

BEFORE THE IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

IN THE MATTER OF AVISTA CORPORATION,) CASE NO. GNR-U-14-01
IDAHO POWER COMPANY, AND))
PACIFICORP DBA ROCKY MOUNTAIN) NOTICE OF PETITION
POWER’S PETITION FOR AN EXEMPTION TO))
UTILITY CUSTOMER RELATIONS RULES) NOTICE OF
311(4) AND (5).) MODIFIED PROCEDURE
))
) ORDER NO. 33157

On September 30, 2014, Avista Corporation, Idaho Power Company, and PacifiCorp dba Rocky Mountain Power (the “Petitioners”) petitioned the Idaho Public Utilities Commission for an Order exempting them from Utility Customer Relations Rule (“UCRR”) 311.04 and .05. With this Order, the Commission provides notice of the Petition and invites interested persons to comment on it until December 10, 2014.

NOTICE OF PETITION

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED that with this Petition, the Petitioners ask the Commission to exempt them from the requirements of UCRR 311.04 and .05, IDAPA 31.21.01.311.04 and .05. In summary, these rules require a utility employee to try to make face-to-face contact immediately before terminating the customer’s service for non-payment: (1) to give the customer a final chance to avoid termination of service by paying the bill at that time; and (2) if the customer does not pay at that time, notify the customer about how the customer can have service reconnected. The rules state:

311. TIMES WHEN SERVICE MAY BE TERMINATED – OPPORTUNITY TO AVOID TERMINATION OF SERVICE (Rule 311).

04. Opportunity to Prevent Termination of Service. Immediately preceding termination of service, the employee designated to terminate service shall identify himself or herself to the customer or other responsible adult upon the premises and shall announce the purpose of the employee’s presence. This employee shall have in his or her possession the past due account record of the customer and shall request any available verification that the outstanding bills are satisfied or currently in dispute before this Commission. Upon presentation of evidence that outstanding bills are satisfied or currently

in dispute before this Commission, service shall not be terminated. The employee shall be authorized to accept full payment, or, at the discretion of the utility, partial payment, and in such case shall not terminate service. Nothing in this rule prevents a utility from proceeding with termination of service if the customer or other responsible adult is not on the premises.

05. Notice of Procedure for Reconnecting Service. The utility employee designated to terminate service shall give to the customer or leave in a conspicuous location at the affected service address, a notice showing the time of and grounds for termination, steps to be taken to secure reconnection, and the telephone numbers of utility personnel or other authorized representatives who are available to authorize reconnection.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Petitioners explain that they want the option of discontinuing payment at the door practices, and of notifying customers in ways besides providing mandatory on-site personal or paper notice. The Petitioners seek the exemption so they can use advances in metering, communication, and electronic payment technologies to reduce operating costs and increase the safety of utility employees without sacrificing customer service.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Petitioners maintain that customers will not be harmed if the exemption is granted because customers would still receive multiple notices before disconnection. The differences between the Petitioners’ current notification practices and the proposed notification practices if the exemption is granted are summarized below:

Current Disconnect Notifications (UCRR 304)	Avista	Idaho Power	Rocky Mountain Power
Initial 7-day Past-Due Notice Letter	X	X	X
Final 3-day Past-Due Notice Letter	X	X	X
48-hour door hanger			X
24-hour in person/telephone notice	X	X	X
Knock/door hanger at disconnection	X	X	X

Proposed Amount Due & Disconnect Notifications	Avista	Idaho Power	Rocky Mountain Power
Monthly bill	X	X	X
Initial 7-day Past-Due Notice Letter	X	X	X
Final 3-day Past-Due Notice Letter	X	X	X
48-hour door hanger			X
24-hour in person/telephone notice	X	X	X
Knock + door hanger at manual disconnect	X	X	
Door hanger only at manual disconnect			X
No on-site notice remote disconnect	X	X	X

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Petitioners request that the proposed exemption from UCRR 311.04 and .05 take effect at the end of the winter disconnection moratorium on March 1, 2015.¹ The utilities request that the Commission process the case under the Commission’s rules of modified procedure.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Petition and supporting workpapers have been filed with the Commission and are available for public inspection during regular business hours at the Commission offices. The Petition is also available on the Commission’s web site at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click on the “File Room” tab at the top of the page, scroll down to “Multi-Utility Cases,” and then click on the case number as shown on the front of this document.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this case will be held pursuant to the Commission’s jurisdiction under Title 61 of the Idaho Code. The Commission may enter any final order consistent with its authority under Title 61.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that all proceedings in this matter will be conducted pursuant to the Commission’s Rules of Procedure, IDAPA 31.01.01.000 *et seq.*, including the Modified Procedure rules referenced below.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission’s Staff will hold a public informational workshop in this matter. Staff will conduct the workshop by telephone from the Commission’s offices in Boise, Idaho. The workshop will occur before the initial comment deadline specified below. The Commission’s Secretary will issue a Notice of Public Workshop

¹ The “winter disconnection moratorium” is specified in UCRR 306, IDAPA 31.21.01.306. That rule generally precludes utilities from terminating service in December through February for residential customers who declare that they cannot fully pay for utility service and whose household includes children, elderly, or infirm persons.

before the workshop occurs to notify interested persons of the workshop's precise date and time and instruct them on how they can participate in the workshop.

NOTICE OF MODIFIED PROCEDURE

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that the Commission has determined that the public interest may not require a formal hearing in this matter and will proceed under Modified Procedure (that is, persons will present their views through written comments) pursuant to Rules 201 through 204 of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission's Rules of Procedure, IDAPA 31.01.01.201 through .204. The Commission notes that Modified Procedure and written comments have proven to be an effective means for obtaining public input and participation.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that persons desiring to state a position on this Petition **must file a written comment in support or opposition with the Commission by December 10, 2014. The Petitioners must file their reply comments, if any, by December 17, 2014.** A comment must contain a statement of reasons supporting the comment. In addition, persons desiring a hearing must specifically request a hearing in their written comments and explain why they believe that Modified Procedure should not be used to process this case. Written comments may be filed by mailing them to the Commission and the Petitioners at the addresses reflected below:

Commission Secretary
Idaho Public Utilities Commission
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0074

Street Address for Express Mail:
472 W. Washington Street
Boise, ID 83702-5918

AVISTA CORPORATION:

David J. Meyer
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PO Box 3727
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These comments should contain the case caption and case number shown on the first page of this document. Comments may also be filed by e-mail. Persons desiring to submit comments via e-mail may do so by accessing the Commission's home page located at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click the "Utility Case Comment or Question Form" under the "Consumers" tab, and complete the comment form using the case number as it appears on the front of this document. Comments filed by e-mail must also be sent to the Petitioners at the e-mail addresses listed above.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that if no written comments or protests are received within the time limit set, the Commission will consider this matter on its merits and enter its Order without a formal hearing. If written comments are received within the time limit

set, the Commission will consider them and, in its discretion, may set the same for formal hearing.

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that this case be processed under Modified Procedure. Interested persons wishing to file comments or protests in this matter must do so by December 10, 2014. The Petitioners must file their reply comments, if any, by December 17, 2014.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Staff shall hold a telephonic public workshop at the Commission's offices before December 10, 2014. The Commission's Secretary shall issue a Notice of Public Workshop specifying the exact date and time of the workshop, with instructions on how to participate, at least seven days before the workshop occurs.

DONE by Order of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission at Boise, Idaho this 23rd day of October 2014.



PAUL KJELLANDER, PRESIDENT



MACK A. REDFORD, COMMISSIONER



MARSHA H. SMITH, COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



Jean D. Jewell
Commission Secretary

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