

PSC 165.041 Meter reading interval. As nearly as practicable meters shall be read at intervals to correspond to customer billing periods.

History: Cr. Register, October, 1968, No. 154, eff. 11-1-68.

PSC 165.042 Billing recording equipment. Where mechanical and/or electronic means are used for recording information that will affect a customer's bill for local and/or toll service, such equipment shall be inspected when assigned and periodically on a sampling basis to see that it is functioning properly and accurately. The utilities shall keep records of malfunctions. The retention period for such records shall be 2 years.

History: Cr. Register, October, 1968, No. 154, eff. 11-1-68.

PSC 165.043 Information available to customers. (1) There shall be kept on file in every business office of the utility where customer payments are received copies of the rate schedules applicable in such locality. Copies of these rules and such rules of the utility as are applicable shall be kept on file in every general and local office of the utility. Reasonable notice shall be given customers as to where the foregoing information is available to them.

(2) Each telephone utility, for every exchange in which it serves, shall provide in the respective telephone directories a telephone listing for repair service by which the utility can be notified at no charge during a 24-hour day of any utility service deficiency or emergency which may exist.

(3) Where a second language is common in a particular area served by the utility and so identified by the commission, all rules pertaining to billing and credit shall be available upon customer request, for distribution in English and that second language in every business office of the utility in that area accessible to the public and where customer payments are received.

(4) All applicants, upon applying for new residential telephone service, shall as a minimum, be informed by the utility as herein described:

(a) Customers shall be informed of all nonrecurring charges applicable to services ordered.

(b) Applicants shall be informed of the number of basic services that are available and given a description of the general service types. The telephone utility shall inform the customer of the range of monthly rates which applies to these services and, if either the high-rated or low-rated service is a measured (limited service) of the call allowance and charge for additional usage associated with such service. The monthly rates which are quoted for basic services shall be without inclusion of rates for any additional, optional service features.

(c) Information described in paragraphs (a) and (b) shall be provided in writing when written telephone service applications are used or when requested by customers for other, nonwritten, requests for telephone service.

(d) Rate information for additional services shall be available upon request.

(5) No residential customer shall be provided with any service feature in addition to the basic monthly service requested, without first having

been informed of the additional rates and charges for such service features.

History: Cr. Register, November, 1976, No. 239, eff. 12-1-76; cr. (4) and (5), Register, March 1978, No. 267, eff. 4-1-78.

PSC 165.05 Customer billing. (1) Bills to customers shall be rendered regularly and shall contain a clear listing of charges. No late payment charge shall be made. Utilities shall comply with reasonable customer requests for an itemized statement of charges.

Note: The public service commission in its order adopting the revision to PSC 165.05 (1) states that "all public utilities operating in Wisconsin shall be in compliance with all of the rules adopted herein not later than 180 days after said rules become effective [9-1-76]."

(2) In the event the customer's service is interrupted otherwise than by the negligence or willful act of the customer and it remains out of order for a substantial period of time after being reported or found to be out of order, appropriate adjustments or refunds shall be made to the customer. The refund to the customer shall be the pro rata part of the month's charge for the period of days that the portion of the service and facilities are rendered useless or inoperative. The refund may be accomplished by a credit on a subsequent bill for telephone service.

History: Cr. Register, October, 1968, No. 154, eff. 11-1-68; r. (2), renum. (3) to be (2), Register, November, 1976, No. 239, eff. 12-1-76; am. (1), Register, August, 1976, No. 248, eff. 9-1-76.

PSC 165.051 Deposits. (1) **NEW RESIDENTIAL SERVICE.** A utility shall not require a cash deposit or other guarantee as a condition of new service unless a customer:

(a) Has an outstanding account balance with any Wisconsin telephone utility which accrued within the last 6 years, and at the time of the request for service remains outstanding and not in dispute, or

(b) Is attempting to receive service with intent not to pay for the same. Such intent may be inferred from all the circumstances surrounding the application, or

(c) Will clearly be unable to pay for service rendered at the time such payment is due.

(2) **EXISTING RESIDENTIAL SERVICE.** A utility shall not require a cash deposit or other guarantee as a condition of continued service unless either or both of the following circumstances apply.

(a) The service of the customer has been disconnected by the utility once within the last 12-month period for nonpayment of a delinquent service account not currently in dispute.

(b) Subsequent credit information indicates that the initial application for service was falsified or incomplete to the extent that a deposit would be required under this section of the code.

(3) **BUSINESS SERVICE.** (a) If the credit of an applicant for service has not been established satisfactorily to the utility, he may be required to provide a deposit or guarantee.

(b) The deposit shall be refunded after 24 consecutive months if the customer's credit standing is satisfactory to the utility.

Register, March, 1978, No. 267

(4) **CONDITIONS OF DEPOSIT.** The maximum deposit for a new account shall not exceed the bill for one month's exchange service plus estimated toll charges for 2 months. Deposits for existing accounts shall not exceed the bill for one month's exchange service plus the highest actual toll charges for 2 consecutive months within the preceding 12-month review period.

(5) **INTEREST ON DEPOSITS.** Deposits shall bear simple interest of at least the legal rate, payable from the date of deposit to the date of refund or application to a final account, whichever is earlier.

(6) **REVIEW OF PAYMENT RECORD.** The utility shall review the payment record of each residential utility customer with a deposit on file at 12-month intervals. The utility shall not require or continue to require a cash deposit unless a deposit is required under the provisions of Wis. Adm. Code section PSC 165.051 (2).

(7) **REFUND OF DEPOSIT.** Any deposit or portion thereof refunded to a customer shall be refunded by check unless both the customer and the utility agree to a credit on the regular billing, or unless subsection (8) applies.

(8) **ACCRUED INTEREST.** Upon termination of service, the deposit, with accrued interest shall be credited to the final bill and the balance shall be returned promptly to the customer.

(9) **FAILURE TO PAY.** Service may be refused or disconnected for failure to pay a deposit request subject to the rules pertaining to disconnection and refusal of service.

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