

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In Re: Petition for approval of) DOCKET NO. 960183-EI
late payment charge, by Tampa) ORDER NO. PSC-96-0469-FOF-EI
Electric Company.) ISSUED: April 4, 1996
_____)

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 TAMPA ELECTRIC COMPANY'S
TARIFF FOR LATE PAYMENT CHARGE

BY THE COMMISSION:

On February 15, 1996, Tampa Electric Company (TECO) filed a petition to provide for a late payment charge. TECO believes that implementation of a late fee charge will reduce the number of delinquent accounts. TECO contends that as the number of delinquent accounts decline, the costs associated with supporting these accounts will decline.

TECO estimates that approximately 21% of its total accounts are past due. TECO maintains that a late payment charge will save approximately \$100,000 annually by encouraging prompt payment by many of these customers. In order to implement the program, TECO will have a one-time expenditure of approximately \$100,000. In addition, TECO will spend approximately \$5,000 annually to maintain the program. TECO estimates that it will receive \$1,620,000 annually in revenues from late payment charges.

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

Upon consideration, we find that the petition should be approved. The implementation of a late charge will encourage

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

03924 APR-4 96

FPSC-RECORDS/REPORTING

ORDER NO. PSC-96-0469-FOF-EI
DOCKET NO. 960183-EI
PAGE 2

prompt payment and shift the cost associated with pursuing late paying accounts to those customers who cause the cost.

Prior to implementation, TECO 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 effective date for the late payment charge will coincide with the ability of TECO's billing system to implement and administer the charge. Staff is authorized to administratively approve the effective date for the late payment.

Based on the foregoing, it is,

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Tampa Electric Company's petition to revise its tariff to include a provision for a late payment charge is hereby approved. It is further

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 4th day of April, 1996.

BLANCA S. BAYÓ, Director
Division of Records and Reporting

by: Kay DeLeon
Chief, Bureau of Records

(S E A L)

LW

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 25, 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.