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In the Matter of Missouri Gas Energy's)	
Tariff Sheets Designed to Increase Rates)	<u>Case No. GR-98-140</u>
for Gas Service in the Company's Missouri)	
Service Area.)	
In the Matter of Missouri Gas Energy's)	
Proposed Modifications to its Facilities)	<u>Case No. GT-98-237</u>
Extension Policy.)	

On October 3, 1997, Missouri Gas Energy, a division of Southern Union Company (MGE or Company), filed tariff sheets with the Commission requesting an annual increase in revenues for the Missouri service area of the Company in the amount of \$27,817,140 or 6.89 percent. The Commission docketed those tariff sheets in Case No. GR-98-140 and issued a Suspension Order and Notice on October 29 which directed that requests for local public hearings be filed no later than February 20, 1998. On November 17, 1997, the City of St. Joseph filed an Application to Participate and requested that a local public hearing be held in St. Joseph.

On November 18, 1997, MGE filed tariff sheets designed to modify its Facilities Extension Policy. On January 7, 1998, the Commission docketed those tariff sheets in Case No. GT-98-237 and issued an order suspending the effective date of the tariff sheets and consolidating Case No. GT-98-237 with Case No. GR-98-140.

On December 8, 1997, Public Counsel filed a Request for Local Public Hearings in Case No. GR-98-140. Public Counsel specifically

requests that the Commission schedule local public hearings in "the service areas of Missouri Gas Energy, more particularly, the St. Joseph, Joplin, Monett/Nixa, Eastern Jackson County (Blue Springs/Independence) and Kansas City metropolitan areas."

The Commission has considered the requests of Public Counsel and the City of St. Joseph. The Commission determines that it is reasonable and appropriate to set local public hearings in the communities of Kansas City, Blue Springs, St. Joseph and Joplin. Direct notice of the hearings shall be sent by the Company, by an imprint on the customer's monthly billing, billing insert, first class letter, or postcard, to each of the Company's residential and commercial customers at least fifteen (15) days prior to the local public hearing date. The direct notice to customers sent by the Company shall prominently state the time, date, and location of the local hearing regarding the Company's rate increase request. The notice will contain enough information so that the recipient can reasonably understand how to determine the location of the hearing. The notice will provide information regarding the amount of the proposed rate increase and the appropriate percentage of the proposed increase. The Staff of the Commission (Staff), Public Counsel and the Company shall develop mutually agreeable language to be contained in the Company's direct notice to customers.

The Commission will direct the Commission's Information Officer to send notice of the local public hearings to radio stations, television stations, and publishers of each newspaper located in the Company's service area, as listed in the newspaper directory of the current **Official Manual of the State of Missouri**, and to members of the General Assembly representing customers in the Company's service area. The Commission will

also direct the Records Department of the Commission to serve a copy of this order upon the county commission of each county and mayor of each municipality within the Company's service area.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That the requests for local public hearings filed by the City of St. Joseph on November 17, 1997, and Office of the Public Counsel on December 8, 1997, are granted, as set out below:

MONDAY, APRIL 20, 1998

12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	City Hall 4th Floor Conference Room 11th & Frederick St. Joseph, Missouri
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5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	Jackson County Parks & Recreation Fleming Hall 22807 Woods Chapel Road Blue Springs, Missouri
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WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1998

12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Monett South Park, Casino Hwy. 37 & 60 Monett, Missouri
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5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.	UMKC Law School 5100 Rock Hill Road Kansas City, Missouri
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2. That the Records Department and Information Office of the Commission shall serve copies of this order and provide notice as described in this order.

3. That anyone with special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Missouri Public Service Commission as soon as possible at one of the following numbers: Consumer Services Hotline - 1-800-392-4211 or TDD Hotline - 1-800-829-7541.

4. That this order shall become effective on April 14, 1998.

BY THE COMMISSION

Dale Hardy Roberts

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

(S E A L)

Lumpe, Ch., Murray, Schemenauer
and Drainer, CC., concur.
Crumpton, C., absent.

G. George, Regulatory Law Judge

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COMMISSION COUNSEL
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION