

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

At a session of the Public Service
Commission held at its office
in Jefferson City on the 16th
day of August, 1996.

In the Matter of the Application of D.J. Youngblood for)
Change of Electric Supplier.) Case No. EO-96-356
)

**ORDER APPROVING APPLICATION FOR CHANGE
OF ELECTRIC SERVICE SUPPLIERS**

On April 24, 1996, Mr. D.J. Youngblood (Applicant) filed an application for change of electric service provider. Applicant is currently served by White River Valley Electric Cooperative (White River). Applicant requests that the Commission authorize a change of electric service supplier to The Empire District Electric Company (Empire). Mr. Youngblood states that Empire provides electric service to all dwellings in his trailer park except for his. Mr. Youngblood states that he would like Empire to provide electric service to all the dwellings in the trailer park.

On May 24, 1996, Empire filed a response to the application. Empire can and will provide electric service to Mr. Youngblood's home, if so ordered by the Commission. According to Empire, Mr. Youngblood must make a one-time payment to lease a new meter pedestal. The one-time payment will be between \$110 and \$190, depending upon the amperage chosen. Mr. Youngblood will have to provide an appropriate ditch for underground service, conduit and conductor service from the metering point to the new pedestal, and make any necessary improvements to the existing service on his side of the meter to meet applicable codes.

On May 30, 1996, White River filed a response to the application. White River states that granting Mr. Youngblood's request to change from White River to Empire is in the public interest. Mr. Youngblood's service

location is isolated from the remainder of White River's distribution system. White River is not lawfully eligible to serve new customers that may build residences in the area in the future.

Mr. Youngblood is the only member served by an extension from a White River three-phase line crossing a valley with a span of 1,300 to 1,400 feet. The Applicant resides at the bottom of that valley. The tap off the three-phase line creates some risk to the integrity of the structure supporting the 1,400-foot hill-to-hill span. Removal of that tap may be beneficial to other White River members insofar as it reduces the likelihood of pole failure due to physical stress.

White River states that there are unavoidable safety implications due to Mr. Youngblood's location. It is physically impossible to provide Mr. Youngblood the same high level of quality response in case of emergency that White River offers other members.

Under Section 394.315.2, R.S.Mo., the Public Service Commission may order a change of suppliers on the basis that it is in the public interest for a reason other than a rate differential. In its order issued July 2, 1996, the Commission stated that two things must occur prior to a ruling on whether the requested relief should be granted: first, that Mr. Youngblood should be advised of what will be required of him with as much specificity as possible; and second, notice to the Commission as to whether Mr. Youngblood still desired to change to Empire electric service.

On July 24, 1996, the Staff filed a Status Notice. Staff states that on July 9, 1996, it had sent a letter to Applicant detailing the anticipated dollar cost and actions requested of Applicant to implement a change of his electric service from White River to Empire.

On August 5, 1996, Staff filed a memorandum to the official case file. Staff states that it concurs with White River in that changing Applicant's

electric provider from White River to Empire is in the public interest. Thus, Staff recommends the Commission issue an order authorizing a change in electric service provider from White River to Empire. Attached to the Staff memorandum is a letter which Staff sent to Mr. Youngblood. The letter details the costs and requirements of Mr. Youngblood. Mr. Youngblood signed the letter on July 26, 1996, indicating that he is aware of the cost and specific actions required of him to change suppliers to Empire, and that he desires the change of suppliers.

The standard for approval of an application for a change of electric service is whether the change is in the public interest for a reason other than a rate differential. Section 394.315.2, R.S.Mo. 1994.

Since no person filed an application to intervene and there are no outstanding requests for hearing, the Commission determines that an oral hearing is not necessary. The Commission will rule on Mr. Youngblood's request for relief based on the pleadings and verified application. *State ex rel. Rex Deffenderfer Enterprises, Inc. v. Public Service Commission*, 776 S.W.2d 494, 496 (Mo. App. 1989).

The Commission finds that a change in electric service providers from White River to Empire with respect to Mr. Youngblood's residence is in the public interest and that Mr. Youngblood's request should be granted.

The Commission finds that Applicant's service location is isolated from the remainder of White River's distribution system, which results in unavoidable safety concerns. It is not possible for White River to provide Applicant the same high level of response in case of emergency that White River offers other members because of Applicant's service location. For these reasons it is in the public interest to authorize Empire to provide service to Mr. Youngblood's location rather than White River.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That the relief requested in Mr. Youngblood's application which was filed on April 24, 1996, be, and is hereby, granted.

2. That White River Valley Electric Cooperative and The Empire District Electric Company be, and are hereby, authorized to take necessary action to change Mr. Youngblood's electric service provider from White River Valley Electric Cooperative to The Empire District Electric Company.

3. That this order shall become effective on the 26th day of August, 1996.

BY THE COMMISSION



**David L. Rauch
Executive Secretary**

(S E A L)

Zobrist, Chm., Crumpton and
Drainer, CC., concur.
McClure and Kincheloe, CC.,
absent.

ALJ: Luckenbill.