

Idaho Public Utilities Commission

Case No. AVU-E-13-08, Order No. 32895

Case No. AVU-E-13-06, Order No. 32889

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PUC taking comment on two Avista applications

The Idaho Public Utilities Commission is taking comments on two Avista Utilities applications that could slightly impact rates in the future.

Comments are being accepted through Oct. 21 on the utility's request to fund up to \$300,000 in research and development of energy efficiency projects through Idaho's four-year universities. The utility also seeks authority to defer expenses related to improving oxygen levels in Lake Spokane. The commission is taking comment on that application through Oct. 24.

R&D efficiency projects, Case No. AVU-E-13-08

Avista already offers a number of programs that result in more efficient use of energy and that also reduce demand on Avista's generation system. The proposed \$300,000 in annual investment into applied research and development could benefit customers as soon as in the next one to four years, according to Avista's application. Energy efficiency and demand reduction programs are the least expensive source of energy for Avista and its customers.

The up to \$300,000 expended would be included in the company's Energy Efficiency Rider, which is adjusted annually to match revenues with expenses. The impact to an Avista residential customer who uses the company's average of 930 kilowatt-hours per month would be about eight-tenths of a cent per month or \$1 per year.

Avista says its proposal is consistent with Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter's Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission ("iGem") under which industries supplement university research and development funding provided by the state.

If the R&D funding is approved, Avista would file an annual report every March 31 outlining the project selection process, project descriptions and milestones as well as an accounting of expenditures.

Spokane Lake deferral account, Case No. AVU-E-13-06

A renewal of Avista's federal license to operate its Long Lake hydroelectric facility and Washington State Department of Environmental Quality regulations require that the utility improve oxygen conditions in Lake Spokane. The lake is a reservoir created by the Long Lake hydro plant.

The utility examined a number of alternatives to address the problem and adopted a plan that includes removing non-native carp and non-native aquatic vegetation and educating shoreline owners on proper vegetative management.

Expense incurred through Dec. 31, 2012 is about \$1.34 million according to Avista, of which \$468,893 would be allocated to Idaho customers.

If the commission allows Avista to defer the costs, rates would not be immediately impacted. However, they would be included in Avista's next general rate case filing. At that time, the commission would review those expenses to determine if they were prudently incurred and needed to serve customers.

To comment on either of these applications, go to the commission Web site, www.puc.idaho.gov and click on "Case Comment or Question Form" under the "Consumers" heading and enter the appropriate case number as cited above. Comments can also be mailed to P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0074 or faxed to (208) 334-3762.

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