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March 26, 2020

Steve Kahl
Director of Administration/Executive Secretary
North Dakota Public Service Commission
State Capitol
600 East Boulevard, Dept. 408
Bismarck, ND 58505-0408

RE: Authorization to Temporarily Estimate Meter Readings - COVID-19

Dear Mr. Kahl:

Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) provides this notice and requests Commission authorization to temporarily use estimated meter readings in certain meter locations. This request is necessary to provide social distancing for the safety of our staff and our customers during this COVID-19 pandemic.

North Dakota Administrative Code Chapter 69-09-02-10(2) states that a “utility may read meters used for determining charges to customers less frequently than once each month provided authorization thereof is obtained from the commission.” Chapter 69-09-02-11(3) allows use of estimated consumption if a utility is unable to obtain a meter reading.

Under the current guidance for COVID-19 many customers are practicing social distancing or are isolating themselves. Otter Tail wants to support this guidance for both our customers and employees. To reduce personal interactions between customers and field staff, for locations where a meter is located inside an inhabited structure, Otter Tail seeks a temporary and limited suspension of meter reading and authorization to estimate applicable meter reads. Following COVID-19 guidance, Otter Tail initiated this practice on March 19, 2020. Otter Tail requests the Commission’s authorization to estimate these meters for reads that would occur from March 19, 2020 through May 31, 2020. Thereafter, Otter Tail will evaluate if continued estimation is necessary.

Otter Tail estimates this will affect approximately 5 percent of our customers or fewer who have meters located inside their businesses and/or homes.

Mr. Kahl
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An electronic copy of this filing is being sent to ndpsc@nd.gov. An original and seven copies are being sent by U.S. mail. If you have any questions regarding this filing, please contact me at 218-739-8657 or at molsen@otpc.com.

Sincerely,

/S/ MATTHEW J. OLSEN

Matthew J. Olsen
Manager, Regulatory Proceedings and Compliance

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Enclosures
By electronic filing and U.S. mail