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November 21, 2003

FILED²

NOV 21 2003

Missouri Public
Service Commission

Mr. Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge
Missouri Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, Missouri 65102

RE: *Empire District Electric Company of Joplin, Missouri*
Case No. ER-2002-424

Mr. Roberts:

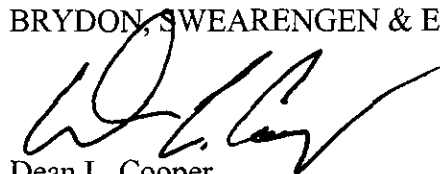
Enclosed for filing in the above-referenced matter are the original and eight (8) copies of The Empire District Electric Company's Status Report in Response to Order Directing Filing. A copy of the foregoing document has been mailed or hand-delivered, this date, to all parties of record.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

BRYDON, SWEARENGEN & ENGLAND P.C.

By:



Dean L. Cooper

DLC/jar

Enclosures

cc: John B. Coffman
Denny Frey
Stuart Conrad
Kelly Walters

FILED²
NOV 21 2003

Missouri Public
Service Commission

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

In the Matter of The Empire District Electric Company)
of Joplin, Missouri, for authority to File Tariffs Increasing)
Rates for Electric Service Provided to Customers in the)
Missouri Service Area of the Company.)

Case No. ER-2002-424

**STATUS REPORT IN
RESPONSE TO ORDER DIRECTING FILING**

COMES NOW The Empire District Electric Company ("Empire") and, in response to the Missouri Public Service Commission's ("Commission") Order Directing Filing, provide the following status report:

1. On October 31, 2003, the Commission issued its Order Directing Filing wherein it directed Empire to file a "status report regarding any residual amounts that have resulted from the company's inability to locate customers eligible for refunds in connection with the company's Interim Energy Charge."

2. As the Commission may recall, the Interim Energy Charge ("IEC") was established with the Commission's approval of a Unanimous Stipulation and Agreement in Case No. ER-2001-299. It later was amended by a Unanimous Stipulation and Agreement in Case No. ER-202-1074. The IEC was designed to ensure "rate stability and . . . to prevent either 'windfall' profits or dramatic losses by ensuring that actual fuel and purchased power costs are the basis for the process to be used." Case No. ER-2001-299, Report and Order (September 20, 2001).

3. The parties, as a part of the Unanimous Stipulation and Agreement in this case, agreed that Empire would refund all amounts it had collected under the IEC (plus interest) to the

customers paying such amounts. The Stipulation further stated that the amount of the refund, including interest, to be credited to each of Empire's customers was to be calculated in accordance with the procedures set forth in the referenced Stipulation and Agreements.

4. The procedures provided that refunds would appear as a:

. . . one-time credit on the customer's bill, except in cases where a customer is no longer a customer in the billing month in which bill credits appear on the bills of remaining customers. In that instance, Empire will mail to the last known address of such former customer a check for the amount of the refund owed that former customer. No checks will be issued to customers for refund amounts of less than \$3.00.

5. The agreement further provided that:

After the bill credits have been made and checks issued, any amount of the total refund plus interest which may remain in Empire's possession six months after the end of the application of the bill credits, for example, due to the inability to locate a former customer, shall be donated by Empire promptly to the Joplin, Missouri chapter of the American Red Cross to help fund its Project Help.

6. Empire refunded to customers a total of \$18,718,326.63, in IEC amounts, including interest. Of this amount, \$17,768,510.36 was returned to customers through the use of bill credits.

7. Of the \$949,816.27 remainder, a total of \$12,830.40 was associated with individual refund amounts that were less than \$3.00. These funds were provided to Project Help by checks dated September 29, 2003.

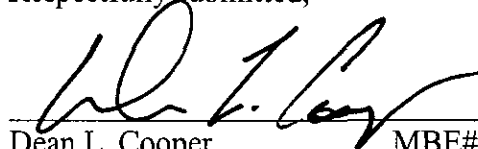
8. The remaining refunds of \$936,985.87, associated with persons no longer customers of Empire, were addressed as follows:

- A total of \$874,407.99 in checks were sent by mail to former customers, and cashed by those customers; and,
- A total of \$62,577.88 was associated with checks that were returned as undeliverable or not cashed after six months. These funds were provided to Project Help by check dated October 27, 2003.

9. Having provided the directed status report, Empire suggests that the refund of the IEC has been completed. Accordingly, Empire believes the Commission should issue its order closing this case.

WHEREFORE, Empire prays that the Commission issue its order closing this case.

Respectfully submitted,



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ATTORNEYS FOR THE EMPIRE DISTRICT
ELECTRIC COMPANY

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned certifies that a copy of the foregoing was, on this 21st day of November, 2003, sent via U.S. Mail, postage prepaid, or hand delivered, to the following:

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Jefferson City, MO 65101

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