

Idaho Public Utilities Commission

Case No. AVU-E-14-05, Order No. 33047 and Case No. AVU-G-14-01, Order No. 33051

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PUC opens case to allow discussions that may avoid or narrow issues in possible Avista rate case

BOISE (June 11, 2014) – State regulators have agreed to open a case that will allow interested parties to participate in settlement discussions regarding alternatives to Avista Utilities from filing a general rate case this year. Avista serves about 125,000 electric customers and 75,000 natural gas customers in northern Idaho.

An order issued today by the Idaho Public Utilities Commission will allow interested parties to engage in settlement discussions in an effort to avoid or narrow the issues in a general rate case. Intervening parties thus far include the Clearwater Paper Corporation, Idaho Forest Group, Idaho Conservation League, Snake River Alliance and the Community Action Partnership Association of Idaho, which represents primarily customers on low- and fixed-incomes. Other parties who may want to participate must file a petition to intervene with the commission by no later than June 20.

A settlement conference is scheduled for Wednesday, June 25, at 9:30 am, MDT, in the commission hearing room at 472 W. Washington St. in Boise.

In Avista's last rate case, the commission approved a settlement that, among other items, restricted the company from increasing its base rates before Jan. 1, 2015.

The commission emphasized it would not be bound by any settlement reached by the parties. If a settlement is reached, the commission will independently review it to determine whether the settlement is "just, fair and reasonable, in the public interest or otherwise in accordance with law or regulatory policy."

"Moreover, the proponents of settlement carry the burden of showing that the settlement is reasonable and in the public interest," the commission said. The commission may accept, reject or modify any settlement.

The commission's order and other documents related to this case are available on the commission's Web site at www.puc.idaho.gov. Under the "Electric" heading click on Open Cases and scroll down to Case No. AVU-E-14-05 or under the "Gas" heading, click on Open Cases and scroll down to Case No. AVU-G-14-01.

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