes for Schedules 11, 12, 13, 21, 22, 23, 31, and 32 during the surcharge/amortization period (August 2023 through July 2024). As identified in Tariff Schedule 75 under Step 7 of “Calculation of Monthly Deferral”, interest on the deferred balance accrues at the quarterly rate published by the FERC. If the proposed rebate is approved by the Commission, the 2022 deferral balance, less earnings sharing (if any), plus interest through July, will be transferred into a regulatory liability balancing account to be combined with the residual balance approved for recovery in Docket UE-220382, Avista’s 2022 Electric Decoupling Rate Adjustment filing. The balance in the account will be reduced each month by the revenue rebated under the tariff.

Support showing the monthly calculation of the 2022 deferred revenue balances for both the Residential and Non-Residential Groups is provided as Attachment B. These calculations were also provided to the Commission in quarterly reports (see Docket UE-190334). The allowed decoupling baseline values that were updated when Docket UE-200900 rates became effective October 1, 2021, remained in effect through December 21, 2022. The allowed decoupling baseline

¹ The FERC effective interest rate was 3.25% until June 30, 2022, and 3.60% in Q3 and 4.91% in Q4 of 2022. The current rate of 7.50% has been used going forward as an estimate for purposes of this rate determination.

values were updated when the rates approved in Docket UE-220053 became effective December 21, 2022 and remained in effect for the remainder of 2022. Attachment B shows the monthly deferral calculations for 2022.

Earnings Test

The decoupling mechanism is subject to an annual earnings test based on the Company's year-end Commission Basis Reports that reflect actual decoupling-related revenues, normalized power supply costs and other normalizing adjustments. If the earnings test rate of return exceeds the allowed rate of return approved by the Commission, one-half of the revenue in excess of the rate of return will be shared with customers through the decoupling rate adjustment.

The 2022 Washington Electric Earnings Test sharing calculations are shown on page 6 of Attachment A. The Earnings Test showed that the Company earned a 6.12% rate of return on a normalized basis in 2022 which does not exceed the allowed return of 7.03%.² Therefore, no earnings sharing adjustment is applied to the 2022 decoupling deferred balances.

3% Annual Rate Increase Test

Decoupling annual rate adjustment surcharges are subject to a 3% annual rate increase limitation. As described in Tariff Schedule 75 the 3% annual rate increase limitation "will be determined by dividing the incremental annual revenue to be collected (proposed surcharge revenue less present surcharge revenue) under this Schedule by the total "normalized" revenue for the two Rate Groups for the most recent January through December period. Normalized revenue is determined by multiplying the weather-corrected usage for the period by the present rates in effect. If the incremental amount of the proposed surcharge exceeds 3%, only a 3% incremental rate increase will be proposed. Any remaining deferred revenue will be carried over to the following year. There is no limit to the level of the decoupling rebate, and the reversal of any rebate rate would not be included in the 3% incremental surcharge test".

Revenue from 2022 normalized loads and customers calculated at the billing rates in effect as of May 1, 2023, for the two rate groups are shown on line 1 of page 7 of Attachment A (these are the same values used to allocate the earnings sharing, if any, on lines 11 and 12 of page 6).

The rate necessary to recover the Residential Group rebate balance, including estimated interest and revenue related expenses as determined on page 1 of Attachment A (see line 20 - Preliminary Proposed Decoupling Rate), less the rebate rate presently in effect, would recover \$12,627,964 less from customers (based on projected sales volumes for Schedules 1 and 2 during the surcharge/amortization period). Therefore, as shown on Attachment A, page 7, the 3% limitation does not affect the proposed residential rate.

The rate necessary to recover the Non-Residential Group surcharge balance, including estimated interest and revenue related expenses as determined on page 3 of Attachment A (see line 20 -

² The allowed return was 7.03% for the rates in effect throughout 2022 as established Docket UE-200900.

Preliminary Proposed Decoupling Rate) less the surcharge rate presently in effect, would recover \$4,721,858 less from customers (based on projected sales volumes for Schedules 11, 12, 13, 21, 22, 23, 31, and 32 during the surcharge/amortization period). Therefore, as shown on Attachment A, page 7, the 3% limitation does not affect the proposed non-residential rate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Avista requests the Commission approve the proposed Schedule 75 rebate rate of 0.725 cents per kWh for the Residential Group and the proposed rebate rate of 0.088 cents per kWh for the Non-Residential Group. The estimated annual revenue change associated with this filing is a decrease of approximately \$17.3 million. Residential customers taking service on Schedule 1 and 2 using an average of 932 kilowatt hours per month would see their monthly bills change from \$88.82 to \$84.24, a decrease of \$4.58, or 5.2%.

The Company has provided in this filing a copy of its customer notice which will be included as a bill insert in the June – July time frame. Please direct any questions on this matter to Joel Anderson at (509) 495-2811.

Sincerely,

/s/ Joe Miller

Joe Miller
Senior Manager of Rates and Tariffs, Regulatory Affairs
Enclosures