

BEFORE THE ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS

LEA MÁRQUEZ PETERSON, CHAIRMAN
SANDRA D. KENNEDY
JUSTIN OLSON
ANNA TOVAR
JIM O'CONNOR

IN THE MATTER OF THE INVESTIGATION
AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE
COMMISSION'S DISCONNECTION RULES
AND THE DISCONNECTION OF PUBLIC
SERVICE CORPORATIONS

DOCKET NO. E-00000A-19-0128

NOTICE OF FILING

Ajo Improvement Company (AIC), pursuant to Decision No. 77849, submits its customer communication plan for Staff review.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 11th day of March, 2021.

AJO IMPROVEMENT COMPANY

By s/Michael W. Patten

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1 efiled this 11th day of March, 2021, with:

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3 Docket Control
4 ARIZONA CORPORATION COMMISSION
5 1200 West Washington Street
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11 By s/Jennifer Thomes
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Ajo Improvement Company

Deferred Payment Arrangement Customer Communication Plan

Background

In Decision No. 77849, the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) directed regulated electric companies to develop eight month deferred payment arrangements for residential customers with overdue balances. On January 19, 2021, in compliance with Decision No. 77849, Ajo Improvement Company (AIC) has submitted revisions to its tariffs to adopt the deferred payment arrangements provisions set forth in that decision. AIC has been operating pursuant to the tariff revisions.

AIC is a small utility with approximately 1100 residential customers. AIC did not experience significant instances of residential customers with significant past due balances during the initial disconnection moratorium for Summer of 2019 and AIC was communicating with the handful of customers who had overdue balances and offering deferred payment arrangements of up to six months. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic period starting in early 2020, AIC has seen a marked increase in residential customers with significant overdue accounts.

This Communications Plan sets forth what AIC has done and will do to communicate with customers about the deferred payment arrangements ordered in Decision No. 77849.

Customer Communication Plan

Direct Telephone Contact

Given the number of AIC customers with overdue bills, AIC has begun the process of attempting to contact those customers directly by telephone and inform them of the option to enter into a deferred payment arrangement for up to eight months.

Targeted Letters

Given the number of seasonal customers, direct telephone contact may not be as effective as for other utilities. Therefore, beginning in January 2021, AIC mailed letters to the billing address for all delinquent accounts regarding the option to enter into a deferred payment arrangement for up to eight months and requesting the customer to contact AIC. AIC is in the process of updating this letter and will submit it to Staff.

In-Person Visit

If neither the direct telephone calls or targeted letter is successful, AIC will send an employee to the residence to determine if the residence is occupied and to communicate the option of a

deferred payment arrangement for up to eight months.

Information posted on AIC Facebook Page

AIC maintains a Facebook page to provide community notices about various AIC matters, such as outages. AIC will be posting information about the option to enter into a deferred payment arrangement for up to eight months on its Facebook page.

Bill Message

Depending on the success of the direct telephone contacts and targeted letters, AIC may provide a bill message or insert informing customers of the option to enter into a deferred payment arrangement for up to eight months.

Communications regarding bill assistance programs

AIC will provide information to customers with overdue balances about entities (such as International Sonoran Desert Alliance (ISDA)) that potentially may have bill assistance programs. AIC provides \$20,000 annually to ISDA for bill assistance and has provided ISDA with an additional \$20,000 in 2020.