CHAIRWOMAN
Dianne Martin

COMMISSIONERS
Kathryn M. Bailey
Michael S. Giaimo

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR
Debra A. Howland

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10
Concord, N.H. 03301-2429

TDD Access: Relay NH
1-800-735-2964

Tel. (603) 271-2431

FAX No. 271-3878

Website:
www.puc.nh.gov

October 5, 2020

Re: IR 20-089, New Hampshire Public Utilities
Investigation into Effects of the COVID-19 Emergency on Utilities and Utility Customers
Suspension of Provisions of Order No. 26,343 (March 31, 2020)

To the Parties:

On March 17, 2020, Governor Christopher T. Sununu issued Emergency Order #3, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, establishing a temporary moratorium on disconnection or discontinuation of service by providers of specified essential services. On March 31, the Commission issued Order No. 26,343, providing guidance to rate-regulated utilities and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative on the implementation of Emergency Order #3. On June 30, Governor Sununu issued Emergency Order #58, terminating the moratorium on disconnection and discontinuance of service by certain providers and putting in place a process, which would permit rate-regulated utilities and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative to resume collection and disconnection activities. Emergency Order #58 states:

> Covered providers whose rates are regulated by the Public Utilities Commission ("Commission"), and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, may begin customer outreach immediately and shall offer payment arrangements, refrain from charging late fees, and begin normal collection activity and disconnections consistent with an agreement between a utility or utilities and the Commission's Consumer Services and External Affairs Division, subsequent order of the Commission, and/or rules adopted by the Commission pursuant to RSA 541-A. The Commission shall provide assistance and guidance to rate-regulated public utilities and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative in implementing the provisions of this Order.

On September 10, 2020, Commission Staff (Staff) filed an agreement between the Commission's Consumer Services and External Affairs Division, most of the state's rate-regulated electric, gas, and water providers,[1] the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, the Office of the Consumer Advocate, New Hampshire Legal Assistance, and LISTEN Community Services.

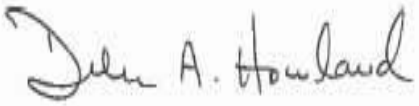
[1] The rate-regulated utilities that signed the agreement include: Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy; Unitil Energy Systems, Inc.; Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities; Northern Utilities, Inc.; Liberty Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities; Abenaki Water Company, Inc.; Aquarion Water Company of New Hampshire, Inc.; Hampstead Area Water Company, Inc.; Lakes Region Water Company, Inc.; Mill Brook Village Water System; Pennichuck East Utility, Inc.; Pennichuck Water Works, Inc.; Pittsfield Aqueduct Company, Inc.; and West Swanzey Water Company, Inc.

The agreement provides protections to customers regarding disconnections of service for non-payment, late payment fees, and payment plans for arrearages. The protections are tailored by industry and rate class. Additional protections are provided to residential customers who meet certain financial hardship criteria.

The Commission has reviewed the agreement and has found that the agreement fulfills the requirements of Emergency Order #58 for the providers that have signed the agreement.

Forest Edge Water Company, Inc., which serves 45 customers in Conway, has not entered into an agreement with the Consumer Services and External Affairs Division. Consequently, Forest Edge Water Company, Inc. remains prohibited by Emergency Order #58 from beginning collection activity or disconnecting customers for non-payment until such time as it enters into an agreement with the Consumer Services and External Affairs Division, or the Commission issues a further order or rules governing collection and disconnection activities.

Sincerely,



Debra A. Howland
Executive Director

cc: Service List (Electronically)
Docket File

Service List - Docket Related

Docket# : 20-089

Printed: 10/5/2020

Email Addresses

ExecutiveDirector@puc.nh.gov
aaugeri@lewisbuilders.com
robert.bersak@eversource.com
james.brennan@oca.nh.gov
sbrown3302@gmail.com
rburke@nhla.org
richard.chagnon@puc.nh.gov
pradip.chattopadhyay@oca.nh.gov
jared.chicoine@osi.nh.gov
gary.cronin@puc.nh.gov
mdean@mdeanlaw.net
robyn.descoteau@puc.nh.gov
paul.dexter@puc.nh.gov
joseph.a.doiron@goferr.nh.gov
epler@unitil.com
sfairchild@newenglandservicecompany.com
matthew.fossum@eversource.com
tom.frantz@puc.nh.gov
steve.frink@puc.nh.gov
larry.goodhue@pennichuck.com
marc.hanks@directenergy.com
carolann.howe@pennichuck.com
jim.r.ingram@gmail.com
maureen.karpf@libertyutilities.com
Paul.Kasper@puc.nh.gov
jay.kerrigan@pennichuck.com
randy.knepper@puc.nh.gov
donald.kreis@oca.nh.gov
NLaChance@NewEnglandServiceCompany.com
jayson.laflamme@puc.nh.gov
Corrine.Lemay@puc.nh.gov
cmcmorran@aquarionwater.com
steven.mullen@libertyutilities.com
amanda.noonan@puc.nh.gov
ocalitigation@oca.nh.gov
rorie.patterson@puc.nh.gov
pphillips@primmer.com
michael.sheehan@libertyutilities.com
Christa.Shute@oca.nh.gov

stephenpstcyr@yahoo.com
nathaniel1970@gmail.com
john@lewisbuilders.com
dszabo@aquarionwater.com
taylorp@unitil.com
George.Torres@Pennichuck.com
stower@nhla.org
Christopher.tuomala@puc.nh.gov
leah@Lakesregionwater.com
dvaughan@newenglandservicecompany.com
donald.ware@pennichuck.com
Angela@listencs.org