

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 23-051

Public Service Company d/b/a Eversource Energy

Petition for Recovery of Storm Expenses

**Order *Nisi* Approving Recovery of Costs as Modified by Assented-To
Disallowances**

ORDER NO. 26,909

December 5, 2023

In this order *nisi*, the Commission approves the petition by Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource or the Company) to recover costs from the Major Storm Cost Reserve (MSCR) for three major storms and six pre-staging events which occurred between January 2022 and July 2022, subject to removal of \$7,654 in costs, assented to by the Company and based on the conclusions of an audit report performed by the New Hampshire Department of Energy (DOE). This order is being issued on a *nisi* basis to ensure that interested persons receive notice and have the opportunity to comment or request a hearing before the order becomes effective.

The Company's petition and subsequent docket filings, other than information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, are posted to the Commission's website at:

<https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2023/23-051.html>

I. BACKGROUND

Eversource maintains its MSCR pursuant to the settlement agreement in Docket No. DE 99-099 and the pre-staging criteria approved in Docket No. DE 12-320. The MSCR is an account with allowed recovery from customers of a specified annual

amount in distribution rates that is used to offset costs incurred if a qualifying major storm or pre-staging event occurs. Simultaneously, Eversource records a liability equal to the amount it recovers from customers so that the recovery does not result in earnings accruing to the Company. When a qualifying major storm¹ or qualifying pre-staging event² occurs, costs related to restoring electric service are charged to the MSCR and all charges to the MSCR are audited by the Audit Division staff of the DOE and approved by the Commission.

II. SUMMARY OF FILINGS

On May 1, 2023, Eversource filed a petition for recovery of costs associated with three major storms and six pre-staging events that occurred between January 2022 to July 2022 from its MSCR account. Accompanying its petition, Eversource pre-filed the direct testimony of Marisa B. Paruta and Dean C. Desautels. Eversource requested recovery of \$15,232,040 over this period (excluding carrying costs). Eversource Petition at Bates Page 1; Testimony of Marisa Paruta and Dean Desautels at Bates Page 13.

On October 2, 2023 the DOE filed the Technical Statement of Jacqueline Trottier and Mark Toscano, members of the DOE's Division of Regulatory Support personnel (DOE Technical Statement). The DOE Technical Statement presented a general recommendation of Commission approval of the Eversource MSCR petition as accurate and complying with the MSCR program, with the stipulation that \$7,654 in

¹ A "Major Storm" is defined as an event that results in either: a) 10% or more of Eversource's retail customers being without power in conjunction with more than 200 reported troubles; or b) more than 300 reported troubles during the event. *Public Service Company of New Hampshire*, Order No. 25,465 at 1 (February 26, 2013).

² A "Qualifying Pre-Staging Event" is defined as a severe weather event with high probability, greater than 60%, of reaching an Energy Event Index Level of 3. *Id.* at 4.

costs be disallowed, based on the findings of the DOE's Audit division's October 2, 2023 report. See Technical Statement at Page 3.

The recommended disallowance of \$7,654 was based on the following three audit issues identified by the DOE:

1. Audit Issue #1 - Requests for documentation led to a reclassification of costs to the correct storm work order resulting in a reclassification of \$1,481 to the costs under review.
2. Audit Issue #2 - The dates listed on supporting documentation for charges post-dated the storm event for which they were applied resulting in a recommended disallowance of \$6,898.
3. Audit Issue #3 - Supporting documentation was not provided for certain storm expenditures resulting in a recommended disallowance of \$2,237.

On October 17, 2023, Eversource filed a letter (Eversource Assent Letter), stating that it had reviewed the DOE's final Audit Report and recommendations, as outlined in the DOE Technical Statement, and agreed with the recommendations included therein. Other than procedural matters, no other filings were received in this matter.

III. COMMISSION ANALYSIS

The Commission has reviewed Eversource's filings and the DOE's Audit Report and recommendations, as presented in the DOE Technical Statement. Based on its review, the Commission disallows \$7,654 in costs as identified through the DOE's Audit and assented to by Eversource. The Commission therefore approves Eversource's recovery of the remaining qualifying storm costs incurred between January 2022 and July 2022, identified by the DOE Technical Statement and Eversource Assent Letter as totaling \$15,224,386, as well as appropriate carrying charges. This amount represents Eversource's storm costs related to storm restoration

and pre-staging events from between January 2022 to July 2022, which have been audited and reviewed by the DOE. Eversource shall notify both the DOE and the Commission when the Company has determined the amount of appropriate carrying charges, and it shall confirm the amount of the recovery and balance of the MSCR fund.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED *NISI*, that Eversource is authorized cost recovery in the amount of \$15,224,386 from the MSCR fund, as well as appropriate carrying charges; and it is

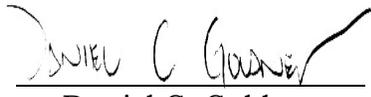
FURTHER ORDERED, that Eversource shall cause a copy of this order to be published on its website within two business day of this order, and to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before December 12, 2023; and it is

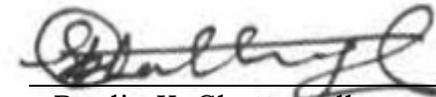
FURTHER ORDERED, that persons interested in responding to this order be notified that they may submit their comments or file a written request for hearing, stating the reason and basis for a hearing, no later than December 15, 2023 for the Commission's consideration; and it is

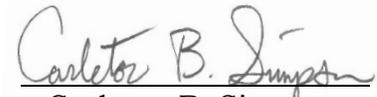
FURTHER ORDERED, that any person interested in responding to such comments or request for hearing shall do so no later than December 26, 2023; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that this order shall be effective January 4, 2024, unless Eversource fails to satisfy the publication obligation set forth above or the Commission provides otherwise in a supplemental order issued prior to the effective date.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this fifth day of
December, 2023.


Daniel C. Goldner
Chairman


Pradip K. Chattopadhyay
Commissioner


Carleton B. Simpson
Commissioner

Service List - Docket Related

Docket#: 23-051

Printed: 12/5/2023

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