

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Request by Florida Power & Light Company to revise Tariff Sheet No. 6.010, to allow application for electric service on the Internet, and to define types of identification needed to obtain service.

DOCKET NO. 971424-EI  
ORDER NO. PSC-98-0048-FOF-EI  
ISSUED: January 7, 1998

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

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

ORDER GRANTING REVISIONS TO FPL TARIFF SHEET 6.010

By Petition filed on October 22, 1997, by Florida Power & Light Company (FPL), the Company proposed revisions to Tariff Sheet No. 6.010. The revisions would define the types of identification which could be requested from applicants prior to initiating service. The proposed revisions also provided for FPL to accept application for electric service over the Internet.

The portion of the Petition with respect to application via the Internet was voluntarily withdrawn at the Agenda Conference on December 16, 1997.

The new forms of personal identification which can be requested are: "social security number, tax identification number, driver's license, birth certificate, or any other form of identification acceptable to the company in order to establish service."

The applicant would be required to produce only one of these forms of personal identification. Currently, to initiate service, FPL requires only an applicant's name and address. FPL does ask for a social security number, but if the applicant refuses to provide his or her social security number, FPL still accepts the application for service.

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FPLSC-REGISTRY/REPORTING

FPL currently uses Equifax to rate a customer's credit and to verify social security numbers. If the name and social security number, provided by an applicant for service, do not match, FPL's customer service will try to determine why there is no match. If service is denied because of improper identification, FPL will send a letter to the applicant stating why service was refused and give the applicant the toll free number for the Commission's Division of Consumer Affairs. To date, FPL does not have a method to verify any of the other required identification numbers, but states that it hopes to have a way of doing so in the future.

An account is written off when FPL believes that the customer will not respond to any normal collection efforts to pay the remaining account balance. The write-off represents the amount owed to the company after any deposit is applied to the outstanding balance. FPL's collection efforts include mailing up to four notices of payment and a telephone call or a field collection effort. After all attempts to contact the customer and to arrange for payment fail, the account is transferred to an outside collection agency. The collection agency works accounts up to six months after receiving them. If the collection agency succeeds in collecting payment, the money is used to reduce the write-off balance and the agency bills FPL the contracted rate for its collection effort.

Uncollectible account write-off is currently allowed in ratebase as an expense. Order No. 11628, issued February 17, 1983, states that the uncollectible expense should be allocated to all classes because this is a societal problem which should be borne by all ratepayers, not just by the rate classes which have customers with uncollectible bills. FPL maintains that an identification number will help FPL and the collection agency in its effort to contact delinquent customers and resolve payment problems. Accordingly, any effort to reduce the level of write-offs, caused by uncollectible accounts, would benefit FPL and its ratepayers. Therefore, the Commission finds that the proposed tariff revisions are in the best interest of FPL and its ratepayers.

Upon consideration, we find that the proposed tariff revisions are in the best interest of FPL and its ratepayers and therefore, should be approved.

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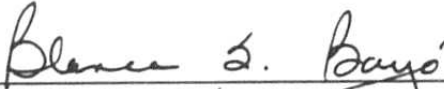
Based on the foregoing, it is

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Florida Power & Light Company's request is hereby approved, effective December 16, 1997. It is further

ORDERED that, if no person whose substantial interests are affected by this order chooses to file a protest within 21 days of the issuance of this order, then this docket shall be closed. It is further

ORDERED that if a protest is timely filed, the tariff revisions shall remain in effect pending resolution of the protest.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission this 7th day of January, 1998.

  
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BLANCA S. BAYÓ, Director  
Division of Records and Reporting

( S E A L )

JCB

NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.569(1), 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.

Mediation may be available on a case-by-case basis. If mediation is conducted, it does not affect a substantially interested person's right to a hearing.

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The action proposed herein is preliminary in nature and will not become effective or final, except as provided by Rule 25-22.029, Florida Administrative Code. Any person whose substantial interests are affected by the action proposed by this order may file a petition for a formal proceeding, as provided by Rule 25-22.029(4), Florida Administrative Code, in the form provided by Rule 25-22.036(7)(a) and (f), 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 January 28, 1998.

In the absence of such a petition, this order shall become effective on the day subsequent to the above date as provided by Rule 25-22.029(6), Florida Administrative Code.

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 and effective on the date described above, any party substantially 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.

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This filing must be completed within thirty (30) days of the effective date of this order, 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.