

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

In the Matter of a Working Case to Consider)	
Best Practices for Recovery of Past-Due Utility)	File No. AW-2020-0356
Customer Payments After the COVID-19)	
Pandemic Emergency)	

**MISSOURI DIVISION OF ENERGY'S
RESPONSE TO ORDER DIRECTING RESPONSES**

COMES NOW the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) – Division of Energy (“DE”), and for its response to the Missouri Public Service Commission’s (“Commission”) *Order Directing Responses* respectfully states as follows:

On June 24, 2020, the Commission issued its *Notice of Ex Parte and Extra-Record Communications and Order Directing Responses* in the above-styled matter. The order included a request for responses by non-utility parties to a list of four questions. DE hereby provides its responses to the second question and a portion of the fourth question, since DE has pertinent information related to these items.

Question 2: Please describe any final or proposed COVID-19 related changes to the Low-Income Weatherization Assistance Program (LIWAP).

Response: There have been no permanent changes to LIWAP, although the following temporary changes have been made:

- Missouri received approval from the U.S. Department of Energy (“USDOE”) to forgo (a) blower door testing for initial audits and (b) final inspections in weatherized homes during the pendency of the coronavirus disease of 2019 (“COVID-19”) crisis.

- DE technical staff will visit select subgrantees once per fiscal year instead of twice per fiscal year for technical monitoring. DE has also adjusted on-site monitoring to incorporate the use of additional personal protective equipment and physical distancing from residents.
- USDOE allowed grantees to combine fiscal year 2020 and fiscal year 2021 funds into one grant period.¹ However, Missouri did not elect to use this option since it did not benefit LIWAP subgrantees.
- DE worked with the Department of Social Services on amending the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (“LIHEAP) State Plan to allow for higher average expenditures per household when using LIHEAP funds for weatherization. This amendment raises the “average cost per unit” to \$8,750, which provides improved flexibility in the use of LIHEAP funds for weatherization.
- DE has increased communication with subgrantees by holding more frequent meetings (currently on a biweekly basis) to stay apprised of subgrantee activities and to answer questions as they arise.

Question 4: ... share other relevant concerns arising from the COVID- 19 pandemic; please include how the pandemic is effecting your organization and the people your organization serves.

Response: The only other effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on LIWAP is a delay of approximately three to four months in service provided to clients. Ultimately, all services should resume, and all postponed work should be completed, by the end of fiscal year 2021. DE is working

¹ The fiscal year for LIWAP ends on June 30.

with the subgrantees to ensure that they have plans in place to spend available funds.

WHEREFORE, the Missouri Division of Energy submits its response to the Commission's *Order Directing Responses* in the above-styled working docket.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Ross Keeling
Ross Keeling, Bar No. 65361
Legal Counsel
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, MO 65102
573-751-6615
Ross.keeling@dnr.mo.gov
Attorney for Missouri Division of Energy

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that true and correct copies of the foregoing have been emailed to the certified service list this 15th day of July, 2020.

/s/ Ross Keeling