

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

**Northern States Power Company
Customer Credit – DOE Settlement 2019
Application**

Case No. PU-21-89

ORDER

August 4, 2021

Preliminary Statement

On February 15, 2021, Northern States Power Company (NSP) filed with the Commission for approval to refund to customers the eleventh settlement payment of \$689,356 received December 22, 2020, from the United States Department of Energy (USDOE) arising from the USDOE's inability to accept nuclear waste under the federal Nuclear Waste Policy Act.

On April 1, 2021, the Commission issued a Corrected Notice of Opportunity for Hearing that provided until May 17, 2021, for receiving written comments and hearing requests. No response was received.

The Corrected Notice of Opportunity for Hearing identified the issues to be determined in this matter:

1. Whether the eleventh settlement payment refund should be combined with any interim rate refund from case PU-20-441 in a future bill credit.
2. Whether NSP's eleventh settlement payment refund amount is just and reasonable.

On July 14, 2021, the Commission discussed this matter with representatives from NSP and Commission Staff during an Informal Hearing.

Discussion

NSP requests to combine the refund of this eleventh USDOE settlement payment with an interim rate refund anticipated in the latter half of 2021 in Case No. PU-20-441, the NSP base rate increase proceeding. NSP has placed the eleventh USDOE settlement payment funds into a separate external interest-bearing account and will include the interest received, net of bank fees, in calculating the amount of the customer credit. NSP proposes the refund would be a one-time bill credit.

Alternatively, NSP suggests the eleventh USDOE settlement payment be a stand-alone refund in 2021 through a one-time bill credit based on each customer's current usage. NSP estimates this amount would be approximately \$2.75 to \$3.00 per customer.

Having considered this matter, the Commission finds the refund of the eleventh USDOE settlement payment should be combined with the interim rate refund anticipated in Case No. PU-20-441 in a single bill credit because it minimizes administrative costs.

NSP's eleventh settlement payment refund of \$689,356 plus interest received, net of bank fees, is just and reasonable.

Order

The Commission Orders:

1. Northern States Power Company's proposal to combine the refund of the eleventh USDOE settlement payment with an interim rate refund anticipated in the latter half of 2021 in Case No. PU-20-441, the NSP base rate increase proceeding, into a single future bill credit is approved (Combined Refund).
2. NSP shall file a refund plan for the Combined Refund.
3. NSP shall file a refund report when the Combined Refund is completed.
4. NSP shall refund future USDOE settlement proceeds to North Dakota customers using the one-time bill credit method as soon as is practicable, but not to exceed 120 days from receipt of the funds from the USDOE unless the Company petitions for – and the Commission approves an extension. Within 30 days of receipt of the settlement proceeds, NSP shall provide notification to the Commission detailing the amount and planned timing of the refund. A refund report shall be filed with the Commission by NSP within 30 days of completion of future refunds.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION


Randy Christmann
Commissioner


Julie Fedorchak
Chair


Brian Kroshus
Commissioner