At a session of the PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WEST VIRGINIA in the City of Charleston on the 24th day of March 2020.

GENERAL ORDER NO. 262.1

COMMISSION GENERAL ORDER REGARDING WAIVER OF ELECTRIC, GAS, AND WATER RULES RELATED TO MONTHLY INSIDE METER READINGS DURING COVID-19 WEST VIRGINIA STATE OF EMERGENCY

COMMISSION ORDER

The Commission temporarily waives requirements that electric, gas, and water utilities perform readings of meters located inside homes which require manual meter reads.

BACKGROUND

Commission rules governing electric, gas and water utilities contemplate instances of utility service meters being located within dwellings. For some utilities, Commission rules and/or utility tariffs provide that utilities will read meters on a monthly basis. Although some utilities have the ability to read meters remotely, other meters require manual meter reading.


2 Gas Rule 3.4.2; applicable utility tariffs.
DISCUSSION

In furtherance of Federal and State guidelines to maintain social distance and limit person-to-person interaction, it is appropriate to temporarily waive Commission rules and applicable utility tariff provisions that require utilities to enter residences to read utility meters. During the WV State of Emergency, electric, water and gas utilities should issue monthly bills based on estimated usage of customers with inside meters that cannot be read remotely. Utilities should true-up actual customer usage and bills when the utility obtains an actual meter reading after the WV State of Emergency is over.

FINDING OF FACT

Commission rules and utility tariffs contemplate instances where meters may be located inside dwellings, and for some utilities, Commission rules and/or utility tariffs require monthly meter readings.

CONCLUSION OF LAW

In consideration of health risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is appropriate to temporarily waive all rules and utility tariffs that gas, electric and water utilities perform manual meter readings of inside meters for the duration of the WV State of Emergency.

ORDER

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that for the duration of the WV State of Emergency Commission rules and utility tariffs that require electric, gas, and water utilities to conduct monthly manual meter readings of inside meters are waived.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that for the duration of the WV State of Emergency electric, water, and gas utilities shall issue monthly bills based on estimated usage to customers with inside meters that cannot be read remotely.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that on entry of this order this case shall be removed from the Commission docket of open cases.
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Executive Secretary serve this Order upon the Commission and its Staff by hand delivery, upon all parties of record who have filed an e-service agreement with the Commission by electronic service and upon all other parties by United States Certified Mail, return receipt requested.

A True Copy, Teste,

Connie Graley, Executive Secretary

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