

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

At a session of the Public Service
Commission held at its office in
Jefferson City on the 24th day of
September, 2026.

In the Matter of the Application of The Empire	)	
District Electric Company for an Order	)	<u>Case No. EE-2026-0065</u>
Granting Temporary Billing Variances	)	
In the Matter of the Application of The Empire	)	
District Gas Company and Liberty Utilities	)	<u>Case No. GE-2026-0066</u>
(Midstates Natural Gas) Corp. for an Order	)	
Granting Temporary Billing Variances	)	
In the Matter of the Application of Liberty	)	
Utilities (Missouri Water) LLC for an Order	)	<u>Case No. WE-2026-0067</u>
Granting Temporary Billing Variances	)	
In the Matter of the Application of Liberty	)	
Utilities (Missouri Water) LLC for an Order	)	<u>Case No. SE-2027-0045</u>
Granting Permanent Billing Variances	)	

ORDER GRANTING APPLICATIONS FOR VARIANCES

Issue Date: September 24, 2026

Effective Date: October 24, 2026

On September 11, 2025, The Empire District Electric Company (EDE), The Empire District Gas Company (EDG), Liberty Utilities (Missouri Water) LLC (Missouri Water), and Liberty Utilities (Midstates Natural Gas) Corp. (Midstates) (collectively, “Liberty” or “the Companies”) filed Applications for Temporary Variances, Requests for Waiver, and Motion for Expedited Treatment.

Liberty is changing the handling of collective/joint customer billing to improve customer experience, in part, due to the concerns raised by customers and other

stakeholders during Liberty's recent town halls and EDE's recent rate case public hearings. The Companies were previously granted temporary variances from Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-13.020(1) which, in conjunction with Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-13.015(1)(C), provides that a billing period shall include usage of not less than 26 days nor more than 35 days except for initial, corrected, or final bills. They were also granted temporary variances of Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240 13.020(6) which provides that, when a meter reading route or billing cycle is changed by 9 days or more, notice shall be provided to customers at least 15 days prior to the date a customer will receive a bill based on the new cycle.

On June 24, the Companies filed Applications for Variances. The Companies now request variances of the rules for which the Commission granted temporary variances, in addition to a variance regarding interest on customer deposits from Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-13.030(4)(B). Specifically, the Companies seek a waiver of the portion of the rule requiring interest on customer deposits to be credited to the account of the customer annually, and instead, allow the credits to be applied more frequently, on a billing period basis.

The Staff of the Commission (Staff) filed its Recommendation on August 31, 2026. Staff recommends the Commission approve the Applications with certain conditions.

Staff has no objection to Liberty being granted variances of Commission Rules 20 CSR 4240-13.020(1), 20 CSR 4240-13.015(1)(C) and 20 CSR 4240 13.020(6), concerning collective/joint accounts, for the following reasons:

a. Collective and Joint accounts are voluntary billing options that allow customers the convenience to receive a single bill for multiple locations and/or commodities, and,

b. Customers are already in fact receiving this bill offering. If the Commission denied the request, it would be an inconvenience to customers and would require extensive process changes for Liberty.

Staff also has no objection to Liberty's proposed variance requests from Commission Rule CSR 4240-13.030(4)(B), concerning Interest on Customer Deposits. This is because:

a. Customers will receive the accrued interest more frequently than the rule requires, and

b. Liberty is currently paying interest monthly and requiring Liberty to change this process would involve changing the billing system at a cost to all rate payers.

The Companies responded on September 3, 2026, accepting Staff's conditions. No other responses were received. Based upon the Applications and Staff's Recommendation, the Commission finds good cause for the variances and finds it reasonable to approve the Applications with Staff's proposed conditions. Liberty is granted variances of Commission Rules 20 CSR 4240-13.020(1), 20 CSR 4240-13.015(1)(C) and 20 CSR 4240 13.020(6), and 20 CSR 4240-13.030(4)(B).

THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:

1. The requests for variances of Commission Rules 20 CSR 4240-13.020(1), 20 CSR 4240-13.015(1)(C) and 20 CSR 4240 13.020(6), and 20 CSR 4240-13.030(4)(B) are granted, with the following conditions:

- a. The Companies shall place a message on customers' billing statements to inform customers that the establishment modification, or realignment of collective and joint billing may result in an unannounced billing cycle change or a bill outside of the 26-35 day billing cycle;
- b. The Companies shall add definitions to their tariffs for collective and joint accounts.

2. The Companies shall file clean copies of the tariffs filed with their June 24, 2026, application, complete with an effective date.

3. This order shall be effective on October 24, 2026.



BY THE COMMISSION

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Dippell".

Nancy Dippell
Secretary

Hahn, Ch., Coleman, Kolkmeyer,
and Mitchell CC., concur.

Pridgin, Deputy Chief Regulatory Law Judge

STATE OF MISSOURI

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Pursuant to 386.290, RSMo., I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission, at Jefferson City, Missouri, this 24th day of September, 2026.



Nancy Dippell

Nancy Dippell
Secretary

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

September 24, 2026

Case No: EE-2026-0065, GE-2026-0066, WE-2026-0067 and SE-2027-0045

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Enclosed find a certified copy of an Order or Notice issued in the above-referenced matter(s).¹

Sincerely,



Nancy Dippell
Secretary

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Recipients listed above with a valid e-mail address will receive electronic service. Recipients without a valid e-mail address will receive paper service.