

**OREGON PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE**

DATE: March 19, 2024

TO: File thru JP Batmale

FROM: Benedikt Springer

SUBJECT: NORTHWEST NATURAL:
(Docket No. ADV 1593/Advice No. 24-02A)
Update to Schedule 320, Oregon Low-Income Energy Efficiency
Programs.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

I have reviewed this filing and recommend that an acknowledgement letter be sent.

With this filing, Northwest Natural proposes to reflect changes to its February 14, 2024, filing (Advice No. 24-02), as adopted by a Commission motion at the March 19, 2024, Public Meeting. The filing was submitted on March 19, 2024, with a proposed effective date of March 20, 2024.

Applicable Law

A public utility is required to file schedules with the Commission showing all changes to rates, tolls, and charges. ORS 757.205. The Commission may approve tariff changes if they are deemed to be fair, just, and reasonable. ORS 757.210. Tariff revisions may be made by filing revised sheets with the information required under the Commission's administrative rules, including OAR 860-022-0025. OAR 860-022-0025(2) specifically requires that each energy utility changing existing tariffs or schedules must include in its filing a statement plainly indicating the increase, decrease, or other change made with the filing, the number of customers affected by the proposed change and the resulting change in annual revenue; and the reasons or grounds relied upon in support of the proposed change.

Filings that propose any change in rates, tolls, charges, rules, or regulations must be filed with the Commission at least 30 days before the effective date of the change. ORS 757.220; OAR 860-022-0015. Tariff filings to be effective on less than 30 days following notice of the change may be authorized with a waiver of less than statutory notice pursuant to ORS 757.220 and OAR 860-022-0020.

OAR 860-022-0030(1) further requires that for tariff or schedule filings proposing increased rates, the utility must for each separate schedule, identify the total number of customers affected, the total annual revenue derived under the existing schedule, and the amount of estimated revenue which will be derived from applying the proposed

schedule, the average monthly use and resulting bills under both the existing rates and the proposed rates that will fairly represent the application of the proposed tariff or schedules, and the reasons or grounds relied upon in support of the proposed increase.

Northwest (NW) Natural's public purpose funding surcharge was established pursuant to Commission Order No. 02-634 in Docket No. UG 143, and supports a number of public purposes, including low-income weatherization assistance.

Analysis

On February 14, 2024, NW Natural filed revisions to Schedule 320 – Oregon Low-Income Energy Efficiency (OLIEE) Programs in Docket No. ADV 1593. On March 19, 2024, the Commission approved NW Natural's proposed changes to Schedule 320 filed in ADV 1593, with two modifications from the original filing.

The two modifications are as follows:

1. Agency Qualifications and Responsibilities for CAP Funds (Sheet 320-3, Item 4): Staff proposed to add the following sentence at the end of NW Natural's proposed paragraph: *"Through the 2024-25 Program Year, at least 80% of funds will be disbursed for projects serving households at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. After the 2024-25 Program Year, the 80% limit will be removed or revisited in consultation with the OAC."*
2. Program Administration, Evaluation and Verification (Sheet 320-2): Staff proposed to modify the last sentence of NW Natural's proposed paragraph as shown in italics: *"Such evaluation shall be paid from the OLIEE account in an amount not to exceed \$150,000. It will include a competitive bid process with assistance from the OLIEE Advisory Committee to ensure cost effective spending."*

Staff and NW Natural discussed and agreed to the proposed modifications, which were approved by the Commission at the March 19, 2024, public meeting.

Compliance

This filing complies with all applicable laws, rules, and Commission orders and was submitted at least one day prior to its effective date.

Conclusion

The filing should be allowed to go into effect, and an acknowledgment letter should be sent. No further action is necessary.