

215 South Cascade Street
PO Box 496
Fergus Falls, Minnesota 56538-0496
218 739-8200
www.otpc.com (web site)



June 10, 2021

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

**RE: Otter Tail Power Company Meter Readings Waiver – COVID-19
Docket No. PU-20-159
Update and Extension Request**

Dear Mr. Kahl:

On March 26, 2020, Otter Tail Power Company (Otter Tail) filed a request for authorization to temporarily use estimated meter readings in certain meter locations to prevent and contain the spread of COVID-19. On April 15, 2020, Otter Tail's request to temporarily suspend meter readings at locations where the electric meter is located inside an inhabited structure, and authorize estimated meter reads for those locations was approved by the North Dakota Public Service Commission (Commission) through May 31, 2020. On May 14, 2020, the Commission approved to extend the period to July 31, 2020; on August 6, 2020, the Commission approved to extend the period to September 30, 2020; on October 7, 2020, the Commission approved to extend the period to December 31, 2020; on January 6, 2021 the Commission approved the extension to March 31, 2021 and on March 17, 2021 the Commission again approved our request to extend the suspension of meter readings at locations where the electric meter is located inside an inhabited structure, and authorize estimate mater reads for those locations through June 30, 2021.

Otter Tail recognizes in recent reports, COVID-19 cases have been relatively stable statewide. Otter Tail is currently working on transition plans back to normal as it relates to these suspended meter readings and other COVID-19 practices that have been in place as we have maneuvered through this pandemic. Otter Tail respectfully requests an additional extension to continue estimating through September 30, 2021 to allow us time for this transition to go smoothly.

Otter Tail continues to receive very little customer feedback for not entering customer facilities to secure readings. When customers call with concerns or questions about estimated readings, Customer Service Representatives work with the customer on what options may be available

including securing a reading from the customer. As previously reported, customers can call our customer service number to submit a reading over the phone, submit a reading from our website or take a picture of their meter(s) and email the picture with the reading to Otter Tail staff. For customer situations where there are three or more consecutive months of estimated readings, we continue to encourage customers to use one of the three options that works best for them.

The number of estimated readings continues to be very low, and we continue to work with the customers affected. Monthly we run a report that shows the number of customers with three or more consecutive months of estimated readings and we attempt to contact the customer to secure and submit a reading. As of the end of May 2021, one North Dakota residential customers with a meter located inside their living quarters had three or more consecutive months of estimated readings. For the customers we are unable to reach, we will continue to estimate readings until such time we receive an actual reading from the customer by one of the methods described above.

An electronic copy of this filing is being sent to ndpsc@nd.gov and an original is 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

cjh
By electronic filing and U.S. mail