

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

**IN RE: SUSPENSION OF SERVICE TERMINATIONS :
AND CERTAIN COLLECTIONS ACTIVITIES : DOCKET NO. 5022
DURING THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY :**

**WOONSOCKET WATER DIVISION’S (“WWD”) RESPONSES TO PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION’S DATA REQUESTS ON THE
QUANTIFICATION OF WAIVED FEES
(Issued September 22, 2020)**

Include Name of Utility at the start of the responses and fill in the responding utility’s name in the bracketed “Name of Utility” spots.

In Order No. 23836 (June 2, 2020), the Commission ordered:

Utilities subject to this order shall temporarily suspend late fees, interest charges, credit card fees, debit card fees and ACH fees. Each utility that charges late fees, interest charges, or passes through credit card, debit card, or ACH fees to the customer shall track the expense of late fees, interest charges not collected as well as credit card fees, debit card fees, and ACH fees absorbed by the utility which are not included in the utility’s revenue requirement, for later review by the PUC. This portion of the order will be reviewed in September 2020.

PUC 1:	Does WWD typically charge late fees to customers? If so, please provide the tariff reference and the types of customers to whom the late fee applies.
WWD 1:	NO
Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

PUC 2:	Does WWD typically charge interest on overdue balances to customers? If so, please provide the tariff reference and the types of customers to whom the interest charge applies.
WWD 2:	Yes, Docket No. 4879, under the miscellaneous charges. The tariff reference "Bills delinquent after 30 days from the due date of the bill will accrue interest at the rate of 1.5% beginning from the due date of the bill." applies to all customers.
Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

PUC 3:	Does WWD typically pass through to the user the so called “convenience fees” associated with paying with credit cards or debit cards?
WWD :	Yes, the “convenience fees” associated with paying with credit cards and debit cards are paid by the user.
Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

PUC 4:	Does WWD typically pass through to the user the so called “convenience fees” associated with paying with an ACH/electronic check?
WWD :	No, Woonsocket Water does not accept ACH/electronic checks.
Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

PUC 5:	Does WWD intend to seek recovery of the costs associated with the absorption of the applicable fees?
WWD 5:	Woonsocket Water will not be seeking recovery of the costs associated with the absorption of convenience fees, because those fees are paid by the user.
Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

If the utility answered no to each of the preceding four questions, they can stop here. There is nothing more for the Commission to consider at this time. If the utility answered yes to one or more of the questions, please continue.

PUC 6:	Please indicate the date upon which WWD ceased charging customers for late fees, interest fees, credit card/debit card payment fees, or ACH/check fees (please list each separately, even if the date is the same) as a result of the Commission's decision.
WWD 6:	<p>Late Fees: Not applicable</p> <p>Interest Fees: Woonsocket Water only bills on a quarterly basis. The first available billing cycle to cease charging the interest fees to comply with the Commission's decision for June 1st would have been the June 2020 quarterly billing. That billing cycle however still had inadvertently included the calculation of late fees. Woonsocket Water is correcting this oversight by crediting those accounts in the September quarterly bill and the calculation will be shut off for that September cycle.</p> <p>Credit card/debit card payment fees: Woonsocket's credit card payments are processed by a third party vendor. To date the Third party vendor is still charging the customers directly. Woonsocket Water as a result is crediting this fee back on subsequent billings.</p> <p>ACH/Check fees: Not applicable</p>
Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

PUC 7:	<p>Utilities only collect late fees and interest fees on accounts for which payments are made. Similarly, credit card/debit card fees and ACH/electronic check fees are only absorbed by the utility under the PUC's order if payments are made. For the period commencing on the date provided in response to number 5 through the most recent date available (identify the date), please provide the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The total number of accounts on which payments were made. b. The number of accounts where payments were made and interest and/or late fees were waived. c. The number of accounts where payments were made by credit card/debit card. d. The number of accounts where payments were made by ACH/electronic check. e. The dollar amount of credit card/debit card fees absorbed by the utility that would have otherwise been assessed to the customer paying with a credit card/debit card. f. The dollar amount of ACH/electronic check absorbed by the utility that would have otherwise been assessed to the customer paying through ACH/electronic check. g. The dollar amount of waived late fees on accounts where payments were made. h. The dollar amount of waived interest fees on accounts where payments were made.
WWD 7:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 8154 accounts between June 01 thru September 30 b. between June 1 and Sept 30 there were only 30 accounts that paid interest for the June 2020 billing. There was a total of \$13,759.24 of interest paid between June 1 and Sept 30th for all billings and only \$158.91 of that amount was for the June 2020 billing, c. There was a total of approximately 1175 accounts which paid credit card fees between 6/1 and 9/30. d. 0. e. There was a total of approximately \$6877 in credit card fees paid between 6/1 and 9/30. As mentioned in the response to WWD-6, these fees will be credited back to the ratepayers in a subsequent billing. f. 0. g. 0. h. There was a total of \$13,759.24 of interest paid between June 1 and Sept 30th for all billings and only \$158.91 of that amount was for the June 2020 billing, Each cycle bills approximately \$35,000 per quarterly billing cycle thus Woonsocket will be absorbing around \$70,000 in interest fees.

Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

PUC 8:	Please indicate the first date WWD sent termination notices to customers with dates not affected by a Commission decision (in other words, the utility could follow through with a physical termination on or after the notice period if payment or a payment arrangement was not made). Please break out by customer class if applicable.
WWD 8:	No termination notices were sent with dates not affected by a Commission decision.
Respondent:	David G Bebyn, CPA
Date:	October 15, 2020

CITY OF WOONSOCKET, WATER DIVISION
By its Attorneys,

/s/Alan M. Shoer
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Dated: October 15, 2020

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on October 15, 2020 I delivered a true copy of the foregoing response to the **Commission's Data Requests on the quantification of waived fees via electronic mail** to the parties in the Commission's service list for this docket.

/s/ Alan M. Shoer