

Idaho Public Utilities Commission

Case No. PAC-E-14-07, Order No. 33082

Contact: Gene Fadness (208) 334-0339

Rocky Mountain seeks prudence finding for investment in efficiency programs

BOISE (August 1, 2014) – Rocky Mountain Power is asking the Idaho Public Utilities Commission to determine that nearly \$26 million of the company’s investments in demand-side management (DSM) programs during 2010-13 were prudently incurred and benefitted customers. This application does not impact rates.

DSM programs encourage customers to use less overall energy or shift use to off-peak hours, thus reducing demand on Rocky Mountain’s generation system. Customers pay for the programs through a rider that appears on customer bills as “Customer Efficiency Services.”

The rider is currently set at 2.1% of a customer’s monthly billed amount. Part of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission’s prudence review is to determine if the programs benefit all customers not just those who directly participate in the programs. If the programs are not found to be cost-effective over time they are not continued.

Rocky Mountain Power claims the programs saved the utility 11,963 megawatt hours in 2010; 8,688 MWh in 2011; 11,420 MWh in 2012 and 18,324 MWh during 2013. That reduced consumption reduces power supply expense for all customers and eliminates or delays the need to build new generating facilities.

Three of the programs are available to residential customers. “Home Energy Saver” provides products and services such as attic insulation and floor insulation, energy efficient windows, CFL lighting and other services. “Refrigerator Recycling” offers customers rebates for removal and recycling of inefficient refrigerators and freezers. “Low Income Weatherization” provides energy efficiency services to residential customers meeting income guidelines.

Three other programs target commercial, industrial and agricultural customers. These include “FinAnswer Express” to help commercial and industrial customers improve the efficiency of their lighting, HVAC, electric motors, building envelopes and other equipment. “Energy FinAnswer” is available to commercial and industrial customers in excess of 20,000 square-feet and includes incentives for improvements to HVAC systems, motors, refrigeration, lighting and other equipment. “Agricultural Energy Services” is designed to improve overall efficiency of irrigation systems. A final program for qualifying volunteer irrigation customers offers financial incentives if they irrigate during non-peak hours.

Rocky Mountain reports that five of the programs were cost-effective in all years, one during two of the three years and another, Low Income Weatherization was not cost-effective during the three-year period. The company says it has taken action to improve the cost-effectiveness of that program.

Rocky Mountain Power, a division of PacifiCorp, serves 73,500 customers in eastern Idaho.

Parties who wish to intervene in this case to present evidence and cross-examine other parties must file a Petition to Intervene with the commission by no later than Aug. 12. After that, the commission will set comment deadline for all customers to comment.

Copies of the company's application and other documents related to the case are found on the commission's Website at www.puc.idaho.gov. Click on "Open Cases" under the "Electric" heading and scroll down to Case No. PAC-E-14-07.

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