

April 27, 2022

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Public Utility Commission of Oregon
Attn: Filing Center
201 High Street SE, Suite 100
Salem, OR 97301-3398

Re: Advice No. 22-005—Rule 8, Metering—Exemption for Master Metering

In compliance with ORS 757.205, OAR 860-022-0025, and OAR 860-022-0030, PacifiCorp, d/b/a Pacific Power (PacifiCorp or the Company), submits for filing the following proposed tariff pages associated with Tariff P.U.C. OR No. 36, which sets forth all rates, tolls, charges, rules, and regulations applicable to electric service in Oregon. The Company requests an effective date of June 1, 2022.

<u>Sheet No.</u>	<u>Tariff</u>	<u>Title</u>
Second Revision of Sheet No. R8-1	Rule 8	General Rules and Regulations, Metering
Second Revision of Sheet No. R8-2	Rule 8	General Rules and Regulations, Metering
Second Revision of Sheet No. R8-3	Rule 8	General Rules and Regulations, Metering
Fourth Revision of Sheet No. R8-4	Rule 8	General Rules and Regulations, Metering

Purpose

The purpose of this filing is to add an exemption for individual metering of services in Rule 8, Metering, to allow for master metering of apartments in certain situations. The proposal also includes adding headings in Section I, Metering – General, for clarity and to improve readability.

Background

Within the last 12 months the Company has received requests for approval of master metered apartments from applicants who will be constructing new apartment buildings specifically for low-income and vulnerable populations. Currently the tariff requires each apartment unit be individually metered with no exemption allowing for master metered apartments.

The applicant requesting master-metered treatment has referenced the higher cost of a complex where each unit is individually metered as a cost barrier to constructing subsidized low-income affordable housing.

Regulatory Constraints

PacifiCorp’s Rule 8, Metering, currently requires an individually metered service for each unit in an apartment building. This requirement for each resident to be individually metered is a requirement in all of PacifiCorp’s six states.¹ The origin of this requirement was the passage of

¹ PacifiCorp received approval for an exemption in Utah similar to the exemption PacifiCorp is requesting in this filing for Oregon.

Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA) in 1978. PURPA 16 USC §2625(b) identifies policy goals that master metering be prohibited or restricted. §2625(d) recommends separate metering for each unit if the occupant of the unit has control over a portion of the electric energy used in the unit, and the long-range benefits to the electric consumers in the building exceed the costs of purchasing and installing separate meters in the building.

ORS 455.420 implemented this metering recommendation from PURPA by requiring, “[an] individual electrical meter for each dwelling unit” except “where a building inspector ... determines that ... installation of a single electrical meter for all dwelling units in such building would facilitate an overall reduction in electrical consumption by such units.” The statute goes on to instruct the Director the Department of Consumer and Business Services to establish, by rule, standards for determining whether a master meter facilitates an overall reduction in electrical consumption. Although no such rule or standards have been established, the state has authorized state building inspectors to authorize installation of a master meter in lieu of individual metering where they determine a master meter is justified. As required by the Oregon State building code, the exemption to individual metering must be obtained by the builder.

Consideration/Issues

The exemption to the requirement for individual metering is based on the costs of individual metering outweighing the benefits of individual metering.

The benefit of individual metering and individual billing is the conservation price signal that an individual customer who has control of its usage faces. There is an incentive for customers to use electricity wisely because they pay for that usage.

However, factors exist that diminish the benefit of individual metering. If the landlord pays the electric bill, the entity paying for the usage is not the same as the entity causing the usage. PURPA guidelines do not provide for master metering to be justified solely by the tenant not being responsible for their electric bill.

The objective of PURPA and ORS 455.420 is conservation, a “reduction in electrical consumption”. It is not likely that master metering would actually reduce consumption. But if standards or criteria are established that limit the opportunity for excess consumption and provide other significant benefits, then the intent of the law can be met.

Requests for master metering have come from prospective low-income housing units. Central to their requests is the idea that these customers may have energy insecurity due to their limited resources. When faced with the priorities of rent, utilities, food, medicine, transportation, and other essentials, the short-term decisions individuals make based on the immediate demand on their resources could have unforeseen negative long-term impacts. Housing that includes their utilities as part of their rent can simplify their lives and ease their burden. This is a significant benefit. Also, the elimination of the costs of individual metering contributes to making such housing more affordable.

Another factor that can reduce the benefit of individual metering is if the potential usage for each dwelling unit is limited. This can be accomplished by providing central heating for the building or using heat pumps. The Company therefore recommends that heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) through central systems or by using heat pumps be required for master metering.

Physical limits on the ability to use electricity is an essential component to facilitate an overall reduction, or minimize excess usage, of electric consumption in the units as required by PURPA and ORS 455.420. Physical limits mean limiting the size of the units to the point that the number of the outlets and their rated capacity provide a limit to excessive consumption. Energy efficient design and installation of energy efficient appliances are another aspect of facilitating a reduction in overall electrical consumption. Limiting the potential consumption limits the opportunity of wasteful usage. The Company recommends that electric load in each unit, excluding HVAC, be less than 250 kilowatt-hours (kWh) per month.

Proposal

PacifiCorp supports the efforts to address the needs of low-income and vulnerable populations by updating our tariffs to provide an exemption to the individual metering requirement. In this filing, PacifiCorp proposes an exemption to individual metering to allow for master-metering in certain situations. The proposal is a careful blend of the application of Oregon statute and PURPA which require individual metering, and which also provide a narrow exemption to the individual metering requirement. To qualify for an exemption under the Company's proposal, the following conditions must be met:

1. the required exemption to individual metering as required by the Oregon State building code has been obtained by the builder
2. the units are not sub-metered
3. HVAC is provided through central systems to each individual residential unit, or if an all-electric building, HVAC may be provided by individual or shared heat pumps supplying both heating and cooling to each individual residential unit
4. electric load within each unit that is controlled by the tenant, excluding any individual load from item 3, will be less than kWh per month

In this filing PacifiCorp proposes an upper limit on usage at 250 kWh per month per unit. This is the same standard used in Utah where an exemption exists. Additionally, the Company acknowledges the requirement of ORS 455.420(1) & (2) by requiring the applicant to provide documentation that their apartment project has received the necessary exemption to individual metering as required by the Oregon State Building Code.

This proposal is not limited to low-income housing, but rather allows an exemption that removes barriers to affordable housing development while ensuring the important goal of energy conservation is not undermined. Any housing that meets the requirements would be eligible for this exemption.

It is respectfully requested that all data requests regarding this matter be addressed to:

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By email (preferred): datarequest@pacificorp.com

By regular mail: Data Request Response Center
PacifiCorp
825 NE Multnomah, Suite 2000
Portland, OR 97232

All other inquiries may be directed to Jennifer Angell, Regulatory Project Manager, at (503) 331-4414 or jennifer.angell@pacificorp.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley McCoy".

Shelley McCoy
Director, Regulation

Enclosure

I. Metering – General

A. Installation, Maintenance and Registration

The Company will install and maintain all meters and other equipment necessary for measuring the electric power and energy used by the Customer and will inspect such installations to maintain a high standard of accuracy.

The Company will, without charge, make a test of the accuracy of registration of a meter upon the request of the Customer or their ESS, provided that the Customer does not request such a test more frequently than once in twelve (12) months. If more than one requested test is made in twelve (12) months, the Company may charge the Customer a meter test charge as specified in Schedule 300. If results of the test show that such meter is outside the 2% accepted tolerance standard under normal operating conditions, the Company may not charge the Customer for the subsequent test(s).

An accurate record will be kept by the Company of all meter readings, and such record shall be the basis for determination of all bills rendered for metered service.

If any meter shall fail to register correctly the amount of electric power or energy used by the Customer, the amount of such use will be estimated by the Company from the best available information.

B. Individual Metering

Separate premises, even though owned by the same Customer, will not be supplied through the same meter, except as may be specifically provided for in the applicable rate schedule.

Other than the exemptions in Section C, service to multi-unit residential buildings where residency is permanent in nature and constructed subsequent to January 1, 1979, shall be provided only if it is possible for the Company to directly meter and bill the occupant of each dwelling unit.

C. Residential Use Exemptions to Individual Metering (criteria for Master-Metering)

Multiple residential units where the units do not have permanent facilities for sleeping, bathing and cooking, which are supplied through a common meter, may not be sub-metered and will be classified as nonresidential service.

Multiple residential units where residency is permanent in nature and constructed subsequent to January 1, 1979, and have facilities for sleeping, bathing and cooking in each unit, may be supplied through a common meter if the units meet all of the following numbered criteria. The service will be classified as residential and billed on the applicable general service rate schedule.

1. Documentation that the multiple residential units have received the necessary exemptions to individual metering as required by the Oregon State Building Code,
2. The units are not sub-metered,
3. Space heating, ventilation, and cooling (HVAC) is provided through central systems to each individual residential unit, or if an all-electric building HVAC may be provided by individual or shared heat pumps supplying both heating and cooling to each individual residential unit, and
4. The electric load within each unit that is controlled by the tenant, excluding any individual load from item 3., is projected to be 250 kWh or less per month and the Company has been provided reasonable substantiation of the load projection.

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I. Metering – General (continued)

D. Meter Verification Fee and Meter Labeling

When multiple meters are installed at a location with multiple units, it is the developer/owner’s responsibility to permanently, and correctly, label each meter base for the associated service address. The Company may check such meter installations to verify they are correctly labeled. The Company will charge the Meter Verification Fee, set forth in Schedule 300, to the developer/owner for each meter installation checked. In the event all meters are labeled correctly for each unit, the Company will waive the Meter Verification Fee for that building.

When a complaint is received from a Customer, landlord or governmental agency of possible switched meters, the Company will check such meter installations to verify that they are correctly labeled. The Company will charge the Meter Verification Fee, as set forth in Schedule 300 to the developer/owner for each meter installation checked. If all meters at a building are correctly labeled for each unit, the Company will waive the Meter Verification Fees for that building. If a Customer or landlord requests more than one meter installation verification within any 12-month period, the Company will require the requesting party to pay the Meter Verification Fee as set forth in Schedule 300, in advance. If the Company determines that the meter is switched or mislabeled, it will refund the deposit to the Customer and the Company will charge the Meter Verification Fee set forth in Schedule 300, to the developer/owner for each meter installation checked.

If a developer/owner or landlord requests the Company to verify or certify that each meter base is labeled correctly, including when locations with multiple units are sold, the Company will charge the party requesting such verification or certification the Meter Verification Fee, as set forth in Schedule 300.

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II. Metering – Direct Access

A. Direct Access Meter Requirement

The Company’s metering standard for Direct Access and Standard Offer Consumers is for remotely interrogated interval metering equipment. Direct Access and Standard Offer Consumers that do not have installed remotely interrogated interval meters may be metered using other approved Company metering equipment. In the absence of a meter installation backlog, the Company will endeavor to install standard meter equipment within 30 days of acceptance of a DASR or receipt of written or electronic authorization for Standard Offer Service. In the event of a backlog, the Company will notify the Consumer or Consumer’s ESS and provide an estimate of the installation date. The Company will provide metering equipment for all Consumers.

B. Meter Charge

Direct Access and Standard Offer Consumers taking Company-specified metering services are obligated to pay the direct access metering charges stated in Schedule 300. Consumers taking non-standard metering services as described in Section II.E of this Rule are obligated to pay the metering charges specified in the applicable contract.

C. Standard Services

The Company will provide Standard Metering Services without charge to Large Nonresidential Consumers and will provide Standard Metering Services at a charge stated in Schedule 300 to Small Nonresidential Consumers. Standard Metering Services provided in conjunction with Direct Access and Standard Offer Service include:

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II. Metering – Direct Access (continued)

C. Standard Services (continued)

1. An interval meter equipped with a communication modem.
2. Installation, removal, testing and maintenance of the meter.
3. Remote communication equipment. Calling fees will be passed through to the Consumer.
4. The meter readings and the results provided to ESS' will be the same as those used as the basis for the Company's charges.
5. The standard method of communicating results of meter reading is specified in the standard form of the Company's ESS Service Agreement.

D. Standard Meter Capabilities

These include interval and remote communication functions.

E. Non-Standard Services

An ESS may request that the Company provide non-standard metering capabilities, functions or services.

1. Requests must be submitted to the Company in writing.
2. The Company will consider and approve or deny the request within ten (10) business days.
3. The Company will file with the Commission rates and charges for non-standard metering capabilities, functions or services within thirty (30) days of approving a request.

Terms and conditions for approved non-standard metering capabilities, functions or services will be incorporated into the Company's ESS Service Agreement.

III. Non-Radio Frequency Metering Accommodation

A Customer may request an alternative to the Company's standard radio frequency meter installation from the following:

- a. Relocation of the Customer's meter base to a different location approved by the Company and the installation of a standard meter;
- b. Relocation of the Customer's meter base to a different location approved by the Company and the installation of a Company approved non-radio frequency meter;
- c. Exchanging a standard meter for a Company approved non-radio frequency meter.

A Customer selecting the option to relocate the meter base will be subject to the meter installation requirements of this regulation as well as Electric Service Rule 13. If the relocation requires a change in the existing service the Customer is responsible for charges to relocate the service including but not limited to the installation of conduit, trenching, obtaining easements, and any additional costs of removing and installing new facilities. If an acceptable meter location cannot be provided on the premises, the Customer's request will not be granted. The Customer must provide written permission of the owner stating the Customer has obtained the owner's permission to proceed with relocating the meter base.

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III. Non-Radio Frequency Metering Accommodation (continued)

Customers who elect to have a non-radio frequency meter will be subject to installation of the non-radio frequency meter as set forth in Schedule 300. All applicable fees will be paid prior to the installation of the non-radio frequency meter. The Schedule 300 charges for the installation is in addition to any aforementioned costs to relocate the Customer's service.

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If a radio frequency meter is installed at the Customer's premise prior to January 1, 2018 and the Customer requests a non-radio frequency meter, the Customer will not be required to pay the installation charge in Schedule 300.

Only non-radio frequency meters approved, obtained, installed, and owned by the Company will be allowed. The Customer's request to replace a radio frequency meter with a non-radio frequency meter cannot be accommodated until an approved non-radio frequency meter can be obtained by the Company.

All Customers with a non-radio frequency meter shall be responsible to pay the monthly meter reading fee in Schedule 300, which will be included in the Customer's monthly service billing.

Customers with non-radio frequency meters may be excluded from participating in Company offered programs for which a standard radio frequency meter is required.

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The Company may revoke the meter exchange accommodation of a non-radio frequency meter by reinstalling the Company's standard radio frequency meter for any of the following conditions:

- a. Meter tampering;
- b. Impeding Company access to the meter to obtain monthly meter readings, perform maintenance or to disconnect meter for non-payment of electric service; or
- c. Service has been disconnected for non-payment of electric service twice within a 12-month period.

Customers opting-out of the Company's standard metering and are metered by a non-standard meter and are otherwise eligible for service under Schedule 4 Residential Service or have a meter without a demand register and are eligible for service under Schedule 23 General Service, Small Non-Residential may contract with the Company for a triannual meter reading schedule. Meter readings will be three times a year and monthly billings between meter readings will be based on estimated usage assumptions. At the discretion of the Company, meter readings may be more frequent without any additional charge to the Customers. Customers are required to pay the triannual meter reading fee as stated in Schedule 300, and enroll in the Company's Equal Payment Plan as described in Rule 10 of this tariff.

The Company reserves the right to remove a Customer from the triannual read program for any of the following reasons:

The Customer is disconnected for nonpayment of bills,
The Customer fails to abide by the terms of the Equal Payment Plan, or
Safe and unobstructed access is not provided to the Company.

This option is not available for service in conjunction with net metering or time-of-use schedules.