



ADMINISTRATIVE RULES OF MONTANA



38.5.2528 STANDARD RATE TARIFF

- (1) A small water or sewer utility may file an application to establish its initial commission-approved standard rates for small water or sewer utilities or by adopting its own rates if they are lower than the applicable standard rates. If the utility has previously had rates on file with the commission it is not eligible for initial standard rates. The standard rate application and tariff forms to be submitted for commission review are available from the commission upon request or by obtaining them from the commission's web site at www.psc.mt.gov.
- (2) The standard rates for small water and sewer utilities are set pursuant to ARM 38.5.2527(1)(b), as calculated by the commission staff.
- (3) Other terms and conditions of service are those provided in the commission's standard rate tariff forms and in ARM 38.5.2501, et seq.
- (4) Within ten days of filing its application with the commission, a small water or sewer utility that files a standard rate application must notify every customer in writing and file a copy of the customer notification with the commission.
- (5) The customer notification must be mailed to each customer's billing address. The notification must inform customers of the proposed rates, provide information that shows the typical bill impact of the proposed rates to the utility's average level of customer usage, and provide contact information for the utility, the Montana Consumer Counsel, and the commission.
- (6) If either the Montana Consumer Counsel or 20 percent of the utility's customers protest the application, the commission will make a decision on the application following any additional process established by the commission.
- (7) A standard rate tariff approved by the commission expires three calendar years after its initial effective date, which begins at the time the commission grants any portion of the standard rate, even if the rate is implemented in increments pursuant to ARM 38.5.2527(3). At least three months prior to the expiration of the standard rate tariff, the utility must file a rate application in accordance with the minimum rate case filing standards of ARM 38.5.101, et seq., or an application in accordance with the operating ratio methodology pursuant to ARM 38.5.2529. A utility may request an extension of the standard rate in limited circumstances and for good cause shown, including for an extension of time to allow the utility to meet its annual report requirements under these rules.
- (8) Standard rates shall be considered interim or temporary rates subject to rebate or surcharge pending a decision made in a rate application in accordance with the minimum rate case filing standards of ARM 38.5.101, et seq. or in accordance with the operating ratio methodology pursuant to ARM 38.5.2529.

Authorizing statute(s): 69-2-101, 69-3-103, 69-3-301, MCA

Implementing statute(s): 69-2-101, 69-3-103, 69-3-301, MCA

History: NEW, 2014 MAR p. 394, Eff. 2/28/14; AMD, 2018 MAR p. 1289, Eff. 7/7/18.