

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI**

In the Matter of Atmos Energy Corporation's	)	
Motion for Expedited Approval of a Tariff	)	
Authorizing an Experimental Pilot Estimated	)	Case No. GT-2006-0462
Meter Reading Program.	)	

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION TO  
GRANT RULE WAIVER AND APPROVE TARIFFS**

COMES Now the Staff of the Commission and for its Recommendation in this case states:

1. On June 6, 2006, Atmos Energy Corporation (Atmos or Company) filed a tariff sheet proposing an Experimental Pilot Estimated Meter Reading Program (Proposed Program) and filed a *Motion For Expedited Approval of Tariff*.

2. In its response to the Commission's Order *Directing Response to Motion for Expedited Treatment* (Staff indicated its agreement with Atmos' request for expedited treatment and indicated staff would file its recommendation in this case no later than Wednesday, June 14.

3. Atmos seeks to expand its *Pilot Meter Reading Program* (Existing Program) which was approved by the Commission in August 2005 to include the months of June and August, to determine whether, and under what circumstances, monthly estimates of usage, in lieu of actual meter readings, in the summer months could continue on a permanent basis.

4. The Proposed Program will allow the Company to estimate the usage for all of its Missouri customers in June, July and August. The Company claims that granting this Proposed Program will permit it, Staff and the Office of the Public Counsel to determine whether customers will benefit from more efficient operations as the Company is able to use the time normally allocated to reading meters to cross train the meter readers, assign the meter readers to

do maintenance, locate lines in new construction areas, and permit meter readers to take vacations when their duties will not need to be filled by other personnel.

5. Staff recommends that the Commission grant the Company a temporary waiver of 4 CSR 240 13.020(2), which states that “[e]ach billing statement rendered by a utility shall be computed on the actual usage during the billing period,” to allow the Company to determine whether this program has the expected benefits. Please see the attached Staff Recommendation.

WHEREFORE Staff recommends the Commission grant the Company a temporary waiver from 4 CSR 240-14.020(2) and approve the proposed program.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Lera L. Shemwell

Lera L. Shemwell  
Senior Counsel  
Missouri Bar #43792

Attorney for the Staff of the  
Missouri Public Service Commission  
P. O. Box 360  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
(573) 751-7431 Telephone  
(573) 751-9285 Fax  
lera.shemwell@psc.mo.gov

### **Certificate of Service**

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, hand-delivered, transmitted by facsimile or electronically mailed to all counsel of record this 12<sup>th</sup> day of June 2006.

/s/ Lera Shemwell

# MEMORANDUM

To: Missouri Public Service Commission Official Case File, Case No. GT-2006-0462,  
Tariff File No. JG-2006-0916, Atmos Energy Corporation

HW

From: Henry Warren, Energy Department – Tariffs/Rate Design

/s/ Thomas Imhoff 06/12/06  
Utility Operations Division/Date

/s/ Lera Shemwell 06/12/06  
General Counsel's Office/Date

Subject: Staff Recommendation for **Expedited Approval** of the Tariff Sheet Filed to Establish  
an *Experimental Pilot Estimated Meter Reading Program* Proposed Effective July 6,  
2006.

Date: 06/12/2006

On June 6, 2006, Atmos Energy Corporation (Atmos or Company) filed a tariff sheet proposing an Experimental Pilot Estimated Meter Reading Program (Proposed Program) and filed a *Motion For Expedited Approval of Tariff*. On June 7, 2006, the Missouri Public Service Commission (Commission) issued an *Order Directing Response to Motion for Expedited Treatment* directing the Public Service Commission Staff (Staff) to respond to the Company's Motion for Expedited Treatment no later than June 9, 2006.

Atmos is filing the tariff sheet to expand its *Pilot Meter Reading Program* (Existing Program) approved by the Commission in August 2005. With this filing, the Company is proposing to expand the Existing Program to the months of June and August, to determine whether, and under what circumstances, monthly estimates of usage, in lieu of actual meter readings, in the summer months could continue on a permanent basis. On April 20, 2006, Atmos presented some results from the Existing Program to Staff and the Office of the Public Counsel (OPC). The presentation indicated that the Existing Program had been successful in September 2005 in its acceptance by customers and the accuracy of the estimates.

The Proposed Program will allow the Company to estimate the usage for all of its Missouri customers in June and August. The Company will put the word, *estimate*, on all the bills of all customers in the Proposed Program. The Company will perform an actual meter reading the following month that will allow the Company to true-up the actual usage for the period. Atmos will evaluate the results of the Proposed Program and provide a report to the Staff and the Office of the Public Counsel at the conclusion of the first year of the Proposed Program. In order for the instant filing to become effective, the Commission needs to grant a waiver of 4 CSR 240 13.020(2), which states that "[e]ach billing statement rendered by a utility shall be computed on the actual usage during the billing period," except in certain circumstances that are not covered by the instant filing.

As the Company explains in their *Motion For Expedited Approval of Tariff*, they anticipate that the Proposed Program will not cause any inconvenience to customers because usage for the months of June and August are stable and among the lowest usage months in a year. The Company states that customers will benefit from more efficient operations as the Company is

able to use the time normally allocated to reading meters to cross train the meter readers, assign the meter readers to do maintenance, locating lines in new construction areas, and have meter readers take vacations when their duties will not need to be filled by other personnel.

The Commission's Energy Department – Tariffs/Rate Design Staff (Staff) has reviewed this filing and has determined that the proposed changes in the filed tariff sheet are acceptable and the Commission should grant a temporary waiver of 4 CSR 240-13.020(2) and approve the proposed program tariffs. The Staff has verified that this company has filed its annual report and is not delinquent on any assessment. The Staff is not aware of any issue currently pending before the Commission that affects, or is affected by, this filing.

Staff therefore recommends expedited approval of the following tariff sheets, as filed on June, 2006, with an effective date of July 6, 2006:

P.S.C. MO. No. 1

1<sup>st</sup> Revised Sheet No. 195.1

Canceling Original Sheet No. 195.1

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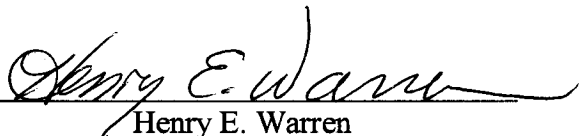
Case No. GT-2006-0426

File No. JG-2006-0916

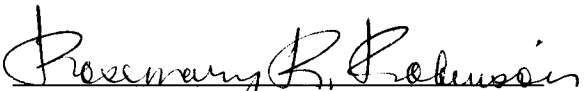
**AFFIDAVIT OF HENRY E. WARREN**

**STATE OF MISSOURI**     )  
                                      ) ss  
**COUNTY OF COLE**        )

Henry E. Warren, of lawful age, on oath states: that he participated in the preparation of the foregoing Staff Recommendation in memorandum form, consisting of   2   pages, to be presented in the above case; that the information in the Staff Recommendation were given by him; that he has knowledge of the matters set forth in such Staff Recommendation; and that such matters are true to the best of his knowledge and belief.

  
Henry E. Warren

Subscribed and sworn to before me this   12th   day of June, 2006.

  
Notary Public

My commission expires   9-23-2008  

