

Decision No. C21-0080-I

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF COLORADO**

PROCEEDING NO. 20M-0267EG

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IN THE MATTER OF THE COMMISSION'S IMPLEMENTATION OF SENATE BILL 20-030  
RELATING TO INCREASED CONSUMER PROTECTIONS FOR INVESTOR OWNED  
UTILITIES.

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**INTERIM COMMISSION DECISION  
MODIFYING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

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Mailed Date: February 12, 2021  
Adopted Date: February 10, 2021

**I. BY THE COMMISSION**

**A. Statement**

1. On June 19, 2020, the Colorado Public Utilities Commission issued Decision No. C20-0452, opening this miscellaneous proceeding to receive comments and other information regarding the statutory changes in Senate Bill (SB) 20-030 concerning increased consumer protections for customers of investor-owned utilities.<sup>1</sup> The Commission also directed electric and gas investor-owned regulated utilities to provide information on how they were responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. By this Decision, we direct regulated utilities to include additional metrics in their monthly reporting as discussed below, beginning March 15, 2021.

**B. Discussion**

3. Decision No. R20-0664-I, issued September 16, 2020, directed regulated utilities to file monthly reports including information on delinquencies, numbers of customers that were

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<sup>1</sup> SB20-030 implementation is currently ongoing in Proceeding No. 20R-0349EG.

eligible for disconnection, geographic information about disconnections, and participation in payment plans. The first reports were submitted on October 1, 2020, and covered data through August 31, 2020.

4. Decision No. R20-0916-I, issued December 28, 2020, subsequently modified the reporting requirements for regulated utilities to promote consistency and collect more specific data regarding actual disconnections of service for nonpayment, whether service was restored, and whether restoration was made upon the customer entering a payment plan or receiving energy assistance, if known. The Decision further summarized modifications utilities have made to disconnection practices, including increasing the threshold at which they would issue a notice of discontinuance for past-due bills, and promoting payment plans and other assistance options.

5. By Decision C21-0048-I, issued January 28, 2021, the Commission identified potential concerns with disconnection activities between September and December 2020, and directed Black Hills Colorado Electric, LLC (Black Hills) to respond to several questions regarding its disconnection practices.

6. Black Hills timely responded to the Commission's questions on February 1, 2021. Black Hills provided context regarding its charitable contributions, modifications to its disconnection practices and payment plan policies, and anticipated increases to energy assistance, all of which contribute to its expectation that disconnections will continue to decrease. Furthermore, Black Hills reported that the average time to restore power to customers after they have met requirements for reconnection is 2.80 hours for electric customers without advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) and 0.50 hours for electric customers with AMI.

7. Understanding disconnection practices during the COVID-19 pandemic is critical because of the potential impact of disconnections on residents' health and safety. Upon reviewing

Black Hills' response and regulated utilities' monthly reports more generally, we find that minor adjustments to reporting requirements would support our evolving understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 on residents who are experiencing arrears and disconnections.

8. Accordingly, we further modify the monthly reporting for all regulated utilities to require three additional metrics, to be included beginning with the March 15, 2021, reports:

- For the prior month, average restoration time in hours after a disconnection for nonpayment for a residential customer;
- Percent of total restorations for residential customers that took longer than six hours to complete; and
- A list of the top five zip codes where residential customers have been disconnected for nonpayment, along with the number of customers who were disconnected for nonpayment in each zip code.

## **II. ORDER**

### **A. The Commission Orders That:**

1. All regulated utilities are directed to include three additional metrics in their monthly reporting beginning March 15, 2021, consistent with the discussion above.

2. This Decision is effective upon its Mailed Date.

**B. ADOPTED IN COMMISSIONERS' WEEKLY MEETING  
February 10, 2021.**

( S E A L )



ATTEST: A TRUE COPY

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Dean".

Doug Dean,  
Director

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

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JOHN GAVAN

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Commissioners