

May 3, 2007

VIA HAND DELIVERY & ELECTRONIC MAIL

Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk
Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, RI 02888

RE: Affordable Energy Plan, Docket No. 3804
Briefing Questions

Dear Ms. Massaro:

At the close of the hearing in the above-captioned docket, Executive Counsel for the Commission requested that parties to the proceeding respond to two questions:

1. Whether the Commission can provide by regulation that a very low income customer need not be physically terminated before the customer can avail himself of the arrearage forgiveness plan provided for in R.I.G.L. § 39-2-1(e)(1)?
2. What constitutes a failure to comply with the arrearage forgiveness plan described in R.I.G.L. § 39-2-1(e)(1)?

National Grid¹ and the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (“Division”) agree on the responses to the Commission’s questions. This letter represents the position of the Company and the Division.

With regard to the first question, National Grid and the Division believe that an actual physical termination need not occur to enable a very low income customer to participate in the arrearage forgiveness plan provided for in the law, so long as the Company has sent a termination notice to the customer. Avoiding a physical termination is a benefit to both the Company and the customer by avoiding the expense, time, and hardship of disconnection and reconnection.

With regard to the second question, the Division and the Company believe that the protocol set forth in the Company’s response to Record Request 5 (with regard to a customer’s failure to make payments on the transitional program) complies with the provisions of R.I.G.L. § 39-2-1(e)(1). This repayment arrangement would require a participating customer to remain current with monthly payments, but essentially allows such customers an additional 30-day grace period to make payment each month, for all thirty-six months.

¹ The Narragansett Electric Company, d/b/a National Grid (the “Company”).

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The following illustrative example describes parameters and treatment of customer accounts that the Company and the Division propose would be appropriate for the very low income arrearage forgiveness plan set forth in R.I.G.L. § 39-2-1(e)(1):

1st Month

Billing Period: January 8 to February 6
Bill Date: February 10
Due Date: March 7

2nd Month

Billing Period: February 7 to March 8
No payments or only partial payment on the February 10 bill is received by March 8
Bill Date: March 9
Bill goes out showing a past due payment plan amount
Due Date: April 4

3rd Month

Billing Period: March 9 to April 8
No payments or only partial payment on the February 10 bill is received by April 8
Account marked as in default and dropped from forgiveness program
Bill Date: April 10
Bill goes out stating they have defaulted on payment plan, dropped from the forgiveness plan and bill shows total past due amount
Due Date: May 7

If a payment in full for the February 10 bill is received by April 8, the customer will remain on the program until the next billing cycle, at which point, payment for the following month's bill will be due in full. As stated above, this repayment arrangement provides participating customers with an additional month to make payment.

Thank you for your attention to this filing. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (401) 784-7667.

Very truly yours,



Laura S. Olton

cc: Docket 3804 Service List
Paul Roberti, Esq.
Steve Scialabba, Division

Certificate of Service

I certify that a copy of the cover letter and materials accompanying this certificate were mailed or hand-delivered to the individuals listed below.



Date: May 3, 2007

Joanne M. Scanlon
 National Grid

Docket 3804 – National Grid – Affordable Energy Plan Service List as of 1/10/07

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