

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION )  
OF NORTHWESTERN CORPORATION )  
DBA NORTHWESTERN ENERGY FOR )  
AUTHORITY TO INCREASE ITS ELECTRIC )  
RATES )**

**ORDER SUSPENDING  
OPERATION OF PROPOSED  
RATES; ORDER ASSESSING  
FILING FEE; ORDER  
AUTHORIZING CONSULTING  
CONTRACTS**

**EL23-016**

On June 15, 2023, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an application by NorthWestern Corporation dba NorthWestern Energy (NorthWestern) for approval to increase rates for electric service to customers in its South Dakota service territory by approximately \$30.9 million annually or approximately 16.32% based on NorthWestern's 2022 historic test year. NorthWestern states a typical residential electric customer using 750 kWh per month would see an increase of \$19.14 per month. The proposed changes may affect approximately 64,680 customers.

On June 22, 2023, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of August 11, 2023, to interested persons and entities on the Commission's PUC Weekly Filings electronic listserv.

SDCL 49-34A-14 authorizes the Commission to suspend the operation of the proposed rates for 180 days following the date on which the proposed rates were filed. SDCL 49-1A-8 authorizes the Commission to require a deposit of up to \$250,000 in the Commission's Regulatory Assessment Fee fund to defray Commission expenses incident to analyzing and ruling upon an application to increase rates as part of a general rate case.

The Commission has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapters 1-26, 49-1A, 49-34A and ARSD Chapter 20:10:13.

At its regularly scheduled meeting on July 11, 2023, the Commission considered this matter. The Commission voted unanimously to suspend the operation of the schedule of rates proposed by NorthWestern for 180 days after the Application filing date of June 15, 2023. The Commission further voted unanimously to assess NorthWestern a filing fee up to the statutory limit of \$250,000 for expenses related to the general rate case and to give the executive director authority to enter into consulting contracts. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the proposed schedule of rates shall be suspended for 180 days after the Application filing date of June 15, 2023. It is further

ORDERED, that NorthWestern shall be assessed a filing fee in an amount up to the statutory limit of \$250,000 for expenses related to the general rate case, with payments made to the Commission's Regulatory Assessment Fee fund as periodically billed by the Commission. It is further

ORDERED, that the executive director shall have the authority to enter into necessary

consulting contracts.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 12<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE	
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, electronically or by mail.	
By:	<u>Adams DeHueck</u>
Date:	<u>7/12/23</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)	

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Kristie Fiegen  
KRISTIE FIEGEN, Chairperson

Gary Hanson  
GARY HANSON, Commissioner

Chi Nelson  
CHRIS NELSON, Commissioner