

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
JEFFERSON CITY
April 17, 2001**

CASE NO: GO-2000-394

Office of the Public Counsel
P.O. Box 7800
Jefferson City, MO 65102

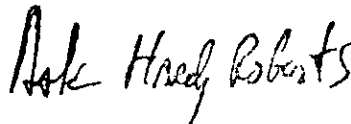
General Counsel
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St. Louis, MO 63101

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Newman, Comley & Ruth P.C.
601 Monroe Street, Suite 301
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Enclosed find certified copy of an ORDER in the above-numbered case(s).

Sincerely,



**Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge**

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

At a session of the Public Service
Commission held at its office
in Jefferson City on the 17th
day of April, 2001.

In the Matter of Laclede Gas Company's)	<u>Case No. GO-2000-394</u>
Experimental Price Stabilization Fund.)	<u>Tariff No. 200100962</u>

ORDER DENYING MOTION TO SUSPEND AND APPROVING TARIFF

On March 21, 2001, Laclede Gas Company (Laclede) filed its First Revised Tariff Sheet No. 28-g. Laclede indicates that the purpose of the tariff filing is to reduce the Required Price Protection volume percentages in the company's Experimental Price Stabilization Program (PSP) from 70 percent to 40 percent for the upcoming winter in order to permit a corresponding reduction in the program's Target Strike Price (TSP) and Catastrophic Price Level (CPL). Laclede also filed a motion for expedited treatment, requesting that the revised tariff sheet be made effective on April 1, 2001, or as soon thereafter as reasonably practicable.

On March 27, 2001, Staff filed a recommendation to suspend the revised tariff sheet. Staff argued that the revised tariff requires additional study and evaluation and should not be approved without further proceedings. Staff states that both Public Counsel and Staff need to analyze whether lower strike prices for smaller volumes would produce better overall strategies. Staff indicates that there has not been an opportunity to discuss the benefits or disadvantages of other available alternatives, nor has there been an opportunity for analysis or evaluation by the Commission Staff, the Office of the Public Counsel, and other interested parties.

Laclede filed its response to Staff's recommendation to suspend on April 4, 2001. Laclede states that the proposed tariff would permit the company to continue its efforts to line up price protection for its customers next winter at prices more favorable than those that would prevail in the absence of the filing. In addition, approving the tariff would not preclude the parties from examining, as Staff suggests, the issue of whether even lower strike prices on even fewer volumes might be appropriate for this winter.

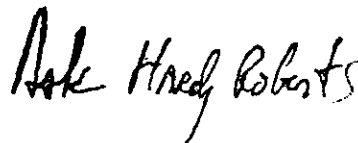
The Commission has reviewed the proposed First Revised Tariff Sheet No. 28-g, Staff's motion to suspend, Laclede's response, and the official case file. Delaying the implementation of the tariff, as requested by Staff, is likely to threaten the viability of the Experimental Price Stabilization Program. The Commission also notes that the program as currently structured terminates on September 30, 2001. Thus, the Commission determines there is not sufficient reason to suspend the tariff. In addition, the Commission finds that there is good cause to permit the proposed tariff to become effective in less than 30 days. The Commission notes that Laclede has expressed a willingness to explore with Staff and Public Counsel the possibility of seeking a further reduction in the TSP and these percentages in the future. The Commission encourages Laclede, Staff, and Public Counsel to diligently continue discussions regarding these issues.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That the Staff's Recommendation to Suspend Tariff, filed on April 4, 2001, is denied.
2. That the proposed tariff (Tariff No. 200100962), filed by Laclede Gas Company on March 21, 2001, is approved to become effective on April 18, 2001. The approved tariff sheet is:

3. That this order shall become effective on April 18, 2001.

BY THE COMMISSION



Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

(S E A L)

Lumpe, Ch., Drainer, Murray,
Simmons, and Gaw, CC., concur.

Ruth, Regulatory Law Judge

ALJ/Secretary: Ruth Payne

Date Circulated 4-13
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HL
Lumpke, Chair

mal
Draimer, Vice Chair

CM
Murray, Commissioner

KSX P2
Simmons, Commissioner

SSB
Gaw, Commissioner

4-17
Agenda Date

Action taken: 5-04A

Must Vote Not Later Than _____

STATE OF MISSOURI

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and

I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission, at Jefferson City,

Missouri, this 17th day of April 2001.

Dale Hardy Roberts

Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

