

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION  
OF WEST VIRGINIA  
CHARLESTON**

At a session of the PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WEST VIRGINIA in the City of Charleston on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of April 2024.

CASE NO 24-0338-G-W-E-CTV-GI

A general investigation into notifications by utilities and cable service providers regarding utility and cable service outages.

**COMMISSION ORDER**

The Commission opens a general investigation into notifications by utilities and cable service providers to customers regarding utility service and cable service outages.

**BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

The Legislature delegated to the Commission the duty to provide for the availability of adequate, economical and reliable utility services throughout the State. W.Va. Code § 24-1-1(a)(2). The Legislature has also delegated the Commission the duty to prescribe cable system standards to promote safe, adequate, and reliable service to subscribers. W. Va. Code § 24D-1-5(4). The Commission routinely investigates causes of service outages. The Commission will initiate an investigation to determine how utilities and cable service providers are notifying their customers of outages. The Commission may decide to hold hearings and/or meetings regarding this subject after it gathers information.

The Commission will name the following utilities and cable service providers as respondents in this proceeding and will require responses from them regarding their notification procedures: Mountaineer Gas Company (Mountaineer), Hope Gas Inc. (Hope), Consumers Gas Utility Company (Consumers), Union Oil & Gas, Inc. (Union), Cardinal Natural Gas Company (Cardinal), West Virginia American Water Company (WVAWC), Beckley Water Company (Beckley Water), Appalachian Power Company and Wheeling Power Company (APCo/WPCo), Monongahela Power/Potomac Edison Power Company (Mon Power/PE), Morgantown Utility Board (MUB), Frontier West Virginia Inc. (Frontier), and Optimum.

Within twenty days of the date of this Order, the respondents should file a response in this matter to aid the Commission in this investigation. Specifically, the respondents should explain how they notify their individual affected customers of

service outages; what plans they have, if any, to add, expand, modify, or improve notification systems; describe any technical or physical barriers that exist to providing electronic notifications by email or text message; and describe procedures in place to notify mass communication media of outages.

The Commission will serve West Virginia Rural Water Association (WVRWA), West Virginia Municipal League (WVML), and the West Virginia Internet and Television Association (WVCTA) (collectively associations) with a copy of this Order so that the associations can inform their members of the general investigation. The Commission welcomes responses from the associations' members, but members are not required to respond.

### **FINDING OF FACT**

The Commission decided to initiate an investigation to determine how utilities and cable service providers are notifying their customers of outages.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

1. The Commission should name Mountaineer, Hope, Consumers, Union, Cardinal, WVAVC, Beckley Water, APCo/WPCo, Mon Power/PE, MUB, Frontier, and Optimum as respondents in this proceeding.

2. The Commission should serve WVRWA, WVML, and WVCTA with a copy of this Order so that the associations can inform their members of this general investigation.

3. The Commission should investigate the respondents' service outage notification capabilities, procedures, and practices.

### **ORDER**

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that the Commission open a general investigation into notifications by utilities and cable service providers to customers regarding utility service and cable service outages.

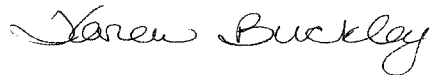
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that named respondents shall file their responses to the Commission's inquiries regarding notifications to customers of service outages within twenty days of the entry of this Order.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that members of the West Virginia Rural Water Association, the West Virginia Municipal League, and the West Virginia Internet and Television Association may, but are not required to file responses to this investigation.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Executive Secretary of the Commission serve a copy of this Order on the West Virginia Rural Water Association, the West Virginia Municipal League, and the West Virginia Internet and Television Association by United States First Class Mail.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Executive Secretary of the Commission serve a copy of this Order by electronic service on all parties of record who have filed an e-service agreement and by the United States First Class Mail on all parties of record who have not filed an e-service agreement, and on Commission Staff by hand delivery.

A True Copy, Teste,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Buckley".

Karen Buckley, Executive Secretary

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