

DE 02-054

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Delivery Service Tariff NHPUC No. 2  
Revised Tariff Pages - Late Payment Charge

Order Further Suspending Tariff Revisions

O R D E R    N O. 24,057

September 26, 2002

This proceeding concerns a request by Public Service Company of New Hampshire (PSNH) to impose a late payment charge of one percent per month on all retail customers. PSNH filed the appropriate revisions to its Delivery Service Tariff NHPUC No. 2 with the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (Commission) on April 1, 2002, with an effective date of July 1, 2002.

By Order No. 24,001, entered on June 27, 2002, the Commission invoked its authority under RSA 378:6, I(b) to suspend the proposed tariff changes for a period of three months. The Commission explained that it was in need of additional information about the proposal, which would involve reducing an existing monthly late payment charge of 1.5 percent for customers receiving service under Primary Delivery Service Rate GV, Large General Delivery Service Rate LG, Backup Delivery Service Rate B, and, when service is taken in conjunction with one of these aforementioned rates, Transition Service Rate T and Default Energy Service DE. As to all other PSNH customers, the late

payment charge would be a new addition to the applicable schedule of PSNH charges.

Order No. 24,001 required PSNH to provide additional information to support the Company's assertion that the revenue received via the proposed late payment charge would be less than PSNH's actual cost of collection, as required by the Commission's Rule PUC 1203.08. The Order also scheduled a technical session for July 8, 2002.

The technical session took place as scheduled, and PSNH provided certain information to Staff that was responsive to the concerns articulated in Order No. 24,001. However, it was not until September 23, 2002 that PSNH provided the Commission Staff with a requested decremental cost analysis. Staff advises that it is in need of additional time to study this submission.

Further, on August 28, 2002, the Commission received a filing from the Save Our Homes Organization (SOHO), which had been granted intervenor status by secretarial letter dated August 22, 2002. SOHO's August 28 filing requested that the Commission further suspend the PSNH tariff filing to allow for certain questions to be resolved. According to SOHO, these questions involve (1) PSNH's actual costs of collection, and (2) the scope of a waiver of the late payment charge to be provided to certain income-eligible customers, and (3) possible coordination with

applicable seasonal limitations on service disconnection for nonpayment.

In light of Staff's need to perform additional analysis and the ongoing concerns of intervenor SOHO, we conclude that the pending investigation cannot be concluded by September 27, 2002, representing the conclusion of the initial three-month suspension period. Accordingly, pursuant to RSA 378:6, I(b), we extend the suspension for an additional two months, to November 27, 2002. We further schedule a technical session, to permit Staff, SOHO and PSNH to discuss pending issues in the case, for October 16, 2002 at 10:00 a.m.

**Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby**

**ORDERED**, that the proposed tariff change is further suspended through November 27, 2002; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that a technical session shall be held at the offices of the Commission on October 16, 2002 at 10:00 a.m.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New  
Hampshire this twenty-sixth day of September, 2002.

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Thomas B. Getz  
Chairman

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Susan S. Geiger  
Commissioner

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Nancy Brockway  
Commissioner

Attested by:

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Debra A. Howland  
Executive Director & Secretary