

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
STAFF REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: December 4, 2012

REGULAR _____ CONSENT X EFFECTIVE DATE December 7, 2012

DATE: November 26, 2012

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: Phil Carver 

THROUGH: Jason Eisdorfer and Maury Galbraith 

SUBJECT: OREGON PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION STAFF: (Docket No. UM 1631) Proposes approval of the request for an exemption from the two-feeder prohibition on aggregation for net metering.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the Commission approve the customer's request to waive the requirement that his designated meter and the aggregated meter be on the same primary feeder.

DISCUSSION:

On November 2, 2012, John Fox filed a request under OAR 860-039-0005(2) to waive the requirement under OAR 860-039-0065(1)(c) that his designated and aggregated meter be on the same feeder for purposes of net metering. Mr. Fox is a customer of Portland General Electric (PGE). OAR 860-039-0065(1) addresses aggregating meters under the net metering program, and provides:

- (1) For the purpose of measuring electricity usage under the net metering program, a public utility must, upon request from a customer-generator, aggregate for billing purposes the meter that is physically attached to the net metering facility ("designated meter") with one or more meters ("aggregated meter") in the manner set out in this rule. This rule is mandatory upon the public utility only when:
 - (a) The aggregated meters are located on the customer-generator's premises or property that is contiguous to such premises;

- (b) The electricity recorded by the designated meter and any aggregated meters is for the customer-generator's requirements, and;
- (c) The designated meter and the aggregated meters are served by the same primary feeder at the time of application.

OAR 860-039-0065(1)(c) requires that aggregated meters be on the same feeder to assure that power from a customer's generation does not flow through the distribution substation to get to the customer's load. Netting the generation and load on a single feeder reduces the need for distribution investments to serve net metering customers. This requirement is also in PGE's net metering tariff (Schedule 203).

In this case, the customer and his solar installer, Energy Unlimited, were unaware at the time the solar facilities were installed on the customer's premises that the two meters on his single-family residential property (one on the residence and one on a shop) are served by two feeders. This circumstance is almost unknown for residential customers. Typically, only large customers are served by two feeders.

Allowing the customer to aggregate the meters for billing purposes is warranted in this case. The solar facilities were installed on the customer's shop, which uses little electricity. If the customer is not allowed to use the electricity generated by the solar facilities to offset the electricity used at his house as well as the electricity used at his shop, he will get very little benefit from his investment.

Bruce Werner indicated that PGE does not oppose a waiver in this limited instance, given the particular facts and circumstances pertinent to this customer. PGE plans to revise its net metering application forms to specifically ask customers in the initial phase of the application process if they intend to participate in meter aggregation. If the customer indicates that they intend to aggregate, PGE will inform the customer of the limitations on aggregation and verify that the designated and aggregated meters are served by the same feeder. Staff notes that changes in PGE's application process do not reduce the responsibility of customer-generators and contractors to read and understand the requirements for aggregation in PGE's net metering tariff (Schedule 203).

Staff finds that the request of a waiver of the single-feeder requirement for aggregation meets the test of showing good cause for a waiver under OAR 860-039-005(2).

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PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

The customer's request under OAR 860-039-0005(2), to waive the requirement under OAR 860-039-0065(1)(c) that aggregated meters be on the same feeder, be approved.

P:/utility/PMmemo/12-04-2012/CA4 UM 1631 waiver of OAR 860-039-0065(1)(c)