

AVISTA CORPORATION
dba Avista Utilities

RULE NO. 10

DISPUTED BILLS

A. Bill Review Procedure

1. In the event of a dispute between a consumer and the Company about any bill, charge or service, the Company will thoroughly investigate the matter and promptly report the results of the investigation to the consumer. The Company will prepare a written record showing the name and address of the consumer involved, the date and character of the dispute, and the disposition of the matter. Records of disputes shall be retained pursuant to OAR 860-28-010.
2. A consumer will be informed of the right to supervisory review of any dispute, including but not limited to, establishment of credit and termination of service. If a dispute is not resolved, the Company will notify the consumer of the Commission's dispute resolution procedure and its toll-free telephone number.
3. A consumer may request the Commission's assistance in resolving the dispute by contacting the Commission's Consumer Services Division at 1-800-522-2404, TDD 1-800-553-9600, or at 550 Capitol St., N.E., Suite 215, Salem, Oregon 97301-2551. The Commission will notify the Company upon receipt of such a request.
4. The Consumer Services Division will assist the complainant and the Company in an effort to reach an informal resolution of the dispute.
5. If a registered dispute cannot be resolved informally, the Consumer Services Division will advise the complainant of the right to file a formal written complaint with the Commission. The complaint shall state the facts of the dispute and the relief requested. The Company will answer the complaint within 15 days of service of the complaint. The matter will then be set for expedited hearing. A hearing may be held on less than ten days notice where good cause is shown.
6. Pending resolution of the dispute, the complainant's obligation to pay undisputed amounts continues.

(continued)

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By Kelly Norwood,

Vice President, State & Federal Regulation

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RULE NO. 10 (continued)

DISPUTED BILLS

7. A customer who has a registered dispute or formal complaint pending with the Commission shall be entitled to continued or restored service provided:
- a. Service was not terminated for theft of service or failure to establish credit;
 - b. A bona fide dispute exists in which the facts asserted by the customer entitle the customer to service;
 - c. Where termination is based on nonpayment, the customer makes adequate arrangements to avoid future loss to the Company, such as prepaying estimated monthly utility charges; and
 - d. The consumer diligently pursues conflict resolution under the Commission's rules.
8. If the conditions in Subsection 7. are not satisfied, the Company has no obligation to provide continued service. If the Company discontinues service because of a failure of Subsection 7.c. or 7.d. of this rule, the Company will give the customer five-day notice serviced in the same manner as provided for in Rule 8 or Rule 11, whichever applies, except that the notice need only describe the defect in performance, the date and time after which utility service will terminate, and the toll-free number of the Consumer Services Division. In deciding whether the conditions are met, the Company, or Consumer Services may ask the Commission for a hearing to decide if the conditions are met. Unless extraordinary circumstances exist, the hearing will be conducted by telephone conference within three business days from the date requested. Notice of hearing will be given to the customer, the Company, and Consumer Services Division at least 12 hours before the date and time of the hearing. Notice is effective when given in person, by telephone, or in writing delivered to the last known address of the party. Mailed notice is effective two days after deposit in the U.S. mail, excluding Sundays and holidays.

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