

ORDER NO. 20-120

ENTERED Apr 09 2020

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
OF OREGON**

UG 390

In the Matter of

CASCADE NATURAL GAS
CORPORATION,

Request for a General Rate Revision.

ORDER

DISPOSITION: STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION ADOPTED

At its public meeting on April 7, 2020, the Public Utility Commission of Oregon adopted Staff's recommendation in this matter. The Staff Report with the recommendation is attached as Appendix A.

BY THE COMMISSION:



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nolan Moser".

Nolan Moser
Chief Administrative Law Judge

A party may request rehearing or reconsideration of this order under ORS 756.561. A request for rehearing or reconsideration must be filed with the Commission within 60 days of the date of service of this order. The request must comply with the requirements in OAR 860-001-0720. A copy of the request must also be served on each party to the proceedings as provided in OAR 860-001-0180(2). A party may appeal this order by filing a petition for review with the Circuit Court for Marion County in compliance with ORS 183.484.

ITEM NO. CA3

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON
STAFF REPORT
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: April 7, 2020**

REGULAR _____ CONSENT X EFFECTIVE DATE _____ Upon Commission Approval

DATE: April 5, 2020

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: Bryan Conway

SUBJECT: CASCADE NATURAL GAS:
(Docket No. UG 390)
Request a waiver of OAR 860-022-0017(1).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Commission approve Cascade Natural Gas's (Cascade or Company) request for a waiver of OAR 860-022-0017(1). This rule requires the utility to inform customers within 15 days of filing with the Commission new or revised tariff schedules which constitute a general rate revision.

DISCUSSION:

Issue

Whether the Commission should approve the Company's request for a waiver of OAR 860-022-0017(1).

Applicable Rule or Law

ORS 756.040 grants broad authority to the Commission under its general power. ORS 860-022-0000(2) states, upon request or its own motion, the Commission may waive any of the division 22 rules for good cause shown. A request for waiver must be made in writing, unless otherwise allowed by the Commission.

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Analysis

In its petition, the Company states that it filed its current rate case on March 31, 2020. The anticipated customer bill impacts were not known by the company until just prior to the rate case filing. This short time window made it infeasible for it to meet planning requirement deadlines necessary to send out customers' notices via bill inserts within the 15-day requirement as outlined in OAR 860-022-0017(1).

Cascade has prepared a customer announcement which it intends to send to customers immediately, within the operational constraints of printing and mailing announcements, to its approximately 77,000 customers within its Oregon service territory. As such, the announcements may initially be received by customers outside of the 15-day requirement and well into the month of May 2020. Cascade's unique geographically-challenged service territory makes using bill insert notification far more economical for the Company, and ultimately, customers.

Staff notes that Cascade's request stated its petition was filed under the provisions of ORS 756.040 and in accordance with OAR 860-021-0005. Since the Company is requesting a waiver of a Division 22 rule, it should have requested relief pursuant to OAR 860-022-0000(2). The intent of the request is clearly for a waiver of OAR 860-022-0017(1), so the Commission can interpret Cascades filing under OAR 860-022-0000(2), or on its own motion, use OAR 860-022-0000(2) and waive the provisions of the rule listed by the Company.

Conclusion

Staff concludes that the Company's tariff modification request is warranted, is in the best interest of customers, and should be granted with less than statutory notice.

PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

Approve Cascade Natural Gas's request for a waiver of OAR 860-022-0017(1).