

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In Re: Petition for Approval of ) DOCKET NO. 951314-EI  
Tariff Revision to Require ) ORDER NO. PSC-96-0022-FOF-EI  
Customers to Obtain Their Own ) ISSUED: January 8, 1996  
Meter Sockets and Own Self- )  
Contained Meter Enclosures by )  
Gulf Power Company. )

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The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

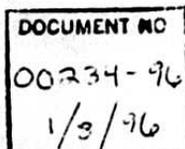
SUSAN F. CLARK, Chairman  
J. TERRY DEASON  
JOE GARCIA  
JULIA L. JOHNSON  
DIANE K. KIESLING

**ORDER APPROVING TARIFF REVISION**

BY THE COMMISSION:

**BACKGROUND**

On November 3, 1995, Gulf Power Company (Gulf or the Company) filed a petition for approval of a tariff revision to require customers to obtain their own meter sockets and own self-contained meter enclosures. Self-contained meter enclosures and sockets are basically metallic casings and slots which house the customer's electric meter and are installed when the customer builds its facility. The Company is now providing meter sockets and self-contained meter enclosures free of charge to residential contractors pursuant to the Commission's directive in Order No. 6674, issued May 20, 1975. This requirement appears to have been an attempt to create uniformity of costs among investor-owned utilities in the initial docket establishing Underground Residential Distribution charges. The order does not address any other reason for this requirement. Previously, we granted Florida Power & Light Company (FP&L) an exemption from this requirement in Order No. 18893, issued February 22, 1988, in Docket No. 870225-EI. A similar exemption was granted to Tampa Electric Company (TECO) in Order No. PSC-95-0132-FOF-EI, issued January 26, 1995, in Docket No. 941250-EI.



**DECISION**

Gulf claims that there are adequate alternative sources for such meter sockets and enclosures, and that it is an expense more appropriately borne by the customer, not the utility. We agree. Gulf stated in its petition that the annual cost of meter sockets and enclosures installed in 1994 was \$171,837. The \$1,259,489 (as of 1994) previously included in ratebase for meter enclosures will continue to be written off on the appropriate schedule. Our granting of this petition eliminates any future accruals to that amount. Besides, the elimination of this annual expense is not expected to have any impact on rates.

With respect to maintenance of existing meter enclosures, Order 18893, granting FP&L's exemption, specifically provides that if service is interrupted due to an enclosure problem, the utility will temporarily restore service and advise the customer of his responsibility to repair or replace the enclosure. This is prudent utility practice and shall be required of Gulf Power, as well.

We have the option here to modify Order 6674 to delete the requirement for the utility to provide meter sockets and/or self contained meter enclosures at no cost to the residential customer. At the time we granted TECO an exemption from this order, we directed our staff to contact Gulf Power Company (Gulf) and Florida Power Corporation (FPC), the two companies that had not requested an exemption, to determine whether it would be appropriate to modify the original order on this point. Gulf took no position at that time on whether the requirement was appropriate. FPC responded that it preferred to continue to provide such meter sockets and enclosures to residential customers at no charge. We chose to take no further action then.

Gulf, in this docket, has now formally requested exemption from the original order requirement to provide the meter sockets and meter enclosures. We have, however, received no indication that FPC's preference to supply the meter sockets or enclosures has changed. Based on the information in hand, the only modification to Order 6674 acceptable to all the utilities would be to allow utilities to provide the meter sockets and meter enclosures, but not require them to do so. With our approval of Gulf's petition above, such a change has little impact since 3 of the 4 subject utilities have requested and received exemptions. Therefore, we decline to modify Order 6674 with respect to the requirement that the utilities provide meter sockets and self-contained meter enclosures at no charge to residential customers.

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Based on the foregoing, it is, therefore,

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Gulf Power Company's petition to modify its tariff as described in the body of this Order is approved. It is further

ORDERED that the tariff revisions approved herein are effective December 19, 1995. It is further

ORDERED that if a protest is filed in accordance with the requirement set forth below, the tariff shall remain in effect with any increase in revenues held subject to refund pending resolution of the protest. It is further

ORDERED that if no protest is filed in accordance with the requirement set forth below, this docket shall be closed.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission, this 8th day of January, 1996.

BLANCA S. BAYÓ, Director  
Division of Records and Reporting

by: Kay Dejean  
Chief, Bureau of Records

( S E A L )

SLE

NOTICE OF FURTHER PROCEEDINGS OR JUDICIAL REVIEW

The Florida Public Service Commission is required by Section 120.59(4), Florida Statutes, to notify parties of any administrative hearing or judicial review of Commission orders that is available under Sections 120.57 or 120.68, Florida Statutes, as well as the procedures and time limits that apply. This notice should not be construed to mean all requests for an administrative hearing or judicial review will be granted or result in the relief sought.

The Commission's decision on this tariff is interim in nature and will become final, unless a person whose substantial interests are affected by the action proposed files a petition for a formal

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Administrative Code, in the form provided by Rule 25-22.036(7)(a)(d) and (e), Florida Administrative Code. This petition must be received by the Director, Division of Records and Reporting, 2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0850, by the close of business on January 29, 1996.

In the absence of such a petition, this order shall become final on the day subsequent to the above date.

Any objection or protest filed in this docket before the issuance date of this Order is considered abandoned unless it satisfies the foregoing conditions and is renewed within the specified protest period.

If this Order becomes final on the date described above, any party adversely affected may request judicial review by the Florida Supreme Court in the case of an electric, gas or telephone utility or by the First District Court of Appeal in the case of a water or wastewater utility by filing a notice of appeal with the Director, Division of Records and Reporting and filing a copy of the notice of appeal and the filing fee with the appropriate court. This filing must be completed within thirty (30) days of the date this Order becomes final, pursuant to Rule 9.110, Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure. The notice of appeal must be in the form specified in Rule 9.900(a), Florida Rules of Appellate Procedure.