

LACLEDE GAS COMPANY
720 OLIVE STREET
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63101

AREA CODE 314
342-0532

MICHAEL C. PENDERGAST
ASSOCIATE GENERAL COUNSEL

FILED

APR 30 1999

Missouri Public
Service Commission

April 30, 1999

VIA FACSIMILE

Mr. Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge
Missouri Public Service Commission
Harry S Truman Building
301 W. High Street, 5th Floor
Jefferson City, MO 65101

RE: Case No. GR-99-315

Dear Mr. Roberts:

Enclosed for filing on behalf of Laclede Gas Company ("Laclede") in the above-referenced case, please find the original and fourteen copies of Laclede's Motion to Schedule Public Hearings. Please see that this filing is brought to the attention of the appropriate Commission personnel.

Laclede notes that it is filing copies of a facsimile transmission of its Motion to Schedule Public Hearings pursuant to 4 CSR 240-2.080(3). In accordance with that rule, the original of the Motion and this letter are being sent to the Commission by next-day mail.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,



Michael C. Pendergast
Associate General Counsel

MCP:jaa

cc: All parties of record

Enclosure

FILED

APR 30 1999

Missouri Public
Service Commission

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of Laclede Gas Company's)
Tariff to Revise Natural Gas Rate) Case No. GR-99-315
Schedules.)

Motion to Schedule Public Hearings

COMES NOW Laclede Gas Company ("Laclede") and for its Motion to Schedule Public Hearings in the above-captioned proceeding, states as follows:

1. On February 9, 1999, the Commission issued its Suspension Order and Notice in the above-captioned case. In its Order, the Commission directed Laclede to notify its customers of the hearings in this proceeding through a notice on or accompanying its customers' bills or through a separate notice to customers.

2. In its past rate proceedings, Laclede has utilized customer bills for purposes of providing such notice since such an approach is substantially less expensive than sending separate notices. As part of the notice, Laclede has also provided information advising its customers of the time, date and location of any public hearings which may have been scheduled by the Commission to permit public testimony on its proposed rate increase.

3. Because no Commission determination has yet been made, however, as to whether and when public hearings will be scheduled in this case, Laclede has not been able to begin the process of preparing such notices. If such a determination is not made by the second week in May,

22

Laclede's ability to use this previously acceptable, less expensive approach for providing notice will be compromised. Under normal circumstances, it takes approximately 30 days to order, print and receive the bill stock containing such a notice, and another 30 days to complete the billing cycle. Pursuant to the Suspension Order in this case, Laclede is also under an obligation to complete the entire notice process at least ten days prior to the date of the hearings. In view of these constraints, it is critical that a determination be made on or before May 14, 1999 if public hearings are to be held in late July or early August -- dates which are compatible with the procedural schedule recently established in this proceeding.


4. Laclede therefore requests that the Commission issue an Order addressing this matter as soon as possible. In the event the Commission decides to conduct public hearings in this case, Laclede further suggests that the Commission consider adopting the same public hearings times and locations adopted by the Commission in Laclede's last rate case proceeding, Case No. GR-98-374. Specifically, Laclede recommends that one public hearing be scheduled for 12:00 p.m. in downtown St. Louis (preferably at the Wainwright State Office Building) and that a second public hearing be scheduled on the same date for 6:30 p.m. in the County Council Chambers, 41 South Central Avenue, Clayton, Missouri.

WHEREFORE, for the foregoing reasons, Laclede respectfully request that the Commission issue an order, on

or before May 14, 1999, scheduling any public hearings to be held in this proceeding consistent with the recommendations set forth herein.

Respectfully submitted,

LACLEDE GAS COMPANY


Michael C. Pendergast
Associate General Counsel
Missouri Bar No. 31763
Thomas M. Byrne
Associate Counsel
Missouri Bar No. 33340
720 Olive Street, Room 1520
St. Louis, MO 63101

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Michael C. Pendergast, Associate General Counsel for Laclede Gas Company, hereby certifies that the foregoing Motion to Schedule Public Hearings in this case has been duly served upon all parties of record to this proceeding by placing a copy thereof in the United States mail, postage prepaid, on this 30th day of April, 1999.



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