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January 6, 2022

NWN WUTC Advice No. 22-01

**VIA ELECTRONIC FILING**

Amanda Maxwell, Executive Director and Secretary  
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
621 Woodland Square Loop SE  
Lacey, Washington 98503

**Re: Rule 5—Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures**

Dear Ms. Maxwell:

Northwest Natural Gas Company, dba NW Natural (NW Natural or Company), files herewith the following revisions to its Tariff WN U-6, stated to become effective with service on and after February 25, 2022.

Third Revision of Sheet 5.1	Rule 5	Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures
First Revision of Sheet 5.2	Rule 5	Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures
First Revision of Sheet 5.3	Rule 5	Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures

**Purpose**

The purpose of this filing is to update language in Rule 5 to be compliant with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-90-128(11) - Disconnecting service during inclement weather.

**Background**

On July 29, 2020, the Commission issued an order amending and adopting rules in docket U-180525 amending consumer protection and meter rules to accommodate deployment of Advanced Metering Infrastructure by regulated electric and natural gas companies. These rules became effective August 29, 2020. NW Natural proposes to update its tariff Rule 5 to reflect its existing process for a cold-weather moratorium that is compliant with WAC 480-90-128(11), which provides that a utility must establish conditions in its tariff(s) under which the utility will cease non-voluntary service disconnections during inclement weather events.

**Proposed Changes**

NW Natural proposes to modify Rule 5 to add the conditions under which NW Natural will postpone residential disconnection for non-payment during inclement weather conditions. NW Natural has been following the process outlined in the proposed conditions since at least 2017, when the Company implemented similar language in its Oregon tariff Rule 11 in compliance with new rules adopted in Oregon codified as Oregon Administrative Rule 860-021-0407.

In both its Washington and Oregon service territories, NW Natural postpones disconnections of residential customers for non-payment when the daily high temperature will be less than 32 degrees Fahrenheit. The proposed language in NW Natural's tariff Rule 5 memorializes this existing practice in its tariff and is compliant with WAC 480-90-128(11).

**Conclusion**

NW Natural respectfully requests that the Commission approve this tariff change with an effective date of February 25, 2022.

In accordance with WAC 480-90-193 and WAC 480-90-195(3), copies of this letter and the attached filing are available in the Company's main office in Portland, Oregon, and on its website at [www.nwnatural.com](http://www.nwnatural.com).

As requested by WAC 480-80-103(4)(a), I certify that I have authority to issue tariff revisions on behalf of NW Natural.

Please address correspondence on this matter to me with copies to the following:

eFiling  
NW Natural Rates & Regulatory Affairs  
250 SW Taylor Street  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
Fax: (503) 220-2579  
Telephone: (503) 610-7330  
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Respectfully submitted,

*/s/ Natasha Siores*

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**Attachments:**

NEW-NWN-WUTC-Advice-22-01-Trf-Sheet-5-1-01-06-2022  
NEW-NWN-WUTC-Advice-22-01-Trf-Sheet-5-2-01-06-2022  
NEW-NWN-WUTC-Advice-22-01-Trf-Sheet-5-3-01-06-2022

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS  
(continued)

**Rule 5. Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures.**

The following shall be cause for Company to disconnect service to any customer: (a) for failure to pay Tariff or price-listed charges for services rendered; (b) for meter tampering, diverting service, or other theft of service; (c) when a Customer is found to have provided false identification to establish service, continue service, or verify identity; (d) for failure to pay a deposit under the terms of RULE 3; (e) for failure to abide by the terms of a time payment agreement; (f) for a delinquent collect balance on an Equal Pay Plan; (g) for hazardous or unsafe conditions; or (h) for certain other reasons set forth in the Rules of the Washington Administrative Code (hereinafter referred to as "WUTC Disconnection Rules"). Residential customers will be given the opportunity to enter into a time payment agreement designed to bring their account current before service will be disconnected. The payment plans available to customers are described in RULE 4 of this Tariff. The Company will not disconnect service on, or the day prior to, a weekend or holiday.

The Company will not disconnect service to a Residential Customer for non-payment when the daily high temperature forecast in a given geographic area is reported by the Company's approved weather reporting service to be less than 32 degrees Fahrenheit. The Weather Zones identified in Rule 11 of this Tariff define the geographic areas to be used for purposes of this provision. The initial decision to hold disconnections of service will be made by 8:00 a.m. each morning and will apply only to the specific geographic area(s) that meet the temperature threshold. The Company may hold disconnections of service to additional geographic areas as weather conditions evolve. Any disconnection of service placed on hold due to this provision shall be rescheduled for completion on the next available business day as weather and operational conditions allow, subject to the restrictions and limitations identified in this Rule 5.

**Disconnection of Service**

If at any time the Company finds that the identification provided by a Residential Customer was false at the time the Customer: (a) established new service, (b) re-established service following a disconnection, (c) continued service at a new service address, (d) or for any other reason was required to provide proof of identification, the Company may disconnect service. If the false identification is found more than sixty (60) days from the date of Customer contact, the Company will issue a notice requiring the Customer to provide valid identification within fifteen (15) business days following the date the notice was mailed. If the false identification is found within sixty (60) days from the date of Customer contact, the Company will issue a notice requiring the Customer to provide valid identification within five (5) business days following the date the notice was mailed. If the Customer fails to provide valid identification in the form required by Rule 1 within the time indicated on the notice, the Company will disconnect service without further notice.

(continue to Sheet 5.2)

(K) Transferred to Sheet 5.2

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GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS  
(continued)

**Rule 5. Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures** (continued).

Except as otherwise allowed under WAC 480-90-128(2) or as otherwise specified in this General Rule, the Company shall issue a disconnect notice to customer prior to disconnecting service. Except as provided below, the Company will make no fewer than two attempts to contact a customer before disconnecting service. The first notice will give the customer no fewer than eight (8) business days following the day the notice was mailed to make payment or payment arrangements before service is disconnected. If the disconnect notice is personally delivered to customer, customer will have no fewer than two (2) business days following the day notice was delivered to make payment or payment arrangements before service is disconnected. Prior to disconnecting service, Company will attempt to contact the customer in person, by telephone, or by additional written notice. If by telephone, at least two attempts will be made to contact customer on the day the Company expects to disconnect service. If contact is not made, a written notice will be mailed and the Company will give at least three (3) business days following the date of mailing before disconnecting service. If by additional written notice, the Company will give at least three (3) business days following the date of mailing before disconnecting service.

If the disconnect notice is for nonpayment of a deposit, customer will have no fewer than six (6) business days after mailing or delivery of the notice to customer before service is disconnected.

Advance notice of disconnection is not required when disconnection is for meter tampering, diverting service, other theft of service, or for hazardous or unsafe conditions.

A residential customer who can certify that a medical emergency exists will be given an additional five (5) business days to obtain an emergency medical certificate before service will be disconnected. See RULE 6 for more information on emergency medical certificates.

When a Customer makes a payment subsequent to the issuance of a notice to disconnect service due to nonpayment, whether payment is made to prevent a disconnection of service or to reactivate service that was disconnected, and the payment is not honored by the bank or other financial institution, the account will be deemed unpaid. The Company will attempt to notify the Customer in person, by telephone, or by written notice, of the payment failure and the Customer will have one Business Day to correct the failure. If a valid payment is not received, service to the Customer may be disconnected after the due date of the previously issued five (5) day notice, and without further written notice. This process may proceed separate from the normal notice process described herein.

**Reconnection of Service**

Customer or Applicant must first satisfy the requirements and request reconnection before the Company will schedule a reconnection of service. Upon satisfaction of the requirements for reconnection, service will be scheduled for reconnection in accordance with the Customer's elected reconnection option, as set forth in Schedule C.

If the service disconnection was due to a Company action, such as maintenance or repair of Company facilities, then service will be reconnected as soon as reasonably possible and the terms and conditions set forth in this provision will not apply.

(continue to Sheet 5.3)

(M) Transferred from Sheet 5.1  
(K) Transferred to Sheet 5.3

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GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS  
(continued)

**Rule 5. Disconnection and Reconnection Procedures** (continued).

**Reconnection of Service (continued)**

Residential

Where service was disconnected for non-payment, Customer/Applicant must at a minimum pay any deposit amount due plus the service reconnection charge.

If service was disconnected for theft, Customer/Applicant must pay in full all amounts owed by Customer/Applicant, plus any applicable Schedule C charges, and any amounts due for damage to the Company's meter or other Distribution Facilities.

Non-Residential

Where service was disconnected for non-payment, Customer/Applicant must first pay all past due amounts, plus any deposit amounts, plus the service reconnection charge.

If service was disconnected for theft, Customer/Applicant must pay in full all amounts owed by Customer/Applicant, plus any applicable Schedule C charges, and any amounts due for damage to the Company's meter or other Distribution Facilities.

Residential and Non-Residential- Reconnect more than 20 days of Disconnection

A new service application, as set forth in General Rule 1 of this Tariff, will be required before service will be reconnected for any residential or non-residential applicant that requests reconnection of service at the same address more than 20 days from the date the service was disconnected. Applicant must pay any deposit amount plus the service reconnection charge before service will be reconnected.

If the request for reconnection comes more than twelve (12) months from the date of disconnection, the reconnection charge set forth in Schedule C shall not apply.

(continue to Sheet 6.1)

(M) Transferred from Sheet 5.2

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