



Evergy Missouri Metro  
Case Name: 2022 Evergy MO Metro Rate Case  
Case Number: ER-2022-0129

Requestor Kremer Lisa -  
Response Provided May 31, 2022

Question:5022

With reference to Page 25 lines 5 through 25 of Ms. Winslow's Direct Testimony, please explain in detail why any of these benefits cannot currently be achieved within the provisions of Chapter 13 and utilizing the Company's AMI and billing system investments.

Specifically: please explain why customers cannot be presently educated to "conveniently monitor both usage and account balances as needed through a web based or mobile application in near real-time."

Please explain why customers can't presently receive more personalized and proactive communications tailored to meet their preferences and assist with better understanding of energy costs. Please detail what additional "personalized" communications will the customer receive in the AEP Program. Please explain why such personalized communications are not presently possible to counsel and assist customers who are finding it difficult to understand their energy usage, their energy bills or pay their bills.

Please explain how "prepaying" a necessary service for health, life, and safety provides payment 'flexibility' above what any given customer has now to their regulated utility and how this 'flexibility' provides greater convenience.

Please explain impediments to the Company in its efforts to help customers reduce usage and realize cost savings other than having a customer "prepay" their electric bill. Please detail all present ways the Company educates and supports its customers in efforts to reduce their electrical usage and realize cost savings. What other utility programs, authoritative sources, white papers, research etc. has the Company conducted in this effort.

Please explain arrearage pay-off assistance presently identified in lines 23 through 25 that differ from all other arrearage pay-off assistance presently available to regulated Missouri electric customers.

**RESPONSE:** (do not edit or delete this line or anything above this)



**Confidentiality:** PUBLIC

**Statement:** This response is Public. No Confidential Statement is needed.

**Response:**

Prepayment for electric service using The Company's current billing system does not provide the same customer experience envisioned with the Advanced Easy Pay Pilot Program. Today, if a customer was to pay in advance for energy, there is no convenient method to know how many days of power remain on an individual account. The Advanced Easy Pay pilot program would offer a more practical way for customers to view their account balance and understand how many days of power they have remaining versus viewing daily usage, predicting future usage, comparing to current rates, and then estimating a future bill amount. After a fixed number of days for each billing cycle, there currently is some forecasting information available. However, creating a near real-time link between a forecast and the days of power remaining is key to creating more customer convenience and budget certainty using Advanced Easy Pay tools. Alternatively, an Average Payment Plan can bring a level of budget comfortability, but customers are still constrained to paying once a bill is rendered or a true up occurs versus whenever it works best for them under the envisioned Advanced Easy Pay Pilot Program.

On a completely voluntary basis, the Advanced Easy Pay Pilot Program would enhance customers' awareness of energy consumption and cost. Customers can make better energy related decisions that could also affect behavioral changes due to enhanced awareness and understanding of energy costs. If a customer has an added layer of energy understanding that better suites their lifestyle, The Company sees this as providing a better customer experience. One of the main goals of the Pilot is to create a stronger link for customers in terms of energy cost and overall energy consumption. This Pilot simplifies that link compared to what is offered today due to software and technical constraints.

New, enhanced communications may include low account balance alters, remaining days of power messages, daily energy cost reminders, and irregular costs alters. Part of the new messaging goals are to put energy costs and consumption into an easier to understand format versus just energy consumption in general.

Details regarding present ways The Company educates and supports its customers in efforts to manage their energy use and realize cost savings can be found in the Evergy Missouri Metro tariff: YE-2020-0100 in matter EO-2019-0132.

As part of The Company's prepay program research, we explored program information online using Georgia Power's website and reviewing content related to their active PrePay program. We also explored content on company websites for Salt River Project's M-Power program, Orlando Utilities Commission's Power Pass program, Baltimore Gas and Electric Company's Prepaid Power Pilot program, and Duke Energy South Carolina's Prepaid Advantage program. We also participated in industry stakeholder meetings online where prepay Program Managers from these utilities and prepay software providers shared information on program best practices



and experiences. These meetings were typically facilitated by ESource or the Prepay Energy Working Group.

To support customers in arrears while also allowing customers to keep their power on, we are proposing payment flexibility with the Advanced Easy Pay Pilot Program. Even during periods of time where weather is not a typical concern, customers with account debt may split payments between amount owed (25%) and amount for future energy use (75%). This allows for participants to keep their power on without having to pay off the full debt balance in its entirety.

**Information provided by:** Tim Wisor, Product Manager, DSM Products and Services

**Attachment(s):**

**Missouri Verification:**

I have read the Information Request and answer thereto and find answer to be true, accurate, full and complete, and contain no material misrepresentations or omissions to the best of my knowledge and belief; and I will disclose to the Commission Staff any matter subsequently discovered which affects the accuracy or completeness of the answer(s) to this Information Request(s).

Signature /s/ *Brad Lutz*  
Director Regulatory Affairs