

BEFORE

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Application of The East)
Ohio Gas Company d/b/a Dominion East)
Ohio for Approval for Waivers of Rules) Case No. 12-888-GA-WVR
4901:1-13-11(B)(5) and 4901:1-17-05(B),)
Ohio Administrative Code.)

In the Matter of the Application of The East)
Ohio Gas Company d/b/a Dominion East) Case No. 12-889-GA-UNC
Ohio for Approval of a Revised Bill Format.)

In the Matter of the Application of The East)
Ohio Gas Company d/b/a Dominion East) Case No. 12-890-GA-ATA
Ohio to File Revised Tariffs.)

FINDING AND ORDER

The Commission finds:

- (1) The East Ohio Gas Company d/b/a Dominion East Ohio (DEO) is a public utility and a natural gas company as defined in Section 4905.02, and 4905.03(A)(5), Revised Code, and, as such, is subject to the jurisdiction of this Commission.
- (2) On March 8, 2012, in accordance with Rules 4901:1-13-02(C) and 4901:1-17-02(B)(3), Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.), DEO filed an application requesting waivers of Rules 4901:1-13-11(B)(5) and 4901:1-17-05(B), O.A.C. Pursuant to Rule 4901:1-13-11(D), O.A.C., DEO also proposes to revise its bill format to reflect the requested waivers and revised definitions. In addition, pursuant to Section 4905.30, Revised Code, DEO proposes to update its tariffs to reflect the revised definitions.
- (3) In support of its request for waiver of Rule 4901:1-13-11(B)(5), O.A.C., DEO explains that, as a result of the Commission's November 29, 2011, finding and order in Case No. 11-4910-AU-ORD, changes to this rule were adopted. Specifically, these rule changes require natural gas companies to incorporate the following text into their billing statements:

"If your complaint is not resolved after you have called (name of utility), or for general utility information, residential and business customers may contact the public utilities commission of Ohio (PUCO) for assistance at 1-800-686-7826 (toll free) from eight a.m. to five p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.puco.ohio.gov>. Hearing or speech impaired customers may contact the PUCO via 7-1-1 (Ohio relay service)

The Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) represents residential utility customers in matters before the PUCO. The OCC can be contacted at 1-877-742-5622 (toll free) from eight a.m. to five p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.pickocc.org>."

DEO requests a waiver to modify the required language on its bills as follows:

"If your complaint is not resolved after you have called Dominion East Ohio, or your Energy Choice supplier or governmental aggregator at the number listed on the front of your bill, or for general utility information, residential and business customers may contact the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) for assistance at 1-800-686-7826 (toll free) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.puco.ohio.gov>. Hearing or speech impaired customers may contact the PUCO via 7-1-1 (Ohio relay service)."

The Ohio Consumers' Counsel (OCC) represents residential utility customers in matters before the PUCO. The OCC can be contacted at 1-877-742-5622 (toll free) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, or at <http://www.pickocc.org>."

DEO requests these changes to encourage customers to contact their energy choice supplier in the event they have questions concerning their bills. According to DEO, the style changes are requested so that DEO's bill message conforms to the

Associated Press Stylebook, which is DEO's preferred format of company correspondence. The Associated Press Stylebook uses numeric times and capitalizes proper nouns.

- (4) The Commission finds that DEO's waiver request to modify the language required in Rule 4901:1-13-11(B)(5), O.A.C., is reasonable, as the modifications do not change the intent of the text. Therefore, DEO's request for wavier of this rule should be granted.
- (5) DEO also seeks a waiver of Rule 4901:1-1-17-05(B), O.A.C., which requires DEO, "[u]pon receiving a cash deposit," to furnish a receipt that includes the customer's name, address to be served, billing address, the deposit amount, and a statement that the rate of interest to be paid on the deposit will not be less than 3 percent per annum if the deposit is held for 180 days or longer. In support of its waiver request, DEO states that it currently bills the security deposit in three installments to be paid concurrently with the respective monthly bills. According to DEO, after each installment is paid, it sends a separate letter to the customer as a receipt for the security deposit. In lieu of sending a separate receipt to customer, DEO proposes to incorporate the deposit receipt into its monthly billing statement. DEO reasons that combining separate information from two sources into one place (the billing statement) satisfies the intent of Rule 4901:1-17-05(B) O.A.C., while also reducing paperwork for both DEO and its customers. DEO included in its application proposed bill format changes, Exhibit B and Exhibit C, which it states contain changes to satisfy the required content in Rule 4901:1-17-05(B), O.A.C.
- (6) With regard to DEO's request for a waiver of Rule 4901:1-17-05(B), O.A.C., the Commission finds that, in light of the fact that the proposed bill format changes comply with the necessary components of a receipt, the bill may be considered the customers receipt in compliance with the rule. Therefore, the Commission finds that no waiver of the rule is necessary and that DEO's proposed bill format changes in this regard should be approved.

- (7) DEO further proposes additional changes to the "Explanation of Billing Terms" section of its bill to address confusion expressed by customers regarding the terms "Basic Monthly Charge" or "Monthly Service Charge." Given that DEO does not prorate the service charge for a partial month's bill, DEO proposes to revise the description of its service charges to remove the "monthly" designation. DEO proposes to define "Service Charge" as the fixed costs for delivering gas and "Basic Service Charges" as the service Charge, plus associated riders. The existing definition for "Basic Monthly Charge" and "Monthly Service Charge" will be deleted.
- (8) Regarding DEO's proposal to change the term "Basic Monthly Charge" and "Monthly Service Charge" on its bill and associated tariffs, the Commission finds that the changes are reasonable and should, therefore, be approved.
- (9) In conjunction with the above-mentioned changes in definitions, DEO proposes to revise impacted tariffs by specifying for each that the customer will be assessed a "service charge...for each billing period or any portion thereof." DEO also proposes a variety of other minor changes to the language on the bill page containing the "Explanation of Billing Terms" section and on the back of its bill, which are to be made as a matter of preference. According to DEO, these proposed changes do not impact DEO's compliance with billing rules contained in the O.A.C.
- (10) The Commission finds that the remaining proposed tariff and bill format changes set forth in finding (9) are reasonable and that the overall format is understandable and should be approved.

It is, therefore,

ORDERED, That, in accordance with finding (4), DEO's request for wavier of Rule 4901:1-13-11(B)(5), O.A.C., be granted. It is, further,


ORDERED, That, in accordance with findings (6), (8), and (10), DEO's application to change its bill format and amend its tariff, as filed on March 8, 2012, be approved. It is further,

ORDERED, That DEO be authorized to file, in final form, four complete copies of the tariff, consistent with this finding and order. DEO shall file one copy in its TRF docket (or may make such filing electronically as directed in Case No. 06-900-AU-WVR) and one copy in this case docket. The remaining two copies shall be designated for distribution to the Rates and Tariffs, Energy and Water Division of the Commission's Utilities Department. It is, further,

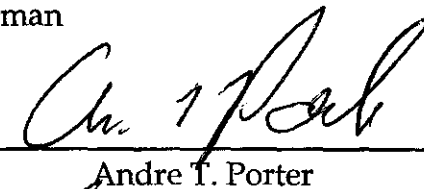
ORDERED, That the effective date of the new tariffs shall be a date not earlier than both the date of this finding and order and the date upon which final tariffs are filed with the Commission. It is, further,

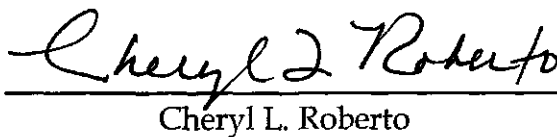
ORDERED, That a copy of this finding and order be served upon DEO and all interested persons of record.

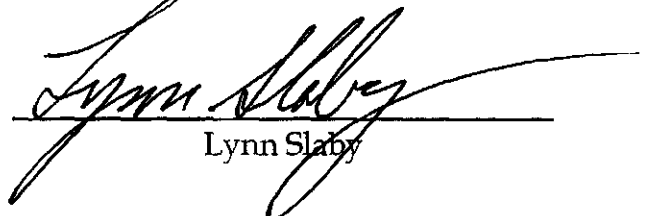
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF OHIO


Todd A. Snitchler, Chairman


Steven D. Lesser


Andre T. Porter

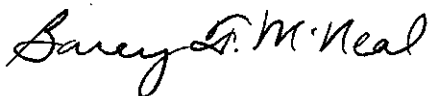

Cheryl L. Roberto


Lynn Slaby

BJB:dmm

Entered in the Journal

APR 11 2012


Barcy F. McNeal

Barcy F. McNeal
Secretary