

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

In the Matter of the Request of)
)
HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT CO., INC.)
)
For Approval to Read Meters for)
Certain Customers Affected by the)
Kilauea Lava Flows on an)
Other-Than-Monthly Basis.)
_____)

NON-DOCKETED

ORDER NO. 35518

APPROVING HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY, INC.'S
REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO READ METERS FOR CERTAIN
CUSTOMERS AFFECTED BY THE KILAUEA LAVA FLOWS ON AN
OTHER-THAN-MONTHLY BASIS, WITH CONDITIONS

PUBLIC UTILITIES
COMMISSION

2018 JUN -7 P 2:42

FILED

(1) HELCO shall include "[a] distinct marking to identify [the] estimated bills," pursuant to G.O. 7, Section 4.3(f);

(2) HELCO shall file a report with the commission by June 15, 2018, setting forth its methodology for estimating the affected customers' bills based on historical readings; and (3) HELCO shall file a report on the last day of every month regarding customer bill contests or complaints received, if any, as a result of HELCO's use of the estimated bills for the customers affected by the Kilauea lava flow ("affected customers"), for as long as HELCO is unable to read the affected customers' meters.

I.

Background

HELCO filed its Letter with the commission on June 5, 2018, requesting authorization to read meters for certain customers affected by the Kilauea lava flows on an other-than-monthly basis, and to instead base customers' bills on historical readings.² HELCO stated that "[t]he Company is doing everything it can to maintain the service of those customers affected by the lava flows. In various locations, however, Company personnel are unable to safely read the meters of

²HELCO Letter at 1.

the affected customers."³ HELCO requests authorization to use estimated bills for the affected customers pursuant to G.O. 7, Section 3.3, which states:

All meters, other than residential, shall be read monthly, except that authority may be obtained from the Commission for reading the meters at other than monthly intervals. Residential meters may be read bi-monthly. As nearly as practicable, utilities shall avoid sending a customer two successive estimated bills.

II.

Request for Authorization

The commission recognizes the dangerous situation on Hawaii Island as a result of the ongoing volcanic eruptions and lava flows, as well as HELCO's responsibility to protect its employees. As a result, the commission approves HELCO's request for authorization to read meters on an other-than-monthly basis, and use estimated bills for affected customers based on historical readings until such time that the meters can be safely read. In doing so, the commission imposes the conditions detailed below, so as to balance the safety of HELCO's employees with the needs of HELCO's customers during this time.

³HELCO Letter at 1.

The commission, in support of its approval, specifically finds and concludes:

1. The ongoing volcanic eruptions and lava flows in areas of Puna on Hawaii Island have led HELCO to determine that in certain parts of this area of its service territory "Company personnel are unable to safely read the meters"

2. According to HELCO, this "impact[s] approximately 1736 customers"

3. G.O. 7, Section 3.3 allows "authority [to] be obtained from the Commission for reading the meters at other than monthly intervals"

4. As such, the commission grants HELCO's request for authorization.

5. As conditions of this approval, the commission requires that:

A. HELCO shall include "[a] distinct marking to identify [the] estimated bills," for the affected customers, as required by G.O. 7, Section 4.3(f);⁴

B. HELCO shall file a report with the commission by June 15, 2018, setting forth its methodology for estimating the affected customers' bills based on historical readings; and

⁴This is in addition to meeting any other existing applicable criteria for customer bill format, set forth in G.O. 7, and/or the commission's statutes, rules, or orders.

C. HELCO shall file a report on the last day of every month regarding customer bill contests or complaints received, if any, as a result of HELCO's use of the estimated bills for the affected customers, for as long as HELCO is unable to read the affected customers' meters.

III.

Orders

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

1. The commission approves HELCO's request for authorization to read meters for certain customers affected by the Kilauea lava flows on an other-than-monthly basis, and instead provide estimated bills for those customers based on historical readings, pursuant to the commission's G.O. 7, Section 3.3, subject to the following conditions:

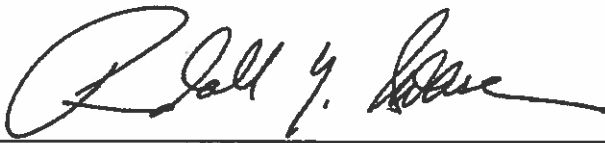
A. HELCO shall include "[a] distinct marking to identify [the] estimated bills," for the affected customers, as required by G.O. 7, Section 4.3(f);

B. HELCO shall file a report with the commission by June 15, 2018, setting forth its methodology for estimating the affected customers' bills based on historical readings; and

C. HELCO shall file a report on the last day of every month regarding customer bill contests or complaints received, if any, as a result of HELCO's use of the estimated bills for the affected customers, for as long as HELCO is unable to read the affected customers' meters.

DONE at Honolulu, Hawaii JUN - 7 2018.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

By 
Randall Y. Iwase, Chair

By 
Lorraine H. Akiba, Commissioner

By 
James P. Griffin, Commissioner

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Caroline C. Ishida
Commission Counsel

Non-Docketed HELCO Request.krnc

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The foregoing order was served on the date of filing by mail,
postage prepaid, and properly addressed to the following:

DEAN NISHINA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
DIVISION OF CONSUMER ADVOCACY
P. O. Box 541
Honolulu, HI 96809

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MANAGER - REGULATORY NON-RATE PROCEEDINGS
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