

**PROJECT NO. 50664**

**ISSUES RELATED TO THE STATE OF  
DISASTER FOR THE CORONAVIRUS  
DISEASE 2019**

**§ PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
§ OF TEXAS  
§**

2020 MAR 26 AM 11:40  
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION  
FILING CLERK

**ORDER DIRECTING CERTAIN ACTIONS AND  
GRANTING EXCEPTIONS TO CERTAIN RULES**

On March 13, 2020 pursuant to Texas Government Code § 418.014, in response to the growing threat of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), Governor Greg Abbott issued a Declaration of State of Disaster for all counties in Texas. Pursuant to 16 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) §§ 25.480(j)(1)(B) and 25.498(i)(1)(B), the Commission directs all retail electric providers to offer a deferred payment plan to customers, upon request.

Furthermore, under the authority found in 16 TAC § 22.5(a), the Commission finds that there exists a public emergency and imperative public necessity that constitutes good cause for granting exceptions to the following rules:

- Water and Sewer Rules
  - 16 TAC § 24.165(c), which relates to assessment of late fees on customers for delinquent bills.
  - 16 TAC §24.165(d), which authorizes a water utility to charge interest on a deferred payment plan.
  - 16 TAC § 24.165(i), which relates to requirements for estimated bills.
  - 16 TAC § 24.167(a)(2)(A), which allows a retail public utility to disconnect water or sewer service for nonpayment.
  - 16 TAC §24.167(a)(2)(F), which authorizes a utility to disconnect water service for non-payment of a solid waste charge.
  - 16 TAC § 24.167(e), which requires a retail public utility to disconnect water service for nonpayment of sewer charges.
- Electric Rules
  - 16 TAC § 25.28(b), which relates to assessment of late fees on customers for delinquent bills.
  - 16 TAC § 25.29(b)(1), which allows an electric utility to disconnect electric service for nonpayment.
  - 16 TAC § 25.480(c), which relates to assessment of late fees on customers for delinquent bills.

106

Such suspension will best serve the public interest and will not prejudice the rights of any party.

Accordingly, it is ordered that, until the Governor's disaster declaration is terminated,


1. All retail electric providers must offer a deferred payment plan to customers, upon request.
2. Exceptions are granted to the following water and sewer rules: 16 TAC § 24.165(c), which relates to assessment of late fees on customers for delinquent bills; 16 TAC § 24.165(d), which authorizes a water utility to charge interest on a deferred payment plan; 16 TAC § 24.165(i), which relates to requirements for estimated bills; 16 TAC § 24.167(a)(2)(A), which allows a retail public utility to disconnect water or sewer service for nonpayment; 16 TAC § 24.167(a)(2)(F), which authorizes a utility to disconnect water service for nonpayment of a solid waste charge; and 16 TAC § 24.167(e), which requires a retail public utility to disconnect water service for nonpayment of sewer charges.
3. Exceptions are granted to the following electric rules: 16 TAC § 25.28(b), which relates to assessment of late fees on customers for delinquent bills; 16 TAC § 25.29(b)(1), which allows an electric utility to disconnect electric service for nonpayment; and 16 TAC § 25.480(c), which relates to assessment of late fees on customers for delinquent bills.

Signed at Austin, Texas the 26<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020.

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF TEXAS**



DEANN T. WALKER, CHAIRMAN



ARTHUR C. D'ANDREA, COMMISSIONER



SHELLY BOTKIN, COMMISSIONER