

DECISION MEMORANDUM

**TO: COMMISSIONER KJELLANDER
COMMISSIONER REDFORD
COMMISSIONER SMITH
COMMISSION SECRETARY
LEGAL
WORKING FILE**

FROM: MICHAEL W. MORRISON

DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2014

**RE: IDAHO POWER'S REQUEST TO REVISE RULE H, NEW SERVICE
ATTACHMENTS AND DISTRIBUTION LINE INSTALLATIONS OR
ALTERATIONS, TARIFF ADVICE NO. 14-01**

BACKGROUND

On September 12, 2014, Idaho Power ("Company") filed a tariff advice with the Commission proposing that Rule H, Sections 4.b.i and 4.b.ii be revised to permit service attachment of self-contained multiple meter bases of 500 amps or less using the procedures and billing methods of Section 4.b.i, rather than requiring a work order and engineering design as specified by Section 4.b.ii.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Rule H, Section 4.b establishes charges for attaching new terminal facilities to the Company's distribution system via underground service cable. Under the provisions of Section 4.b.ii, the Company performs an engineering design and cost estimate for service attachments requiring three phase current, or for service attachments requiring single phase current greater than 400 amps. Under Section 4.b.ii, applicants are charged a work order cost. The lead time required for design and attachment is typically about two weeks.

Under the provisions of Section 4.b.i, no engineering design is required for attachment to facilities with single phase current requirements less than or equal to 400 amps. Applicants are assessed a base charge and a per-foot distance charge. Cost drivers are wire size (1/0, 4/0, or 350 MCM), conduit size (2 inch or 3 inch), and attachment type (underground or overhead). For

overhead attachments, different base charges are assessed for different riser sizes (2 inch or 3 inch). Lead time is typically two to three days.

For multiple occupancy buildings, common construction practice is to use a 100 amp meter for each dwelling unit. Self-contained multiple meter bases are available in 100, 200, 400, and 800 amp sizes. A 500 amp self-contained multiple meter base has recently become available. It is intended for use in fourplex multiple occupancy buildings, and includes a fifth meter base for use by the building's owner or a homeowners' association. At the present time, applications for attachment to 500 amp meter bases are processed in accordance with Section 4.b.ii procedures. Under the Company's engineering design rules, the materials, labor, and other costs associated with attaching a 500 amp self-contained multiple meter base are identical to those required for attaching a 400 amp self-contained multiple meter base. The Company does not foresee the new 500 amp meter bases changing the way it sizes transformers or other distribution equipment. The Company therefore proposes revising Rule H criteria to permit applications for attachment to the new 500 amp bases to be processed using Section 4.b.i, instead of requiring the less timely, and more costly procedures of Section 4.b.ii. The Company proposes an effective date of October 13th, 2014.

Staff analyzed the Company's request, and determined there to be no difference in the costs of attaching either 400 amp or 500 amp self-contained multiple meter bases. Namely, both require the use of 4/0 wire triples, 3 inch conduit, and 3 inch risers.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Permitting 500 amp self-contained multiple meter bases to be attached using Section 5.b.i procedures would decrease the attachment charge paid by applicants without any identifiable increase in the costs incurred by the Company or its ratepayers. Staff therefore recommends that the Company's proposal to revise Rule H, Sections 4.b.i and 4.b.ii be approved.

COMMISSION DECISION

Does the Commission wish to approve the Company's proposed updates to Rule H, Sections 4.b.i and 4.b.ii with an effective date of October 13th, 2014?

Randy Salt for

Michael W. Morrison

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