

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DE 15-467

PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE d/b/a EVERSOURCE ENERGY

Proposed Tariff Amendment to Loss of Service Investigation Charge

Order Approving Tariff Change

ORDER NO. 25,842

November 20, 2015

In this Order, the Commission approves a tariff amendment proposed by Eversource that eliminates a charge to residential and small commercial customers who request an investigation when experiencing an outage. Currently, Eversource charges residential and other customers \$125 per incident to investigate an outage during normal business hours, and \$250 when the investigation is conducted outside normal business hours. The change will have minimal impact on Eversource's revenues.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

On October 26, 2015, Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource) filed a proposed tariff amendment to the loss of service investigation charge for residential and small commercial customers. The filing was made consistent with RSA 378:3 and New Hampshire Code Admin. Rules Puc 1605. Eversource included annotated and clean tariff pages showing the proposed changes, a supporting technical statement, and supporting schedules. Eversource asked that the proposed changes be effective 30 days from the date of the filing.

The Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA) filed a letter of participation with the Commission on November 12, 2015. Also on November 12, 2015, Staff filed a memorandum recommending that the Commission approve the tariff change.

I. SUMMARY OF FILING AND POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES

The filing proposes to eliminate loss of service investigation charges for residential and small commercial customers. Eversource explained that, when a customer requests a loss of service investigation, the Company directs its employees to investigate the outage at the customer's premises. Historically, if Eversource determined that the outage was due to the customer's (and not Eversource's) equipment, Eversource assessed a loss of service investigation charge on the customer. The purpose of the charge was to offset the costs incurred by the Company in investigating outages that were caused by customer equipment. If the investigation was made during working hours, Eversource charged \$125 per incident. For investigations that occurred after normal working hours, Eversource charged \$250 per incident.

Eversource proposed eliminating the investigation charge only for residential customers taking service under the Residential Rate R or Residential Time-of-Day Rate R OTOD, and small commercial customers taking service under General Service Rate G, and General Service Time-of-Day Rate G OTOD. In Eversource's view, commercial and industrial customers should continue to be subject to the investigation charge, because such customers tend to have the resources and personnel necessary to investigate internal electric problems.

Recently, related to Eversource's reliability enhancement program (REP), Eversource began to broadly implement a "troubleshooter" program. The troubleshooter organization provides coverage to respond to customer outages and trouble calls 24 hours a day, and interacts and works with municipal partners, such as first responders, as needed. The Commission

approved the continuation of the REP and the inclusion of the troubleshooter organization, in Order No. 25,793 (June 25, 2015).

Eversource said that the proposed elimination of the charge would reduce revenue by approximately \$57,000. Eversource stated that because the troubleshooter organization will address most loss of service calls, the charge would be redundant. Removal of the charge will streamline the billing process and eliminate the possibility that customers delay reporting outages out of a concern that they may incur an additional cost.

Staff filed its recommendation on November 12, 2015, and supported Eversource's request to amend its tariff to eliminate the loss of service investigation charge for residential and small commercial customers. According to Staff, the revenue impact on Eversource is minimal, the troubleshooter program provides 24 hours a day coverage for response to outage and trouble calls, and the change will eliminate the possibility that customers may delay reporting outages out of concern that they may incur an additional cost.

According to Staff, the OCA supports the proposed tariff changes. The OCA said that eliminating the residential service charge will likely remove a disincentive to customers to report trouble and will likely improve service overall.

II. COMMISSION ANALYSIS

We find that the elimination of the charges for loss of service investigation for residential and small commercial customers is just and reasonable and in the public interest. We agree that the lost revenue is minimal, and understand that customers are already paying for such investigation services through the troubleshooter segment of Eversource's REP. We agree with Staff and the OCA that eliminating the charge will remove a disincentive to residential and small

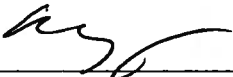
commercial customers from reporting a loss of service and, as a result, shorten service loss in some instances. Accordingly, we approve the tariff change proposed by Eversource.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

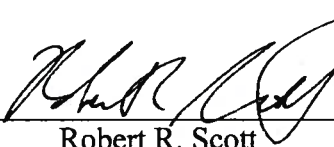
ORDERED, that the proposed tariff change to eliminate certain customer charges for the costs of investigating a loss of service call is hereby APPROVED; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Eversource shall file tariffs conforming to this order within 20 days hereof.

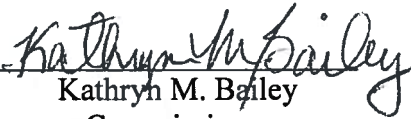
By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twentieth day of November, 2015.



Martin P. Honigberg
Chairman

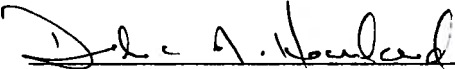


Robert R. Scott
Commissioner



Kathryn M. Bailey
Commissioner

Attested by:



Debra A. Howland
Executive Director