

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

IN RE: EMERGENCY REGULATIONS TO THE :
RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING :
TERMINATION OF RESIDENTIAL : **Docket No. 3975**
ELECTRIC, GAS AND WATER :
UTILITY SERVICE :

REPORT

WHEREAS, on July 28, 2008, the Wiley Center filed a Petition signed by thirty-three individuals with the Public Utilities Commission requesting that the Commission's Rules and Regulations Governing Termination of Residential Electric, Gas and Water Utility Service ("Termination Rules") be changed to restore/continue service of a utility at 10% of the outstanding back bill; and

WHEREAS, the Commission opened a docket to investigate the matter; and

WHEREAS, on October 3, 2008, National Grid filed a proposal recommending that the percentages currently required as a down payment in order for protected customers to have service restored be reduced by ten percent; and

WHEREAS, at an open meeting held on October 6, 2008 after consideration and deliberation, the Commission found there exists an imminent peril to public health, safety and welfare because:

1. Rhode Island's current unemployment rate is the second highest rate in the country and growing faster than any other state in the country; and
2. children and elderly are at risk because of inadequate heat; and

3. most of the LIHEAP money received by the State of Rhode Island will be distributed to oil heat customers because the price of oil has risen so significantly; and
4. the current financial condition of the State will prevent it from helping these individuals whose utility service has been terminated.

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that the proposal by National Grid is insufficient to address the severe problem that currently exists; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds it is necessary to adopt emergency regulations to address the imminent peril to public health, safety and welfare.

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that it is necessary to adopt the following emergency regulation:

From October 6, 2008 through December 1, 2008, any residential customer whose utility service has been terminated by National Grid for non-payment will be entitled to have such service restored by National Grid upon satisfaction of one of the following conditions:

- (a) for a customer owing less than \$1000, 20% of the balance owed must be paid and the remainder of that balance must be paid within 18 months;
- (b) for a customer owing more than \$1000 but less than \$2500, 15% of the balance owed must be paid and the remainder of that balance must be paid within 24 months;

(c) for a customer owing \$2500 or more, 10% of the balance owed must be paid and the remainder of that balance must be paid within 36 months unless the Company chooses to extend such time period.

In addition to the down payments specified above, customers must pay current bills within the time period allowed by National Grid.

(19446)

EFFECTIVE AT WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND, ON OCTOBER 6, 2008 PURSUANT TO AN OPEN MEETING DECISION. A COPY OF THE FINAL RULES WERE FILED WITH THE RHODE ISLAND SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE ON OCTOBER 8, 2008 WITH AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF OCTOBER 6, 2008. WRITTEN ORDER ISSUED ON OCTOBER 9, 2008.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION



Elia Germani

Elia Germani, Chairman

Robert B. Holbrook, Commissioner*

Mary E. Bray

Mary E. Bray, Commissioner

* Commissioner Holbrook did not participate in this decision.