

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA**

In re NorthWestern Energy's Application to Increase Retail Electric and Natural Gas Utility Service Rates and for Approval of Service Schedules, Cost Allocation, and Rate Design	Docket 2024.05.053 September 3, 2024
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Notice of Filing Date and Intervention Deadline

Background

1. On July 10, 2024, NorthWestern Corporation d/b/a NorthWestern Energy (“NorthWestern”) filed with the Montana Public Service Commission (“Commission”) an application to revise its electric and natural gas service rates, service schedules, cost allocation, and rate design (“Application”).

2. NorthWestern’s Application is subject to the Commission’s minimum filing standards set in Mont. Admin. Rs. 38.5.101–195. Mont. Admin. R. 38.5.184 requires the Commission to notify the utility within 30 days of any failure to comply with the minimum rate case filing standards. The notice “shall specify the deficiencies and grant the utility a reasonable period of time in which to supplement or correct the filing.” Mont. Admin. R. 38.5.184(1). If notice is not given within 30 days, the Application is deemed adequate under the minimum filing standards.

3. On August 7, 2024, the Commission issued a Notice of Commission Action (“Notice”) that identified multiple instances where NorthWestern’s Application fell short of full compliance with the minimum filing standards. Notice of Comm’n. Action, Dkt. 2024.05.053, 2-7 (Aug. 7, 2024). The Notice specified the deficiencies and provided NorthWestern two weeks to supplement or correct the Application. *Id.* 8.

4. On August 9, 2024, NorthWestern submitted its NCA Response and Supplemental Filing (“Response”), which addressed the deficiencies identified in the Commission’s Notice. The Response included supplemental written testimony, exhibits, and updates to statements required in the minimum filing standards.

5. On August 21, 2024, the Commission issued a Notice of Commission Action finding that NorthWestern’s Response failed to remedy the Application’s non-compliance with Mont. Admin. R. 38.5.176 and provided NorthWestern an additional week to comply. Notice of Comm’n. Action, Dkt. 2024.05.053, 5 (Aug. 21, 2024). The Commission stated that NorthWestern’s filing date will be moved to correspond with the date the minimum filing requirements are met. *Id.*

6. On August 23, 2024, NorthWestern filed its NCA Response and Second Supplemental Filing (“Second Response”) to address the deficiencies identified in the Commission’s Notice. The Second Response included supplemental written testimony, workpapers, and exhibits required in the minimum filing standards.

Analysis

7. The Commission finds that NorthWestern’s Application, as twice supplemented, meets the Commission’s minimum filing standards. NorthWestern’s Second Response sufficiently addresses the failure of the Application and Response to comply with Mont. Admin. R. 38.5.176 through the second supplemental written testimony and exhibits of Glenda Gibson, NorthWestern’s Manager of Regulatory Compliance. The second supplemental written testimony provides important additional information and insight into NorthWestern’s functionalization, classification, and allocation methodologies that were absent from the Application and prior supplemental testimony. Exhibits GJG-9 and GJG-10 provide additional workpapers and allocator derivation information for electric and natural gas allocators, respectively.

Conclusion

8. The Commission concludes that NorthWestern's twice-supplemented Application meets the minimum filing requirements found at Mont. Admin. Rs. 38.5.101–195. The Commission further concludes that the effective filing date for NorthWestern's Application is now August 23, 2024.

9. Because NorthWestern's Application is now complete, the Commission will also reopen the period for intervention. The new deadline for intervention will be **September 6, 2024**. A party seeking intervention must file an electronic petition on the Commission's website at reddi.mt.gov. All filings must be made in REDDI and hard copies are not required. A party seeking intervention must also mail a copy of the petition to MCC at P.O. Box 201703, Helena, MT 59620, and to NorthWestern's attorneys, Shannon M. Heim and Sarah N. Norcott, 208 N. Montana Ave. Suite 200, Helena MT 59601.

10. The Commission's jurisdiction over this matter is provided in Title 69 and Title 2, Chapter 4 of the Montana Code Annotated; Title 38, Chapters 2 and 5 of the Montana Administrative Rules; and any prior orders of the Commission relevant to the issues presented.

DONE and DATED September 3, 2024, by the Montana Public Service Commission, through delegation to staff.

JAMES BROWN, President
JENNIFER FIELDER, Vice President
TONY O'DONNELL, Commissioner
RANDALL PINOCCI, Commissioner
DR. ANNIE BUKACEK, Commissioner

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that on September 3, 2024, a true and accurate copy of the foregoing document was served by email to the following:

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Notification of NorthWestern Energy Filings

By: /s/ Tarin Slayton
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Montana Public Service Commission