

State of Florida



Public Service Commission

CAPITAL CIRCLE OFFICE CENTER • 2540 SHUMARD OAK BOULEVARD
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0850

-M-E-M-O-R-A-N-D-U-M-

DATE: May 28, 2020

TO: Office of Commission Clerk (Teitzman)

FROM: Division of Economics (Forrest) *JGH, ED*
Office of the General Counsel (Trierweiler) *JC*

RE: Docket No. 20200097-EI – Petition for approval of budget billing tariff modifications by Gulf Power Company.

AGENDA: 06/09/20 – Regular Agenda – Tariff Filing – Interested Persons May Participate

COMMISSIONERS ASSIGNED: All Commissioners

PREHEARING OFFICER: Administrative

CRITICAL DATES: 06/09/20 (Gulf Power Company waived the 60-Day Suspension Date to the June 9, 2020 Agenda Conference)

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: None

Case Background

On March 20, 2020, Gulf Power Company (Gulf or utility) filed a petition with the Commission that seeks to revise its budget billing tariff. This revision would affect customers participating in the optional budget billing tariff that also have outdoor lighting service. The proposed revisions would remove the costs associated with Rate Schedule OS (outdoor lighting tariff), from inclusion in the budget billing calculation. Rather, the outdoor lighting tariff costs would be charged as a separate line item on the customer's bill. The utility states that this change is necessary as a result of modifications to its account management system. This petition would modify Tariff Sheet Nos. 6.32, 6.32.1, and 6.33, as shown in legislative format in Attachment A to the recommendation.

Docket No. 20200097-EI

Date: May 28, 2020

During the review of this petition, staff issued a data request to Gulf on March 31, 2020, for which responses were received on April 14, 2020. The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Sections 366.03, 366.04, 366.05, and 366.06, Florida Statutes (F.S.).

Discussion of Issues

Issue 1: Should the Commission approve Gulf's proposed modifications to its budget billing tariff?

Recommendation: Yes, the Commission should approve Gulf's proposed modifications to its budget billing tariff effective June 9, 2020. (Forrest)

Staff Analysis: The optional budget billing tariff provides customers with stable electric bills by averaging and leveling out energy costs over an annual cycle. This allows participating customers to pay approximately the same amount each month. Currently, a customer participating in the utility's outdoor lighting tariff would have the lighting costs incorporated into its budget billing calculation and billing amount. In February 2020, the utility transitioned to a new customer management program called Customer Account Management System (CAMS). Gulf states that the new system does not allow the outdoor lighting tariff costs to be incorporated into the budget billing calculation.

According to Gulf, the CAMS system requires electric and multi-service accounts, like outdoor lighting, to be viewed and treated as two separate contracts under one single account. This technical limitation does not allow for budget billing to occur across multiple contracts. Therefore, the utility must remove the outdoor lighting contract from the budget bill calculation, while keeping the electric contract on budget billing.

Gulf states that customers enrolled in the outdoor lighting tariff incur an average monthly usage charge of \$11.10 for lighting services. Due to the limited fluctuations in outdoor lighting usage, these customers would only see a small fluctuation in their bills as a result of the lighting costs being a separate line item charge. Currently, Gulf states that this change would affect approximately 5,000 of the 38,000 budget billing customers. The affected outdoor lighting tariff customers will be notified of the change pursuant to the terms of the budget billing tariff. Any over/under billing will be charged or refunded in accordance with the terms of Gulf's budget billing tariff.

Conclusion

According to Gulf, the company's recently installed customer billing system will not allow for customer outdoor lighting tariff costs to be incorporated into the budget billing calculation. In addition, due to the limited fluctuation in outdoor lighting bills, removing the lighting billing from the budget billing calculation would not adversely impact customers. For the reasons stated above, staff believes that the proposed changes to Gulf's budget billing tariff are appropriate. Gulf stated that impacted customers would be notified via a bill message on their next bill. Staff recommends that the Commission should approve Gulf's proposed modifications to its budget billing tariff effective June 9, 2020.

Issue 2: Should this docket be closed?

Recommendation: If Issue 1 is approved and a protest is filed within 21 days of the issuance of the order, the tariff should remain in effect, with any revenues held subject to refund, pending resolution of the protest. If no timely protest is filed, this docket should be closed upon the issuance of a consummating order. (Trierweiler)

Staff Analysis: If Issue 1 is approved and a protest is filed within 21 days of the issuance of the order, the tariff should remain in effect, with any revenues held subject to refund, pending resolution of the protest. If no timely protest is filed, this docket should be closed upon the issuance of a consummating order.



Gulf Power

Section No. VI
~~Eighth-Ninth~~ Revised Sheet No. 6.32
Canceling ~~EighthSeventh~~ Revised Sheet No. 6.32

**RATE SCHEDULE BB
BUDGET BILLING
(OPTIONAL RIDER)**

PAGE 1 of 2	EFFECTIVE DATE March 29, 2018
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AVAILABILITY:

Available throughout the entire territory served by the Company.

APPLICABILITY:

This budget billing rider will, upon request by the Customer, be applied to any customer receiving electric service under Rate Schedules RS, RSVP, GS, GSD, GSDT, GSTOU, LP, LPT, PX, PXT, and RTP except those customers with current delinquent bills or those customers disqualified from the program within the twelve preceding months. Eligible customers will be notified of availability of this rider annually. Gulf Power shall have 30 days to establish Budget Billing upon request of the Customer.

BILLING:

Under the Budget Billing plan, the Monthly billing is determined as follows:

1. The Annual Base Amount is calculated using the most recent 12 months billings for the premises (~~including-excluding~~ billings for Rate Schedule OS, ~~if any,~~) and then averaged and rounded to the nearest whole dollar (Monthly Budget Billing Amount). If the customer has not occupied the premises for 12 months, the Annual Base Amount will be determined by the Customer's available monthly billings plus the previous occupant's billings. If the premises is new or sufficient actual consumption is not available, a 12-month estimated bill will be used.
2. The Monthly Budget Billing Amount is recalculated every month using the most recent Annual Base Amount plus any deferred balances (the difference in prior billings made under the Budget Billing Plan and that of actual charges).

$$\begin{array}{rclclcl} \text{Monthly Budget} & = & \text{12-month Summation} & + & \text{Deferred} \\ \text{Billing Amount} & & \frac{\text{Actual or Est. Annual Base}}{12} & & \text{Balance} \end{array}$$

ISSUED BY: ~~Charles S. Boyett~~ Tiffany Cohen



Gulf Power®

Section No. VI
~~Sixth~~Seventh Revised Sheet No. 6.32.1
Canceling ~~Sixth~~Fifth Revised Sheet No. 6.32.1

PAGE	EFFECTIVE DATE
	March 29, 2019

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ISSUED BY: ~~Charles S. Boyett~~ Tiffany Cohen



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Section No. VI
~~Third~~Fourth Revised Sheet No. 6.33
Canceling ~~Third~~Second Revised Sheet No. 6.33

PAGE 2 of 2	EFFECTIVE DATE March 29, 2019
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(Continued from Rate Schedule BB, Sheet No. 6.32)

For each month except the annual review month, if the difference between the newly calculated Monthly Budget Billing Amount and the current Monthly Budget Billing Amount is greater than \$5.00 and 10%, then the Monthly Budget Billing Amount will be reestablished at the newly calculated amount (rounded to the nearest whole dollar). In the Customer's annual review month, the Monthly Billing Amount will be reestablished at the newly calculated amount.

3. At the Customer's option (in lieu of carrying the deferred balance forward in the recalculation of the Monthly Budget Billing Amount) any deferred balance that is outstanding at the Customer's annual review may be settled either through being applied to the Customer's new bill (if a credit balance) or direct payment to the Company (if a debit balance).

TERM OF CONTRACT:

Upon request of the Customer, billing under the provisions of this rider shall continue thereafter until terminated as provided below.

TERMINATION:

Billing under this agreement shall be subject to termination by either party giving notice to the other party. This agreement may be terminated by the Company if the account becomes delinquent. In the event billing under this agreement is terminated, any amount the Customer has been underbilled shall immediately become due and payable to the Company and any amount overbilled shall be refunded to the Customer. Billing may be terminated under this agreement without terminating or affecting any service agreement between the Company and the Customer. In such event, billing under the normal monthly billing procedure will be resumed subsequent to the settlement statement rendered by the Company; however, nothing in this agreement shall be construed to waive the Company's rights to discontinue service in the event of failure to pay bills or for any other lawful cause as set forth in its electric tariff.

Service under this rate schedule is subject to Rules and Regulations of the Company and the Florida Public Service Commission.

ISSUED BY: ~~Charles S. Boyett~~Tiffany Cohen