

LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE ORDER DATED AUGUST 19, 2016

LOUISIANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, EX PARTE

In re: Executive Order Creating Emergency Suspension of Late Payment Fees Assessed on Delinquent Payments for Utility Services in Areas Under a State of Emergency during the August 2016 Flood Event.

Due to extensive flooding experienced in south Louisiana in August, 2016, a number of parishes have been placed under a State of Emergency by Governor Edwards. Many of these parishes have also been declared a Federal Disaster Area by President Obama. By way of Executive Order dated August 17, 2016, the Commission prohibited the disconnecting of customers for non-payment of bills in all parishes that are under a State of Emergency and/or have been declared a Federal Disaster Area. Additional concerns have been raised regarding the applicability of assessing late fees for failing to timely pay bills. Given the severity of these events, and the impact they have on Commission-jurisdictional ratepayers, and the lack of access for many in the affected areas to mail and/or electronic methods for bill paying, immediate action is required to ensure those in the affected areas do not incur late charges for their inability to timely submit payment. However, the Commission is not scheduled to meet again until Wednesday, August 31, 2016, and is unable to address this issue before that time. In scenarios such as the present, the General Order dated November 3, 2005 delegates to the Executive Secretary,

limited authority to make temporary exceptions to Commission rules and/or orders during a state of emergency in Louisiana declared by the Governor of the State of Louisiana and/or President of the United States and after approval of the requested action by the Chairman of the Commission, or Vice Chairman of the Commission if the Chairman is unavailable.

As further stated therein,

During times of crisis, the ability of the Louisiana Public Service Commission to make immediate decisions is often required in order to avoid possible negative results for the public.

Consistent with the requirements of the General Order, Executive Secretary Gonzalez has received approval from Chairman Commissioner Holloway to implement the following emergency action:

1. All Public Utilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission are prohibited from assessing late payment fees/charges on customers not timely paying utility bills in all parishes that are currently under a declared State of Emergency and/or have been declared a Federal Disaster Area.
2. Once the State of Emergency has been lifted for a particular parish, this prohibition/suspension shall be lifted.
3. The Commission will vote to ratify this action at its August 31, 2016 Business and Executive Session.

This Order is effectively immediately.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

BY ORDER OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

August 19, 2016


EVE KAHAO GONZALEZ
SECRETARY

Executive Order dated August 19, 2016