

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Application of West Coast Gas Company to
Revise its Gas Rates and Tariffs.

(U-910-G)

Application 05-04-014
(Filed April 5, 2005)

**SCOPING MEMO AND RULING
OF ASSIGNED COMMISSIONER AND ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE**

1. Summary

This Scoping Memo and Ruling (Scoping Memo), issued after the June 14, 2005 prehearing conference (PHC) in this matter, sets forth the procedural schedule and issues to be addressed, designates the presiding officer, and addresses other procedural issues which will facilitate the efficient processing of this complaint.

2. Category of Proceeding and Need for Hearings

No party has objected to the category of this proceeding, which is ratesetting. Based on the PHC, hearings will be required.

3. Presiding Officer

Pursuant to Rule 6 (b)(3) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (Rules), Commissioner Brown designates Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Koss as the presiding officer.

4. Issues to Be Addressed

The issues to be addressed are described below. In this application, West Coast Gas Company (WCG) is requesting an 8.5% increase in its gas base rates

for approximately 1500 residential and commercial customers in the WCG Mather and Castle service territories. The prepared direct testimony of Raymond J. Czahar, WCG Chief Financial Officer, and the workpapers supporting his direct testimony were filed along with the application. The application additionally states that WCG plans to request another rate increase in April 2006. At the PHC, Czahar advised that WCG does not intend to make any additional filings in support of the subject application (except possible written rebuttal testimony).

The Commission's Office of Ratepayer Advocates (ORA) timely protested the application based on questions regarding revenue requirements, methodology used to determine test year revenues, gas sales, depreciation and other related expenses. ORA also protested the proposal that a subsequent application would be filed next year and requested a ruling from the Assigned Commissioner or ALJ directing WCG to either withdraw the current application, or not file next year. ORA will further address these issues in its written testimony (schedule discussed below).

At the PHC, the parties advised they may attempt to discuss a possible settlement or stipulation to these issues and agreed WCG would not amend the application until these discussions occur. Should a settlement or stipulation be reached before the hearing, the parties must telephone the Assigned ALJ, and notice the service list no later than September 13, 2005, the day before the scheduled hearing.

5. Schedule

The following schedule, based on agreements reached by the parties at the PHC, is affirmed. The Assigned Commissioner or ALJ may modify the schedule

as necessary. The schedule for briefing and a decision will be determined at the conclusion of the hearing.

Event	Date
ORA to serve prepared written testimony, and list of exhibits and witnesses.	August 16, 2005
West Coast to serve rebuttal to ORA testimony	August 23, 2005
Evidentiary hearing at the Commission's Courtroom, State Office Building, 505 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco, California	September 14, 2005, commencing at 11 a.m.

Our goal is to resolve this case as soon as possible, and we anticipate that the resolution will occur within 12 months from the date of filing the application, or April 2006.

6. Ex Parte Rules

The ex parte rules set forth in Rule 7(c) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure apply to this proceeding.

7. Service List

A permanent service list was established at the PHC and is attached as Appendix A.

8. Filing and Service of Documents

Parties shall file and serve all documents as set forth in Article 2 of the Rules. Based on an agreement by the parties at the PHC, all documents will be served electronically, as set forth in Rule 2.3.1 of the Rules (a paper copy must be provided to the assigned ALJ as provided in Rule 2.3.1(f)).

IT IS RULED that:

1. Based on the prehearing conference, hearings are necessary.

2. The issues to be addressed and schedule for this proceeding are set forth in Sections 4 and 5 of this Scoping Memo, unless subsequently modified by the Assigned Commissioner or Administrative Law Judge (ALJ).

3. The application shall presently not be amended.

4. ALJ Koss is the presiding officer in this proceeding.

5. The service list for this proceeding is attached as Appendix A.

6. The process for filing and service of documents in this proceeding is set forth in Section 7 of this Scoping Memo.

7. Ex parte communications in this proceeding shall comply with Rule 7(c) of the Rules of Practice and Procedure.

Dated June 17, 2005, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ GEOFFREY F. BROWN

Geoffrey F. Brown
Assigned Commissioner

/s/ KENNETH KOSS

Kenneth Koss
Administrative Law Judge

APPENDIX A

******* SERVICE LIST *******
A.05-04-014

APPEARANCES

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(End of Appendix A)

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify that I have by mail, and by electronic mail to the parties for whom an electronic mail address has been provided, this day served a true copy of the original attached Scoping Memo and Ruling of Assigned Commissioner and Administrative Law Judge on all parties of record in this proceeding or their attorneys of record.

Dated June 17, 2005, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ ELIZABETH LEWIS
Elizabeth Lewis

N O T I C E

Parties should notify the Process Office, Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 2000, San Francisco, CA 94102, of any change of address to insure that they continue to receive documents. You must indicate the proceeding number on the service list on which your name appears.

The Commission's policy is to schedule hearings (meetings, workshops, etc.) in locations that are accessible to people with disabilities. To verify that a particular location is accessible, call: Calendar Clerk (415) 703-1203.

If specialized accommodations for the disabled are needed, e.g., sign language interpreters, those making the arrangements must call the Public Advisor at (415) 703-2074, TTY 1-866-836-7825 or (415) 703-5282 at least three working days in advance of the event.