

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

At a session of the Public Service Commission held by telephone and internet audio conference on the 17th day of March, 2021.

In the Matter of Spire Missouri Inc.'s d/b/a)	
Spire Missouri East and Spire Missouri)	<u>File No. GR-2021-0280</u>
West Filing of its Proposed Weather)	Tariff Nos. YG-2021-0163 &
Normalization Adjustment Rider (WNAR))	YG-2021-0164
Tariff Sheets)	

**ORDER APPROVING WNAR TARIFF AND
ORDERING STAFF TO INVESTIGATE A BILLING ERROR**

Issue Date: March 17, 2021

Effective Date: April 1, 2021

On March 2, 2021, Spire Missouri Inc. (Spire), on behalf of itself and its two operating units, Spire Missouri East (Spire East) and Spire Missouri West (Spire West), filed proposed revisions to its Weather Normalization Adjustment Rider (WNAR) tariff sheets with tariff tracking Numbers YG-2021-0163 and YG-2021-0164. On March 2, 2021, the Commission issued its Order Directing Staff Recommendation and Setting Time for Responses. On March 11, 2021, Spire filed substitute tariff sheets, and the Commission's Staff (Staff) filed its Staff Recommendation for Approval of Tariff Sheets to Adjust the Weather Normalization Adjustment Rider (WNAR) Rates of Spire East and Spire West and Motion to Direct Staff to Investigate Spire's WNAR Billing Errors (Recommendation). On March 15, 2021, Spire filed a response to Staff's Recommendation and Motion.

Spire's WNAR became effective on April 19, 2018. The purpose of the WNAR is to adjust revenues for differences between actual heating degree days and normal

heating degree days. This is Spire's sixth WNAR filing. Spire's current and proposed rates are included in the following table:

District	Current	Proposed
Spire East	0.00160	0.01006
Spire West	0.00369	0.01059

Staff states that because previous periods generally experienced warmer weather than normal in Spire's rate districts, the proposed rates are a larger rate in this filing. Staff's recommendation explains the effect of Spire's WNAR tariff sheet filing is that a residential customer who used 100 therms or ccf in a given billing month will see a line item increase of \$0.85 for customers of Spire East and a line item increase of \$0.69 for customers of Spire West.

Staff's recommendation also identified a WNAR billing error. Staff states that during its investigation it found that Spire did not incorporate the WNAR rate reflected in its tariffs, effective October 1, 2020, to the present, in its billing system until February 22, 2021. Staff states that as the WNAR rates prior to October 1, 2020, were negative rates, and the current WNAR rates since October 1, 2020, are positive, customers received a credit rather than a charge in the WNAR line item on their bills for most of the prior winter months. Staff contends Spire's failure to bill the tariffed rate from October 1, 2020 to February 22, 2021 is a violation of Spire's currently effective tariff.

Staff states that the WNAR rates now proposed are not impacted by Spire's failure to bill its customers the appropriate rate in previous months. The reconciliation period for those months will not be addressed until Spire's September 2021 filing. Staff states that it has reviewed the proposed tariff sheets, as substituted on March 11, 2021, and that notwithstanding the incorrect billing discussed above, it recommends approval of the tariff

sheets to go into effect for service on April 1, 2021. Staff states it has verified that Spire is not delinquent on any assessment and has filed its Annual Report. Staff states it is not aware of any other matter pending before the Commission that affects or is affected by this tariff filing, with the exception of the billing errors identified above. With regard to those billing errors, Staff recommends the Commission order Staff to investigate their scope and file its findings and recommendations in this case.

The Commission set a deadline for responses to the tariff changes or Staff's recommendation. Except for Spire's response to Staff's recommendation, no other party responded or opposed approval of the tariff. The Commission has reviewed the tariff and Staff's verified recommendation and memorandum. The Commission will approve the tariff sheets, as substituted, to become effective on April 1, 2020.

Spire requests that the Commission deny Staff's Motion to Direct Staff to Investigate Spire's WNAR Billing Errors, stating that Spire is willing to provide information on how the billing error occurred and how the billing error issue may be addressed going forward. Spire states it does not believe the issue rises to the level of an "investigation" and that Staff's request is premature. The Commission concurs with Staff, and will open a new separate case and direct Staff to investigate the nature and scope of the billing errors described in the body of this order.

As the tariff sheets would take effect in less than 30 days without an order of the Commission, and to ensure the timely adjustment of rates to account for differences between actual heating degree days and normal heating degree days, this order will take effect in less than 30 days.

THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:

1. The tariff sheets filed by Spire Missouri Inc.'s d/b/a Spire Missouri East and Spire Missouri West on March 2, 2021, substituted on March 11, 2021, and assigned tracking numbers YG-2021-0163 and YG-2021-0164, are approved to become effective on April 1, 2021.

2. The Commission's Staff shall investigate the nature and scope of the Spire's WNAR billing errors described in the body of this order. The Commission will open a new case, by separate order, in which that investigation shall proceed.

3. This order shall become effective on April 1, 2021.



BY THE COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Morris L. Woodruff".

Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary

Silvey, Chm., Kenney, Rupp, Coleman, and
Holsman CC., concur.

Graham, Regulatory Law Judge