

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In Re: Petition for approval of ) DOCKET NO. 960024-GU  
late payment charge by Peoples ) ORDER NO. PSC-96-0371-FOF-GU  
Gas System, Inc. ) ISSUED: March 18, 1996  
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The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

SUSAN F. CLARK, Chairman  
J. TERRY DEASON  
JOE GARCIA  
JULIA L. JOHNSON  
DIANE K. KIESLING

ORDER APPROVING PEOPLES GAS SYSTEM, INC.'S  
TARIFF FOR LATE PAYMENT CHARGE

BY THE COMMISSION:

On January 5, 1996, Peoples Gas System, Inc. (Peoples) filed a petition to provide for a late payment charge. Peoples believes that implementation of a late fee charge will reduce the number of delinquent accounts. Peoples contends that as the number of delinquent accounts decline, the costs associated with supporting these accounts will decline.

As of September 30, 1995, approximately ten percent (10%) of Peoples accounts were classified as delinquent accounts. Accounts are classified as delinquent when payment is not received by the past due date indicated on the customer's bill. The past due date indicated on the bill is approximately twenty days from the date of mailing. Peoples proposes to assess a late fee payment for all customers failing to pay their bill by the past due date.

The total past due receivables were \$1,600,000 as of September 30, 1995. Assuming past due balances remain at this level, the late charges would generate \$288,000 annually and would be recorded to account 495 (other gas revenue).

The Commission has previously approved late payment charges similar to the charges requested by Peoples. The most recent approval involved Florida Power Corporation's petition for approval of a late payment charge (Docket No. 950753-EI, Order No. PSC-95-1087-FOF-EI).

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FPSC-RECORDS/REPORTING

The proposed modification would allow Peoples to assess a late charge equal to 1.5 percent of the unpaid balance to all delinquent accounts other than federal, state, and local entities. These governmental entities are subject to imposition of a late payment charge in accordance with Sections 215.422, Florida Statutes (state agencies), 218.70 -.79, Florida Statutes (local government agencies), and 31 U.S.C. 3901 - 3907 (federal government agencies)

Upon consideration, we find the petition should be approved. Prior to implementation, Peoples shall provide thirty day's advance notice to its customers. A clearly stated notice to customers may be included on the bill rather than mailed separately. A sample of the notice shall be submitted to the Commission's Division of Electric and Gas for approval prior to implementation. The tariff will become effective thirty days after the Commission vote.

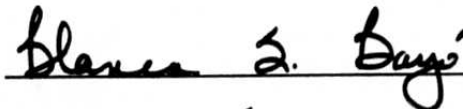
Based on the foregoing, it is,

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Peoples Gas Systems, Inc's. petition for revision to its Natural Gas Tariff to include a provision for a late payment charge is hereby approved.

ORDERED that if a protest is filed in accordance with the requirements set forth below, the tariff shall remain in effect with any increase in revenues held subject to refund pending resolution of the protest. It is further

ORDERED that if no protest is filed in accordance with the requirements set forth below, this docket shall be closed.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission, this 18th day of March, 1996.



BLANCA S. BAYÓ, Director  
Division of Records and Reporting

( S E A L )

VDJ

NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.59(4), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing or judicial review of Commission orders that is available under Sections 120.57 or 120.68, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing or judicial review will be granted or result in the relief sought.

The Commission's decision on this tariff is interim in nature and will become final, unless a person whose substantial interests are affected by the action proposed files a petition for a formal proceeding, as provided by Rule 25-22.036(4), Florida Administrative Code, in the form provided by Rule 25-22.036(7)(a)(d) and (e), Florida Administrative Code. This petition must be received by the Director, Division of Records and Reporting, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on April 8, 1996.

In the absence of such a petition, this order shall become final on the day subsequent to the above date.

Any objection or protest filed in this docket before the issuance date of this Order is considered abandoned unless it satisfies the foregoing conditions and is renewed within the specified protest period.

If this Order becomes final on the date described above, any party adversely affected may request judicial review by the Florida Supreme Court in the case of an electric, gas or telephone utility or by the First District Court of Appeal in the case of a water or wastewater utility by filing a notice of appeal with the Director, Division of Records and Reporting and filing a copy of the notice of appeal and the filing fee with the appropriate court. This filing must be completed within thirty (30) days of the date this Order becomes final, pursuant to Rule 9.110, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. The notice of appeal must be in the form specified in Rule 9.900(a), Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.