

BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION)
OF AVISTA CORPORATION FOR) CASE NO. AVU-E-07-09
AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT A PILOT)
PROGRAM FOR REMOTE DISCONNECTS) ORDER NO. 31009
AND RECONNECTS)

Before the Commission is a request by Avista Corporation (“Avista” or “Company”) for an extension of its limited waiver of IDAPA 31.21.01.311.04 and 311.05 (Utility Customer Relations Rules) and a 50% reduction in reconnect fees, granted for the purpose of implementing its Remote Disconnect and Reconnect Pilot Program, while the Company prepares, files and the Commission ultimately reviews a comprehensive report documenting the results of the pilot program.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On August 31, 2007, Avista filed an Application seeking approval to implement a pilot program for the remote disconnection and reconnection of customers to its system. Avista also requested a limited waiver of Utility Customer Relations Rule 311.04 and 311.05 (IDAPA 31.21.01.311.04 and .05) related to the final customer notification prior to disconnection. The Company requested that its Application be processed through Modified Procedure. IDAPA 31.01.01.201-.204.

On September 19, 2007, the Commission issued a Notice of Application and Notice of Modified Procedure, establishing a deadline for the submission of comments and/or protests. Commission Staff filed comments supporting the Company’s Application. AARP Idaho filed comments opposing the Company’s Application. Likewise, the Community Action Partnership Association of Idaho (“CAPAI”) filed comments opposing approval of the Company’s Application as well as the Commission’s use of Modified Procedure. Additionally, CAPAI requested that the Commission convene a technical hearing and order a workshop regarding the Company’s proposal.

On December 4, 2007, the Commission deferred judgment on the Company’s Application and ordered workshops to further refine and develop details of the pilot program. *See* Order No. 30471.

On March 27, 2008, a public workshop was held at the Commission's office in Boise during which the parties reached a tentative agreement on most of the issues. Representatives from Avista, Commission Staff, CAPAI and AARP attended the workshop. At the conclusion of the workshop, participants agreed to continue working informally on the issues of customer notification and identification of the data to be collected during the course of the pilot.

On April 28, 2008, Avista submitted its Revised Application pursuant to Order No. 30471. The Revised Application incorporated certain changes to the pilot program agreed to during the March 2008 public workshop as well as subsequent correspondence between the parties.

On July 30, 2008, the Commission approved Avista's Application to implement an 18-month pilot program and ordered that, upon completion of the pilot program, the Company shall prepare "a detailed report with the Commission documenting its findings. . . ." Order No. 30603 at 10.

On January 28, 2010, Avista submitted a letter to the Commission requesting an extension of its limited waiver of IDAPA 31.21.01.311.04 and 311.05 (Utility Customer Relations Rules granted for the purpose of implementing its Remote Disconnect and Reconnect Program.)

AVISTA'S REQUEST

Avista notes in its letter to the Commission that "the 18-month pilot program is set to expire on January 30, 2010" and that the Commission ordered the Company to "prepare and file a detailed report with the Commission documenting its findings and utilizing the data identified in its Revised Application, as well as any other useful and relevant data which could be used to assess the effectiveness of the remote disconnect and reconnect program in reducing the Company's overall operating costs, enhancing employee safety or improving the quality of service to its customers." Order No. 30603. Pursuant to this Commission requirement, "Avista requests 90 days to complete and report on the results of the pilot program." The Company states that it "intends to complete its study and file it with the Commission no later than April 30, 2010."

Meanwhile, the Company requests that it be allowed to "continue the terms of the pilot as the documentation is being prepared, [including] the limited waiver of the above mentioned rule for the customers that are currently participating in the pilot and the 50%

reduction in disconnect fees until such time that the Commission has had the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the remote disconnect and reconnect program.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff reviewed Avista’s letter and recommended that the Commission approve the Company’s request to continue all of the provisions of the pilot program until the Commission has been able to assess the program’s effectiveness.

COMMISSION DECISION AND FINDINGS

The Commission has reviewed Avista’s current filing and Staff’s recommendation of the filing. Accordingly, the Commission approves Avista’s request to continue its Remote Disconnect and Reconnect Pilot Program, including the previously approved waiver of UCR Rules 311.04 and 311.05. A 50% reduction in reconnect fees is authorized until the Commission has had an adequate opportunity to review the Company’s forthcoming report regarding the results of the pilot program, and to assess its effectiveness. In reaching this finding, the Commission notes that it has not received any objection or negative feedback regarding the Company’s request for a brief continuation of the terms of the pilot program.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Avista Corporation is an electrical corporation as the term is defined in *Idaho Code* § 61-119. The Commission has jurisdiction over Avista Corporation, an electric utility, and the issues presented in this case pursuant to Title 61 of the Idaho Code, specifically *Idaho Code* §§ 61-302, 61-303, 61-401, 61-406 and 61-501.

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Avista Corporation may continue the terms of its Remote Connect and Disconnect Pilot Program, including the previously approved waiver of UCR Rules 311.04 and 311.05. A 50% reduction in reconnect fees is authorized until such time as the Commission is able to review the Company’s report regarding the results of the pilot program and assess the program’s effectiveness.


THIS IS A FINAL ORDER. Any person interested in this Order (or in issues finally decided by this Order) may petition for reconsideration within twenty-one (21) days of the service date of this Order with regard to any matter decided in this Order. Within seven (7) days

after any person has petitioned for reconsideration any other person may cross-petition for reconsideration. *See Idaho Code* § 61-626.

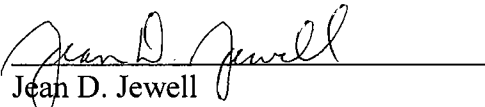
DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this 17th day of February 2010.


JIM D. KEMPTON, PRESIDENT


MARSHA H. SMITH, COMMISSIONER


MACK A. REDFORD, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:


Jean D. Jewell
Commission Secretary

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