

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE 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.)

File No. ER-2012-0345

JOINT PROCEDURAL PROPOSAL

COMES NOW The Empire District Electric Company (“Empire”), the Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission (“Staff”), the Midwest Energy Users’ Association (MEUA), the Midwest Energy Consumer’s Group (MECG), the Office of the Public Counsel (“Public Counsel”), Southern Union Company d/b/a Missouri Gas Energy (MGE), and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”), and jointly state as follows:

1. On July 6, 2012, Empire filed with the Missouri Public Service Commission (“Commission”) tariff sheets to implement a general rate increase for electric service to customers in its Missouri service area, as well as tariff sheets to implement an interim rate increase.

2. The signatory parties jointly propose the following procedural items:
- a. That the test year shall be the twelve months ending March 31, 2012, with an update through June 30, 2012 for known and measurable changes, and that the true-up shall be through December 31, 2012.
 - b. That the procedural schedule for the interim rate request be as follows:

Date	Event
July 25, 2012	Empire to identify by witness and page all testimony pertaining to interim request.
August 20, 2012	Rebuttal
August 27, 2012	Surrebuttal and Cross-Surrebuttal
August 29, 2012	Issues List, Order of Witnesses, Order of Cross, Order of Openings
September 4, 2012	Position Statements
September 10 & 11, 2012	Hearing
September 20, 2012	Initial Briefs
October 1, 2012	Reply Briefs

c. That data requests relating to the interim rate request shall be responded to within 5 business days of such request, and any objection to such data requests and any notification of the need for additional time to respond to such data requests shall be due within 3 business days of the request.

d. That the procedural schedule for the general rate request be as follows:

Date	Event
July 6, 2012	Empire's Direct Filing
July 23, 2012	Prehearing
November 21, - December 21, 2012	Public Notices Mailed
December 7, 2012	Non-Empire Revenue Requirement Direct
December 20, 2012	Non-Empire Rate Design Direct
January 3, 2013	Local Public Hearing in Joplin (noon)
January 3, 2013	Local Public Hearing in Joplin (evening)
January 4, 2013	Local Public Hearing in Reeds Spring (noon)
January 7 – 11, 2013	Settlement Conference
January 14, 2013	Informal Preliminary Issues List (not filed)
January 22, 2013	Rebuttal
February 13, 2012	True-up Information Provided to Parties
February 8, 2013	Surrebuttal / Cross-Surrebuttal
February 15, 2013	Issues List, Order of Cross, & Order of Openings
February 19, 2013	Position Statements
February 20, 2013	Reconciliation
February 25 – March 8, 2013	Hearing
March 21, 2013	True-up Direct
March 25, 2013	True-up Rebuttal
March 28 & 29, 2013	True-up Hearing
April 8, 2013	Initial Post-Hearing Briefs
April 16, 2013	Reply / True-up Briefs

- e. The signatory parties support Commission approval of the form of customer notice as attached as Appendix A.
 - f. The signatory parties propose the following procedures and request that these procedures be accepted by the Commission and reflected in the Commission's Procedural Order setting filing dates among other things:
 - 1) If a party requests a data request response as discussed in paragraph 6., part E., of the Commission's *Discovery Order*, and that request is received on or after the due date of the response, the responding party shall provide a copy of the response to the requesting party as soon as is reasonably practicable. However, if the request is received prior to the due date of the response the responding party shall provide the response to all requesting parties contemporaneously. In no event shall a request for a copy of a response be considered to have initiated a new data request with new time limits.
 - 2) That the date specified in paragraph 4 of the Commission's *Discovery Order*, pertaining to the last date to issue data requests, subpoenas, or other discovery requests, be modified to February 11, 2013, in accordance with the above schedule. Also, that this limitation apply only to discovery not related to True-up.
 - 3) That the date specified in paragraph 5 of the Commission's *Discovery Order*, pertaining to the last day to file motions to compel a response to a discovery request be modified to February 22, 2013, in accordance with the above schedule. Also, that this limitation apply only to discovery not related to True-up.
3. The signatory parties request that the transcripts of the interim rate hearing be expedited to facilitate this schedule.

WHEREFORE, the signatory parties submit their *Joint Procedural Proposal*, and respectfully request that the Commission order the procedural matters as set forth here-in.

Respectfully submitted,

THE EMPIRE DISTRICT ELECTRIC
COMPANY

/s/ Diana C. Carter
James C. Swearngen MBE 21510
Diana C. Carter MBE 50527
Attorneys for
The Empire District Electric Company
312 East Capitol Avenue
P.O. Box 456
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: (573) 635-7166
Fax: (573) 635-7431
E-mail: lrackers@brydonlaw.com

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC COUNSEL

/s/ Lewis R. Mills, Jr.
Lewis R. Mills, Jr. MBE 35275
Public Counsel
P.O. Box 2230
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: (573) 751-1304
Fax: (573) 751-5562
E-mail: lewis.mills@ded.mo.gov

THE STAFF OF THE
MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

/s/ Sarah Kliethermes
Sarah L. Kliethermes MBE 60024
Attorney for the Staff of the
Missouri Public Service Commission
P. O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: (573) 751-6726
Fax: (573) 751-2690
E-mail: sarah.kliethermes@psc.mo.gov

MIDWEST ENERGY USERS' ASSOCIATION

/s/ Stuart W. Conrad
Stuart W. Conrad MBE 23966
Attorney for the
Midwest Energy Users' Association
3100 Broadway, Suite 1209
Kansas City, Missouri 64111
Phone: (816) 753-1122
Fax: (816) 756-0373
E-mail: stucon@fcplaw.com

MIDWEST ENERGY CONSUMERS GROUP

/s/ David L. Woodsmall

David L. Woodsmall MBE 40747
Attorney for the
Midwest Energy Consumers Group
807 Winston Court
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101
Phone: (573) 797-0005
Fax: (573) 635-7523
E-mail:
david.woodsmall@woodsmalllaw.com

MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

/s/ Jeremy Knee

Jeremy Knee MBE 64644
Assistant Attorney General
Attorney for the Missouri
Department of Natural Resources
Agriculture & Environment Division
Missouri Attorney General's Office
P.O. Box 899
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: (573) 751-6579
Fax: (573) 751-8796
E-mail: jeremy.knee@ago.mo.gov

SOUTHERN UNION COMPANY, D/B/A
MISSOURI GAS ENERGY

/s/ Todd J. Jacobs

Todd J. Jacobs MBE 52366
Senior Director, Legal
Attorney for
Southern Union Company, d/b/a
Missouri Gas Energy
3420 Broadway
Kansas City, Missouri 64111
Phone: (816) 360-5976
Fax: (573) 360-5903
E-mail: todd.jacobs@sug.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing have been mailed, hand-delivered, transmitted by facsimile or electronically mailed to all counsel of record this 25th day of July, 2012.

/s/ Sarah Kliethermes

NOTICE

On July 6, 2012, The Empire District Electric Company filed revised electric service tariff sheets with the Missouri Public Service Commission (“MPSC”), which would increase base rates by approximately \$30.7 million. Because of changes in the costs of fuel since the last rate case, the net impact to customers would be \$22.1 million, or an increase of about 5.3 percent over current levels. If approved by the MPSC, a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours would see a monthly net increase in rates of about \$6.60.

Empire is asking to continue the use of the Fuel Adjustment Clause, that was previously approved by the MPSC. This appears as the Fuel Charge on customers’ bills. The continuation of the Fuel Charge will allow Empire to adjust customers' bills twice each year, on June 1st and December 1st, based on increases or decreases in the cost of fuel used to generate electricity at the Company's generating units and electric energy Empire purchases on behalf of its customers.

Empire states that the rate increase is needed to recover costs from the May 2011 tornado and because of increased charges from the regional transmission organization, software replacements, increased tree-trimming costs, and other increases in costs.

Local public hearings regarding Empire’s rate increase request have been set before the MPSC as follows:

- At 12:00 p.m., January 3, 2013, at Webster Hall, Missouri Southern State University, 3950 East Newman Road, Joplin, Missouri.
- At 6:00 p.m., January 3, 2013, at Webster Hall, Missouri Southern State University, 3950 East Newman Road, Joplin, Missouri.
- At 12:00 p.m., January 4, 2013, at Tri-Lakes TCRC, University of Missouri Extension at Reeds Spring High School, ITV Room, 20277 State Highway 413 (in the South Wing of Reeds Spring High School), Reeds Spring, Missouri.

If you wish to comment or secure information, you may contact the Missouri Public Service Commission, Post Office Box 360 Jefferson City, Missouri 65102, telephone 800-392-4211, email pscinfo@psc.mo.gov or the Office of the Public Counsel, Post Office Box 2230, Jefferson City, Missouri, 65102, telephone (866) 922-2959 email opcservice@ded.mo.gov.

The Commission will also conduct evidentiary hearings at its offices in Jefferson City February 25 through March 8, 2013.

The buildings where the hearings will be held meet accessibility standards required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. If a customer needs additional accommodations to participate in these hearings, please call the Public Service Commission's Hotline at 1-800-392-4211 (voice) or Relay Missouri at 711 prior to the hearing.