

16. Each utility subject to the rules in (1) (a) will file a plan for implementation as soon as possible and no later than 60 days from date of publication. The plans shall include a list of uniform bill codes developed by the utilities, to be approved by the commission.

(b) Each bill including the customer's receipt rendered by gas utilities not included in par. (a), shall show the present and last preceding meter readings, the date of the present reading, the number of units consumed, the class of service if other than residential, and the rate schedule under which the bill is calculated. In lieu of including the rate schedule on the bill the utility may, whenever a rate change becomes effective and at least twice a year, supply each customer with the schedule of rates at which the bills are calculated and any other rates that might be applicable. Bills rendered at rates requiring the measurement of a number of different factors shall show all data necessary for the customer to check the calculation of the bill. All monthly adjustment clause factors necessary for a customer to check the calculation of the bill shall be included on the monthly bill. Minimum and estimated bills shall be distinctly marked as such. Estimated bills are bills rendered without actual meter readings.

(c) Merchandise and service repair work charges shall not be included on utility service bills.

(d) The utility may include on the utility service bill charges to the customer resulting from other services, materials or work provided by the utility as a result of commission-approved conservation and alternative energy programs. The charges shall be listed individually on the bill and the customer shall be permitted to include such payment in his or her payment for gas utility service. Any partial payments will be applied first to the amount due for utility service and the remainder to the other charges.

(e) The commission may authorize the utility to make late payment charges to a customer's utility service bill that is not paid in full within 20 days following issuance of the bill. The late payment charge may be either a one-time charge as provided in par. (f) or a monthly charge as provided in par. (g). The utility shall receive approval from the commission of the method it desires to use and shall not change methods without commission approval.

(f) If the utility is authorized to make a one-time late payment charge, such charge shall comply with the following requirements:

1. The bill shall clearly indicate the amount of the late payment charge and the date after which the late payment charge shall be applied.

2. Late payment charges shall be applied no sooner than 20 days after the date of issuance of the bill.

3. The amount of the late payment charge shall be 3% of the bill, except a minimum charge of 30¢ shall apply.

4. Late payment charges shall be applied to all customer classes and rate classifications.

5. The utility shall not waive any properly applied late payment charges.

6. A late payment shall be applied only once to any given amount outstanding.

(g) If the utility is authorized to make monthly late payment charges, such charges shall comply with the following requirements:

1. The amount of the charge shall be no more than 1-½% per month and shall be filed with and approved by the commission before it can be applied.

2. The late payment charge shall be applied to the total unpaid balance for utility service, including unpaid late payment charges.

3. The late payment charge shall be applied no sooner than 20 days after the date of issuance of the bill.

4. The late payment charge shall be applied to all customer classes and rate classifications.

5. If a customer disputes a bill for utility service or portion thereof and does not pay the disputed bill in full within 20 days following issuance of the bill, the late payment charge shall be applied only to that portion of the disputed bill later found to be correct and payable to the utility.

6. The utility may not waive any properly applied late payment charge.

7. No additional late payment charge may be applied to a delinquent account for utility service after the date on which the delinquent account was written off by the utility as uncollectable.

8. If a utility changes the type of late payment charge or initiates a late payment charge, the new charge shall apply only to utility service provided after the effective date of the change or initiation.

(2) (a) If the billing period is longer or shorter than allowed in s. PSC 134.12, the bill shall be prorated on a daily basis unless other provision is made in the utility's filed rules.

(b) If the utility cannot read the meter at the end of each billing period, or if the customer requests it, the utility shall leave meter-reading forms at the premises for completion by the customer. If no form is left or the form is not returned in time for the billing operation, a minimum or estimated bill may be rendered. In cases of emergency, the utility may render minimum or estimated (average) bills without reading meters or supplying meter-reading forms to customers. Only in unusual cases or when approval is obtained from the customer shall more than 3 consecutive estimated bills be rendered.

(c) If meter reading is not scheduled on a monthly basis, the utility shall supply customers with meter-reading forms for the periods when the meter is not scheduled to be read by the utility. Customers shall not be required to provide these meter readings. If the customer informs the utility he or she does not desire to supply a reading or if the form is not returned in time for the billing operation, a minimum or estimated bill may be rendered.

(d) When an actual meter reading indicates that a previous estimated bill was abnormally high or low the utility shall calculate the bill for the entire period as if use of service was normally distributed throughout the

period. The previous estimated charge shall be deducted from the re-computed total. If there is evidence to indicate that actual use was not uniform throughout the period, the billing shall be adjusted according to available information.

(3) (a) Credits due a customer because of meter inaccuracies, errors in billing, or misapplication of rates shall be shown separately and identified.

(b) The original billing rendered because of meter inaccuracy, or errors in billing, shall be separated from the regular bill and the charges explained in detail.

(4) Each bill for service shall be computed at the proper filed rate and the rate used shall be the cheapest applicable rate based on 12 months' use of service. If the customer's use is such that it is difficult to be certain what rate should be applied until there has been 12 months' use, the billing shall be adjusted on the first bill following the end of the 12 month use period.

(a) This rule does not prohibit contracts having terms longer than 1 year but does require that the rates paid under such contracts be the utility's lowest applicable rates on file with the commission.

(b) Where a customer is eligible to take service under more than one rate schedule the utility shall inform the customer how to select the rate that results in the lowest cost of service, based on 12 months' service and on the information at hand.

(c) The customer shall be informed of the selection of a rate every 12 months, whenever there is a change in rates that would affect the customer and at any other time the customer so requests.

(d) Section PSC 134.13(4) (a) (b) and (c) applies to service as it is being supplied. If the customer could reduce his or her bills by installing equipment, combining or separating services, he or she should be notified, but no change in rates shall be made until the customer makes the necessary changes.

(5) All utilities listed in PSC 134.13 (1) (a) shall bill on a "therm" basis. Other utilities may base their rates on either a volumetric basis or a "therm" basis but permission must be obtained from this commission to change any rate from one method to another. The unit of service on a volumetric basis shall be the cubic foot. If the volume billed is at a different pressure and/or temperature base than the registered volume, the rate shall specify the billing pressure and temperature. The "therm" billing unit shall be 100,000-British thermal units of total dry heating value. Where therm billing is used, the heating value shall be the average for the billing period or a filed lesser amount. Adjustment of volumes or therms billed shall not be made because of the delivery of standby or peak shaving gas without commission approval.

(6) Each utility shall offer a budget payment plan to all prospective and existing residential customers and to all commercial accounts for which the primary purpose of the service is to provide for residential living, subject to the following minimum requirements.

(a) A budget payment plan tariff shall be on file with the public service commission, applicable only to charges for utility services under PSC jurisdiction.

(b) A budget payment plan may be established at any time of the year. The budget amount shall be calculated on the basis of the estimated consumption and estimated applicable rates through the end of the budget year. If the budget year is a fixed year, then prospective and existing customers requesting a budget payment plan after the start of the fixed year will have their initial monthly budget amount determined on the basis of the number of months remaining in the current budget year.

(c) An applicant for a budget plan shall be informed at the time of application and an existing budget plan customer on at least a quarterly basis, that budget amounts shall be reviewed and changed every 6 months if necessary, in order to reflect current circumstances. Adjustments to the budget amount shall be made with the objective that the customer's underbilled or overbilled balance at the end of the budget year shall be less than one month's budget amount.

(d) Customers on the budget payment plan shall be notified of adjustments by means of a bill insert, a message printed on the bill itself, or both. When an adjustment is made to a budget payment amount, the customer shall be adequately informed of the adjustment at the same time the bill containing the adjustment is rendered.

(e) Customers who have arrearages shall be allowed to establish a budget payment plan by signing a deferred payment agreement for the arrears, according to the provisions of s. PSC 134.063.

Note: Provisions of PSC 134.13 (6) (e) have been incorporated into PSC 134.13 (6) (e) and (d).

(f) Budget payment plans shall be subject to the late payment charge provisions of sub. (1) (f) and (g). In addition, if a budget payment is not paid the customer shall be appropriately notified with the next billing. If proper payment is not received subsequent to this notification, the next regular billing may effectuate the removal of the customer from the budget payment plan and reflect the appropriate amount due.

(g) At the end of a budget year, if an underbilled or overbilled balance exists in the account, the balance shall be handled as follows:

1. A customer's debit balance will be paid in full or, at the customer's option, on a deferred basis.

2. A customer's credit balance will be applied against the customer's account or, at the customer's option, a refund shall be made.

History: 1-2-58; r. and recr. Register, February, 1959, No. 38, eff. 3-1-59; am. (6), Register, January, 1966, No. 109, eff. 2-1-66; r. and recr. (1), Register, August, 1976, No. 248, eff. 9-1-76; am. Register, March, 1979, No. 279, eff. 4-1-79; am. (1) and (6), Register, October, 1980, No. 288, eff. 11-1-80; am. (6), Register, November, 1980, No. 299, eff. 12-1-80; renum. (1) (d) to be (1) (f) and am. (intro.), cr. (1) (d), (e) and (g) and am. (6) (f), Register, September, 1981, No. 309, eff. 10-1-81.

PSC 134.14 Adjustment of bills. (1) Whenever a meter is found to have an error of more than 3% fast as determined in the manner specified in s. PSC 134.28 under any load condition, a recalculation of bills for service shall be made for the period of inaccuracy assuming an inaccu-

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racy equal to the maximum fast percentage. The recalculation shall be made on the basis that the service meter should be 100% accurate.

(2) If the period of inaccuracy cannot be determined, it shall be assumed that the full amount of inaccuracy existed during the last half of the period since the previous test was made on the meter; however, the period of accuracy shall not exceed one-half the required test period.

(3) If the average gas bill of a customer does not exceed \$10 per month over the refund period the monthly consumption of which the refund is calculated may be averaged.

(4) If the recalculated bills indicate that more than \$1 is due an existing customer or \$2 is due a person no longer a customer of the utility, the full amount of the calculated difference between the amount paid and the recalculated amount shall be refunded to the customer. The refund to an existing customer may be in cash or as credit on a bill. If a refund is due a person no longer a customer of the utility, a notice shall be mailed to the last known address, and the utility shall upon request made within 3 months thereafter refund the amount due.

(5) Whenever a meter is found to be more than 3% slow on any test load, the utility may bill the customer for the amount the test indicates has been undercharged for the period of inaccuracy which period shall not exceed the last 6 months the meter was in service unless otherwise ordered by the commission after investigation. No back billing will be sanctioned if the customer has called to the company's attention his doubts as to the meter's accuracy and the company has failed within a reasonable time to check it.

(6) A classified record shall be kept of the number and amount of refunds and charges made because of inaccurate meters, misapplication of rates, and erroneous billing. A summary of the record for the previous calendar year shall be submitted to the commission by April 1 of each year.

History: Cr. Register, 1-2-56; r. and rec. Register, February, 1959, No. 38, eff. 3-1-59.

PSC 134.15 Employees authorized to enter customers' premises. The utility shall keep a record of employees authorized pursuant to s. 196.171, Stats., to enter customers' premises.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1959, No. 38, eff. 3-1-59.

PSC 134.16 Maps and diagrams. Each utility shall have maps, records, diagrams, and drawings showing the location of its property, in sufficient detail so that the adequacy of service to existing customers may be checked and facilities located.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1959, No. 38, eff. 3-1-59.

PSC 134.17 Complaints. Each utility shall investigate and keep a record of complaints received by it from its customers in regard to safety, service, or rates, and the operation of its system. The record shall show the name and address of the complainant, the date and nature of the complaint, and its disposition and the date thereof. A summary of this record for the previous calendar year shall be sent to the commis-

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sion by April 1 of each year. Each utility also shall document all contacts and actions relative to deferred payment arrangements and disputes.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1959, No. 38, eff. 3-1-59; am. Register, March, 1979, No. 279, eff. 4-1-79.

PSC 134.18 Record of interruption of service. (1) Each utility shall keep a record of all interruptions to service affecting an entire distribution system of any urban area or an important division of a community. The record shall show the date and time of interruption, the cause, the approximate number of customers affected, and the date and time of restoring service.

(2) Each utility shall keep a record of all failures and notifications of difficulty with transmitted gas supply affecting each gate station. The record shall show the date and time of failure or notification, the date and time of resumption of normal supply, the operation of standby equipment including amount of gas produced, the number of customers whose service was interrupted and the maximum and minimum gas supply pressure during the period of difficulty.

(3) A summary of records required by subs. (1) and (2) shall be sent to the public service commission by April 1 of each year.

(4) Each interruption of service which affects more than 100 customers shall be reported by mail, telephone, or telegraph to the commission within 48 hours following the discovery of the interruption.

(5) Any interruption of a principal gas supply shall be immediately reported to the commission by telephone or telegraph by the utility or utilities affected.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1959, No. 38, eff. 3-1-59.

PSC 134.19 Meter records and reports. (1) Whenever a gas meter is tested, such record shall be kept until that meter is tested again. This record shall indicate the information that is necessary for identifying the meter, the reason for making the test, the reading of the meter before it was removed from service, the accuracy of measurement, and all the data that were taken at the time of the test. This record must be sufficiently complete to permit convenient checking of the methods and calculations that have been employed.

(2) Another record shall be kept which indicates when the meter was purchased, its size, its identification, its various places of installation, with dates of installation and removal, the dates and results of all tests, and the dates and details of all repairs. The record shall be arranged in such a way that the record for any meter can be readily located.

(3) All utilities shall keep an "as found" high and light load test summary of all meters tested after being in service. This summary shall be made on a calendar year basis and forwarded to this commission by April 1 of the following year. This summary shall be divided according to the length of time since the last test, and meters found within each of the following per cent accuracy classifications:

(a) Over 115; 110.1-115; 105.1-110; 103.1-105; 102.1-103; 101.1-102; 100.1-101; 100; 99-99.9; 98-98.9; 97-97.9; 95-96.9; 90-94.9; 85-89.9; under 85; passing gas does not register; does not pass gas; not tested; grand

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total average % error of fast meters; average % error of slow meters;
total average error; number tested, number in service.

History: Cr. Register, February, 1959, No. 38, eff. 3-1-59.

PSC 134.20 Preservation of records. The following records shall be preserved and kept available for inspection by the commission for the periods indicated. The list is not to be taken as comprehending all types of utility records.

| | Description of Record | Period to be Retained |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| (1) | Maps showing the location and physical characteristics of existing plants | Currently |
| (2) | Engineering records in connection with construction projects | Permanently |
| (3) | Supply records: Station and system supply records All other records taken in the plant | Permanently 6 years |