

G-010/GR-90-678 ACCEPTING FILING AND SUSPENDING RATES

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Darrel L. Peterson	Chair
Cynthia A. Kitlinski	Commissioner
Norma McKanna	Commissioner
Robert J. O'Keefe	Commissioner
Patrice Vick	Commissioner

In the Matter of the Application of Midwest Gas, a Division of Iowa Public Service Company, for Authority to Increase its Rates for Gas Service in the State of Minnesota

ISSUE DATE: October 16, 1990

DOCKET NO. G-010/GR-90-678

ORDER ACCEPTING FILING AND
SUSPENDING RATES

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On September 14, 1990, Midwest Gas, a division of Iowa Public Service Company (Midwest or the Company) filed a petition seeking a general rate increase of \$2,590,902, or 5.7%, effective November 13, 1990. Knowing that the Commission may suspend the proposed rate schedules, the Company also proposed an interim rate schedule, to be effective November 13, 1990. The interim rate request would increase present revenues by \$1,212,782, or 2.7%.

On September 27, 1990, the Department of Public Service (the Department) submitted comments. The Department noted that the Company's filing satisfied filing requirements set by statute and rule, with one exception. Midwest had failed to submit a conservation improvement plan (CIP) with its rate case filing, as required by Minn. Stat. § 216B.16, subd. 1 (1988). With the assumption that the Company would submit the required CIP filing, the Department recommended that the Commission accept the Company's rate case filing.

On October 1, 1990, Midwest supplied the required CIP filing.

The matter came before the Commission on October 9, 1990.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Commission finds that Midwest's filing is sufficient for the purposes of filing a general rate case under Minn. Stat.

§ 216B.16 (1988) and Minn. Rules, parts 7825.3100 to 7825.4600 (1988). The filed information will be subject to additional examination and scrutiny during the contested case hearing process which will follow. The Order arising from the last general rate case of North Central Public Service Company (Midwest's immediate predecessor) did not impose any additional filing requirements for the present proceeding. **In the Matter of the Application of North Central Public Service Company, a Division of Donovan Companies, Inc., for Authority to Increase Rates for Gas Utility Service in Minnesota, G-010/GR-83-333, FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER.**

By separate Order the Commission has found that contested case proceedings are necessary for adequate examination of the Company's rate increase proposal. See NOTICE AND ORDER FOR HEARING entered in this docket on this date. During the contested case proceeding the Commission may require Midwest to produce additional information within ten days of service of any information request by the Department or any other party.

Under Minn. Stat. § 216B. 16, subs. 1 and 2 (1988), the rates proposed by the Company become effective 60 days from filing, unless they are suspended by the Commission. The Commission finds that it cannot resolve all issues regarding the reasonableness of the proposed rates within this 60 day period and that the public interest requires suspension. The Commission will establish interim rates for the suspension period, under Minn. Stat. § 216B.16, subd. 3 (1988), by separate Order.

ORDER

1. The September 14, 1990 rate increase petition of Midwest Gas is accepted as sufficient for the purposes of filing a general rate case under Minn. Stat. § 216B.16 (1988) and Minn. Rules, parts 7825.3100 to 7825.4600 (1988).
2. The Department of Public Service shall conduct an investigation into the reasonableness of the rate changes proposed by the Company.
3. All parties to this proceeding may serve information requests on any other party. Information requests shall be answered within ten days of receipt.
4. The operation of the proposed rate schedule is suspended under Minn. Stat. § 216B.16, subd. 2 (1988), until the Commission has issued a final determination in the matter.
5. The Company shall give written notice, as approved by the Commission, of the proposed change in rates to the governing body of each municipality and county in the area affected and shall submit an affidavit of such service to the Commission within 45 days of the service date of this Order.
6. The Company shall give individual written notice to all customers (including contract customers) of the proposed increase. This customer notice shall be included as an insert in the first bill rendered after the effective date of the interim rates as set by future Commission

Order. The Company shall submit the proposed notice, and any other billing inserts proposed for the billing cycle, for prior Commission approval.

7. The Commission authorizes the Executive Secretary to enter Orders on behalf of the Commission varying time requirements for the filing of pleadings and other documents and determining the conduct of this proceeding, according to the standards set forth in Minn. Rules, part 7830.4400 (1988). Any party adversely affected by such an Order shall file a motion for reconsideration, vacation, or modification, no later than ten days from the date of its entry or one day before any filing deadline or occurrence of an act directed in such Order. Such motions will be heard by the Commission.
8. This Order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Richard R. Lancaster
Executive Secretary

(S E A L)