

DE 01-247

UNITIL ENERGY SYSTEMS, INC.

**Tariff Filing with Revisions to Terms and Conditions for
Distribution Service and Revisions to Terms and Conditions for
Competitive Suppliers, Appendix B, Enhanced Metering Service and
Interval Data Service**

Order Approving Tariff Filing

O R D E R N O. 24,279

February 6, 2004

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On October 31, 2003, Unitil Energy Systems, Inc. (UES or the Company) filed with the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (the Commission) certain revisions to NHPUC No. 1 - Electricity Delivery, Unitil Energy Systems, Inc., for effect on December 1, 2003. UES proposed the following changes: additional language pertaining to UES' right to access customer premises to inspect equipment and install and maintain its distribution facilities; an increase in the fees for its Interval Data Services; a decrease in the fees for its Pulse Output Service to General Service Customers; and additional language clarifying that Interval Data Service is also available to Large General Service (G1) customers.

Staff reviewed the original filing and recommended that the Commission issue a Tariff Suspension Order. The Commission issued a Suspension Order on November 26, 2003, Order No. 24,242. Staff issued a set of data requests on December 5, 2003 and the

Company filed responses to Staff's data requests on December 19, 2003.

II. POSITION OF THE PARTIES AND STAFF

A. UES

UES states that, subsequent to the implementation of its unbundled Tariff NHPUC #1, Delivery Service, it realized it had inadvertently omitted two provisions concerning UES' right to access customer premises to inspect equipment and install and maintain its distribution facilities. Since this language was included in its previous tariff, UES proposes to add this language to its current tariff.

In addition, UES avers that it found two errors in its fees for Enhanced Metering and Interval Data Services. First, UES proposes to increase the fees for Interval Data Service (a service that provides interval load data through e-mail or basic web access) from \$12.07 to \$48.27 for a single request per meter, and from \$83.76 to \$335.05 for an annual subscription fee per meter.

Second, UES proposes to decrease the fees for its Pulse Output Service to General Service Customers. Pulse Output Service is a program that allows customers to connect their own metering equipment or equipment provided by their authorized representative while UES provides a pulse interface device that a customer uses to access load data. UES proposes to decrease the monthly fee from \$11.58 to \$8.42 and to decrease the initial lump

sum fee from \$284.11 to \$206.61.

Finally, UES proposes including certain language on Second Revised Page 51 to clarify that Interval Data Service is also available to Large General Service (G1) customers. UES states that adding such language to this section is appropriate because it already has interval data recording equipment as part of its standard G1 metering package.

B. Staff

By memorandum dated February 5, 2004, Staff provided the Commission with its findings and recommendations. Staff reviewed the Company's proposed tariff revisions and its responses to Staff's data requests. Based on its review, Staff believes that UES' series of proposals are reasonable and recommends that the Commission approve the proposed tariff pages. In Staff's view, UES' proposed additional language pertaining to UES' right to access customer premises to inspect equipment and install and maintain its distribution facilities is reasonable because it was only due to oversight that this language was excluded from the original tariff filing. Staff also notes that this language is similar to language contained in tariffs of other electric companies i.e., Public Service Company of New Hampshire and Granite State Electric Company.

Staff also reviewed the data files that UES submitted as part of its responses to Staff's data requests and concurs

that the current fees for Interval Data Services are in error. In addition, UES's current fees for its Pulse Output Service to General Service Customers are in error. UES stated that since no customers are currently enrolled in Interval Data Services or Pulse Output Service, these adjusted fees will have no effect on UES customers. Accordingly, Staff recommends that the Commission approve UES' proposed adjustments to the fees for its Interval Data Services and Pulse Output Service to General Service Customers.

Lastly, Staff recommends that the Commission approve UES' proposal to add language to clarify that Interval Data Service is also available to Large General Service (G1) customers. This language makes clear to large customers that this service is available to them, and it meets the requirements established in *Public Service Company Of New Hampshire et al.*, Order No. 24,263 in DE 03-013 (January 9, 2004, Order Approving Settlement Agreement regarding Investigation into Advanced Customer Metering and Demand Response by Electric Distribution Companies).

III. COMMISSION ANALYSIS

We have reviewed the Company's filing and Staff's recommendations. In view of Staff's recommendations, we are persuaded that Unitil's errors were inadvertent and that it has worked diligently to correct the mistakes once discovered. The

tariff changes are not *de minimus*, but because there are no customers currently taking either Interval Data Services or Pulse Output Service, we are comfortable with the change to the tariffs without further proceedings. We will therefore approve the proposed revised tariff pages, to be effective on March 1, 2004.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that the proposed tariff revisions to NHPUC No. 1 - Electricity Delivery, Unitil Energy Systems, Inc., as included in First Revised Pages 11-35 Superseding Original Pages 11-35 and Second Revised Pages 50-51 Superseding First Revised Pages 50-51, are hereby approved.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this sixth day of February, 2004.

Thomas B. Getz
Chairman

Susan S. Geiger
Commissioner

Graham J. Morrison
Commissioner

Attested by:

Debra A. Howland
Executive Director & Secretary