

STATE OF VERMONT
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

Case No. 19-1270-TF

Washington Electric Cooperative tariff filing for rate design changes and a change in rate schedules to be effective on services rendered beginning June 17, 2019	
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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE’S RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Public Service (Department) recommends that the Public Utility Commission (Commission) open an investigation, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. §§ 225 and 226, into the justness and reasonableness of the Washington Electric Cooperative, Inc.’s (WEC) proposed rate design adjustments and revised tariffs that WEC filed on May 1, 2019. WEC’s proposed rate design revisions include reductions to the current kWh rate for WEC’s residential, commercial, and large power rate classes that will be offset by increases to monthly customer charges and modifications to WEC’s existing inclining-block rate structure.

The Department has completed a preliminary review of WEC’s proposed rate design adjustments. The Department does not currently have reason to dispute WEC’s representations that the proposed rate changes are revenue neutral or that these changes will better enable WEC to respond to various legislative and regulatory mandates, such as the Renewable Energy Standard. However, the proposed increases to WEC’s monthly customer charges constitute a significant departure from WEC’s current rate structure and have the potential to substantially affect some ratepayers’ monthly bills. The Department, therefore, believes that it would be appropriate for the Commission to open an investigation, in part, to determine whether WEC has achieved an appropriate balance between increasing monthly charges and decreasing kWh rates in light of current and anticipated market conditions and WEC’s statutory and regulatory

obligations. In its petition, WEC indicates that it will suspend the proposed changes while an investigation is pending before the Commission. The Department agrees with WEC that it would be appropriate for the proposed changes to remain suspended pending the completion of any investigation before the Commission.

Dated at Montpelier, Vermont, this 3rd day of June, 2019.

Vermont Department of Public Service

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