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20-00047

April 29, 2020

TPUC Staff
Tennessee Public Utility Commission
502 Deaderick Street, 4th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243

VIA EMAIL

Re: Tennessee Water Service, Inc.'s Post-Emergency Customer Payment Options Report for the Coronavirus COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Dear TPUC Staff:

Pursuant to the Tennessee Public Utility Commission's Order on March 31, 2020, Tennessee Water Service, Inc. hereby files this Post-Emergency Customer Payment Options Report, which describes any temporary grace period, payment plans, and other options that will be implemented or will continue following the expiration or lifting of the public health emergency declaration.

Please let us know if anything further is required.

Sincerely,



Ryan Freeman
For the Firm

RAF:kcw

Enclosure



April 30,2020

Re: Report on Post-Emergency Customer Payment Options – Docket No. 20-00047

On March 31, 2020 in Docker No. 20-00047, the Tennessee Public Utility Commission (“TPUC” or “Commission”) issued an order requiring jurisdictional public utilities to submit “a report describing any temporary grace period, payment plan, and other options that will be implemented or will continue following the expiration or lifting of the public health emergency declaration.” Tennessee Water Service, Inc. (“TWS” or “Company”), hereby submits the following in response to this Order:

As of March 10, 2020, TWS has suspended disconnection of water service and imposition of late fees on customer bills. In addition, any customers who were disconnected for non-payment between March 1st and March 10th had their service reconnected. Customers have been provided notice via bill message and on the TWS website of this policy initiative.

The Company has historically offered customers payment arrangements (“PA”) or payment plans (“PP”) to mitigate the need for disconnection or late fees. A PA is an agreement with a customer to pay off their balance in combination with future bills, which installments are reflected on customer bills . If customers make the agreed-upon installment payments, they will not be subject to late fees or disconnect. A PP is an agreement with a customer to make a specified payment by a specified date. For example, a customer may agree to pay a balance 10 days beyond the bill’s due date. Scheduled PP information generally does not show on customer bills as it is not tied to a billing cycle.

TWS has standard practices for implementing PA’s and PP’s for its customers, as required per the Final Order in Docket No. 09-00017. The Company offers customers one three-month PA every twelve months with no interest/late fee. Additional PA’s can be implemented in the twelve-month period if the customer repaid as agreed in a previous PA. If the customer demonstrates a unique financial situation – such as a loss of job, loss of spouse, hospital stay, etc. – or a member of the household is disabled, the utility may offer a second PA.

For the current COVID-19 situation, the Company is considering the following options and customer notifications:

- Providing notice to customers who contact its Customer Contact Center (“CCC”) that PA’s and PP’s can be utilized in advance of the emergency declaration being lifted, in order to stay current.
- Providing notice to customers via bill insert, bill message, MyUtilityConnect customer service app, or e-mail, to contact the CCC if they believe they have fallen or will fall behind on payments during the emergency declaration period.
- Provide notice to customers via bill insert, bill message, MyUtilityConnect customer service app, or e-mail, at the end of the emergency declaration that they should contact the CCC if they have an outstanding balance that will not be repaid before the normal disconnect process would commence.

- Providing customers with existing PA's or PP's an opportunity to extend their existing agreement for 6 months beyond the existing agreement's term.
- Provide customers not on existing PA's or PP's at the time the emergency declaration ends an opportunity to enter into a PA of 6 months, or PP agreement as best suits the customer's situation.
- Provide extended grace periods for late fees and disconnections should repayments per the PA agreement fall short of the scheduled payment, but remain within the existing agreement term.
- Provide opportunity for debt forgiveness in extreme circumstances, to be approved by Company leadership on a case-by-case basis.

The Company will provide copies of any customer notice information to the Chalet Village Homeowners Association, and will remain in regular contact with the HOA during the emergency declaration period and beyond to ensure customer needs are addressed.

The Company thanks the Commission for the opportunity to provide the above information. TWS will continue to submit weekly updates to the Commission regarding its operating status and further developments on the above items and any other developments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald H. Denton III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Donald Denton III
President, Atlantic Business Unit
Corix Regulated Utilities