

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

DW 26-027

PENNICHUCK WATER WORKS, INC.

Request for Change in Rates

**Order Suspending Proposed Tariffs and Commencing Adjudicative Proceeding,
and Notice of Prehearing Conference and Hearing**

ORDER NO. 28,233

June 22, 2026

This order provides notice that the Commission received a request from Pennichuck Water Works, Inc. (PWW or the Company) for a permanent revenue increase of \$11,608,503, which would produce an overall customer rate increase of 21.34 percent. Additionally, PWW filed a petition to modify their ratemaking methodology and customer rate design. In this order, the Commission commences an adjudicative proceeding to evaluate PWW's request, and schedules a prehearing conference on July 16, 2026, with a hearing on PWW's request for temporary rates on July 21, 2026.

I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

PWW is a water utility that provides water service to customers in southern and central New Hampshire. On May 1, 2026, PWW filed a notice of intent to file rate schedules. Both the

Department of Energy and the Office of Consumer Advocate have filed notices of appearances to participate in this matter.

On June 1, 2026, PWW filed petitions for permanent rates, temporary rates, and modifications to its rate structure, including its municipal fire protection rate design. In support of its petitions, PWW filed testimony of multiple employees and experts, and related documents. All docket filings, other than any information subject to confidential treatment, are available on the Commission's website at the PUC Virtual File Room, see [Docket DW 26-027](#).

A. Proposed Permanent Rate Increase

The Company requested a permanent revenue requirement increase to \$67,349,043, an increase of 21.34 percent. *See* Testimony of Torres at 25. The average residential customer would see a monthly increase of 21.34 percent, from \$60.02 to \$72.83 monthly. *See* Testimony of Countie at 22. The Company proposes an increase to the monthly fixed rate for all meter sizes.

B. Proposed Temporary Rate Increase

In the event that the Commission suspends PWW's proposed permanent rates tariff, pending further investigation, PWW requested approval of a temporary rate increase 21.34 percent to be applied uniformly to all rate classes, effective July 2, 2026. *Petition for Temporary Rates* at page 3.

C. QCPAC and Other Relief Requested

In their *Petition*, PWW also filed a request for modification to their ratemaking structure, including recovery through their approved Qualified Capital Project Adjustment Charge (QCPAC) capital improvement program. Among other modifications, PWW seeks to implement a Debt Service Revenue Requirement (DSRR) and alter its municipal fire protection rate design. *Petition for Further Modification* at 4–5.

II. ISSUES PRESENTED

The filing presents, *inter alia*, the following issues: whether the proposed temporary rates are reasonable and sufficient to yield not less than a reasonable return of the cost of the property of the utility used and useful in the public service less accrued depreciation, as required by RSA 378:27; whether the proposed permanent rates are just, reasonable, and lawful, as required by RSA 374:2, RSA 378:5, and RSA 378:7; and whether implementing the proposed QCPAC and DSRP would be just and reasonable pursuant to RSA 374:2 and RSA 378:7. Accordingly, an adjudicative proceeding will be convened to address these issues.

The Commission will be conducting the prehearing conference and any hearings scheduled in this matter in person. The Commission will consider requests to conduct hearings using a hybrid format to permit remote participation by a specific individual only if the Commission has determined that a sufficient reason has been provided for why that individual would be unable to attend in person. Any party requesting that a specific individual be permitted to participate remotely should file a written request with the Commission's Clerk's Office no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the prehearing conference or hearing date. If the Commission determines that one or more individuals will be permitted to appear remotely, then individuals in the Commission's hearing room, including the Commissioners, will be broadcast on a web-enabled platform.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that PWW's proposed tariffs are suspended for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months, or until June 22, 2027, pursuant to RSA 378:6, I(a), pending investigation and further order of the Commission; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that an adjudicative proceeding be commenced for the purpose of reviewing and resolving the foregoing issues pursuant to RSA chapter 541-A, RSA 374:2, RSA 378:5, RSA 378:7, RSA 378:27, and RSA 378:28, and the Commission's procedural rules; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a prehearing conference, pursuant to Puc 204.07, at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on July 16, 2026, at 10:00 a.m., at which each party should be prepared to address any of the issues set forth in Puc 204.07; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that PWW shall circulate a Structuring Statement to the parties on or before July 6, 2026 and file the Structuring Statement with the Commission no later than July 13, 2026;

FURTHER ORDERED, that the New Hampshire Department of Energy is requested to file its position regarding PWW's temporary rates, including the reasons for this position, on or before July 13, 2026; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that during the prehearing conference, the Commission will consider the matters listed in Puc 204.07(f), including the establishment of a procedural schedule governing the remainder of the proceeding. Parties and potential parties are encouraged to facilitate the development of a procedural schedule by conferring prior to the prehearing conference, so that the presiding officer can address any matters on which there is disagreement during the prehearing conference; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, immediately following the prehearing conference, PWW shall make appropriate personnel available for the parties to hold a technical session to review the filing; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any entity or individual may petition to intervene and seek to be admitted as a party in this proceeding. Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, consistent with RSA 541-A:32, Puc 204.08, and Puc 203.06, any entity or individual seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to PWW and any other parties on the service list, on or before July 1, 2026. The petition shall state the facts demonstrating how the petitioner's rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with Puc 204.08; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before July 10, 2026; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that the parties may submit a stipulation containing a discovery schedule, statement of any additional issues not identified in this order of notice, and at least three dates on which they would be available for a final hearing in this matter, including how much time will be required, with a request that the prehearing conference and technical session be cancelled, on or before July 13, 2026. The Commission may cancel the prehearing conference and technical session upon approval of such a stipulation; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that parties shall file any proposed exhibits, written testimony, motions, or other documents intended to become part of the record in this proceeding with the

Commission in accordance with the Commission's administrative rules. Parties may elect to submit any filing in electronic form unless otherwise ordered by the Commission. Filings will be considered filed as of the time the electronic copy is received by the Commission; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that routine procedural inquiries may be made by contacting the Commission's Clerk's Office at (603) 271-2431 or www.puc.nh.gov/about-us/contact-us. All requests to the Commission should be made in a written pleading filed with the Commission. Unless otherwise authorized by law, *ex parte* communications are prohibited; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to Puc 204.04, PWW shall notify all entities and individuals desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on its website no later than two business days after the date of issue, such publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before July 2, 2026. In addition, the Clerk shall publish this order of notice on the Commission's website no later than two business days after the date of issue; and it is

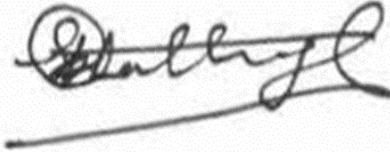
FURTHER ORDERED, that the Commission will hold a hearing on PWW's request for temporary rates at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on July 21, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any hearings in this matter shall be conducted in accordance with the attached hearing guidelines.

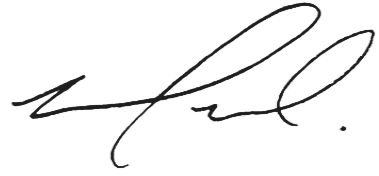
So ordered, this twenty-second day of June 2026.



Christopher J. Ellms, Jr.
Chairman



Pradip K. Chattopadhyay
Commissioner



Mark W. Dell'Orfano
Commissioner

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the NHPUC, 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429; 603-271-2431; TDD Access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance should be made one week prior to the scheduled event.

Service List - Docket Related

Docket#: 26-027

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