



Idaho Public Utilities Commission

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C.L. Butch Otter, Governor

Paul Kjellander, Commissioner
Kristine Raper, Commissioner
Eric Anderson, Commissioner

Case No. AVU-E-16-01, AVU-G-16-01, Order No. 33494

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www.puc.idaho.gov

Convenience fee for Avista customers is going away

BOISE (April 1, 2016) – A \$3.50 convenience fee paid by residential customers of Avista Utilities will soon be going away. The fee is charged by a third-party vendor when Avista electric or natural gas customers pay their bills online or by telephone.

Avista received approval from the Idaho Public Utilities Commission to process the online and telephonic payments on its own, something the utility says it can do for as little as \$1.50 per transaction.

According to Avista, the convenience fee is “one of the largest frustrations” expressed by the utility’s growing number of customers who pay electronically or by telephone. Only about 38 percent of customers mailed in payments in 2015, with the rest paying online or over the telephone. Avista serves about 125,000 electric and 80,000 natural gas customers in northern Idaho.

Avista estimates it will cost about \$195,000 per year to process the payments for its Idaho electric customers and \$120,000 per year for natural gas customers. Avista will defer and record the costs it incurs to process the payments for possible inclusion in a later rate case. It will also file a report with the commission every six months detailing program expense and customer participation levels.

The utility has also received approval in its Washington and Oregon jurisdictions to eliminate the fee.

A copy of the commission’s final order as well as other documents related to this case is available on the commission’s website at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click on “Open Cases” under the “Electric” heading and scroll down to Case No. AVU-E-16-01.

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