

BEFORE THE FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In re: Request for Approval) DOCKET NO. 920349-WS
of Late Payment Charge on) ORDER NO. PSC-92-0611-FOF-WS
Past Due Bills by PALM COAST) ISSUED: 07/07/92
UTILITY CORPORATION in)
Flagler County)
_____)

The following Commissioners participated in the disposition of this matter:

SUSAN F. CLARK
J. TERRY DEASON
BETTY EASLEY
LUIS J. LAUREDO

ORDER APPROVING TARIFF IMPLEMENTING A LATE PAYMENT CHARGE

BY THE COMMISSION:

Palm Coast Utility Corporation (Palm Coast or utility) is a Class A water and wastewater utility in Flagler County, Florida. According to its 1990 Annual Report, Palm Coast served 8,143 water customers and 7,243 wastewater customers.

On April 8, 1992, Palm Coast filed a tariff proposing a late payment charge of \$3.00 for every customer's account that remained unpaid after twenty days. Palm Coast submitted cost justification with its proposed tariff showing that the dollar amount of its past due accounts has increased by 150 percent since 1988, now averaging \$60,000 a month. The utility does not believe that the customers who pay on time should be required to absorb costs associated with collecting past due accounts.

We have previously approved late payment charges for other water and wastewater utilities. We believe that the general body of ratepayers should not be required to cover costs associated with late paying customers. Therefore, we approve the utility's proposed tariff to establish a late fee in the amount of \$3.00 to be assessed after the twentieth day of the billing cycle so that customers will have an incentive to pay their bills on time.

In addition, the charge must be identified as a late charge and included in the utility's tariff section for miscellaneous service charges. Palm Coast must submit a proposed customer notice reflecting the implementation of a \$3.00 late fee charge for our approval. The tariff will become effective for service rendered on or after the stamped approval date on the tariff sheets, and after

DOCUMENT NUMBER-DATE

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the approval of the customer notice. The proposed tariff sheets will become final if a substantially affected person does not file a petition for a formal proceeding regarding the implementation of the late fee charge within twenty-one days of the date of issuance of this Order.

Based on the foregoing, it is,

ORDERED by the Florida Public Service Commission that Palm Coast Utility Corporation's tariff filing to implement a late payment charge in the amount of \$3.00 to be assessed after the twentieth day of the billing cycle is hereby approved. It is further

ORDERED that Palm Coast Utility Corporation shall submit a proposed customer notice for approval. It is further

ORDERED that the tariff shall become effective for service rendered on or after the stamped approval date on the tariff sheets, and after the approval of the proposed customer notice. It is further

ORDERED that the tariff shall become final if a substantially affected person does not file a petition for a formal proceeding within twenty-one days of issuance of this Order. If no such petition is received, this docket shall be closed.

By ORDER of the Florida Public Service Commission, this 7th day of July, 1992.

STEVE TRIBBLE, Director
Division of Records and Reporting

(S E A L)

by: Kay Flynn

Chief, Bureau of Records

NRF

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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 proceeding, as provided by Rule 25-22.036(4), Florida 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 at his office at 101 East Gaines Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0870, by the close of business on July 28, 1992.

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.