

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

August 25, 2014

IN RE:)	
)	
ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION'S TENNESSEE)	DOCKET NO.
AND UNION CITY, TENNESSEE 2012-2013 ACA)	13-00124
FILING)	

**ORDER ADOPTING ACA AUDIT REPORT OF
TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY'S UTILITIES DIVISION**

This matter came before Chairman Herbert H. Hilliard, Vice Chairman David F. Jones and Director James M. Allison of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority (the "Authority" or "TRA"), the voting panel assigned to this docket, at a regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on July 22, 2014, for consideration of the report of the Authority's Utilities Division (the "Staff") resulting from the Staff's audit of Atmos Energy Corporation's ("Atmos" or "Company") annual deferred gas cost account filing for the year ended June 30, 2013. The Actual Cost Adjustment ("ACA") Compliance Audit Report (the "Report"), attached hereto as Exhibit 1 and incorporated by this reference, was filed by the Staff on July 7, 2014, and contains four findings.

The Company submitted its ACA filing on September 19, 2013, and the Staff completed its audit of the Company's filing on June 24, 2014. On July 7, 2014, the Staff filed its Report in this docket. The original 180-day deadline for the Staff to complete the audit was extended to June 30, 2014 and again to July 31, 2014 by mutual consent of Atmos and Staff, as provided for

in the Purchased Gas Adjustment Rule 1220-4-7-.03(2). The objective of the audit was to determine whether the purchased gas adjustments within the ACA and approved by the TRA for the twelve (12) months ended June 30, 2013 were calculated correctly and were supported by appropriate source documentation. Staff's Report contained four findings: 1) the Company miscalculated storage inventory activities; 2) the Company understated its gas cost recoveries; 3) the Company erroneously booked a purchased gas cost as a demand cost rather than as a commodity cost; and 4) the Company overstated the amount of interest due to customers in the ACA filing. Atmos concurred with all of the findings.

Based upon the Company filing and except for the findings noted, the Staff concluded that the Purchased Gas Adjustment mechanism as calculated in the ACA appears to be working properly and in accordance with the TRA Rules in all material respects. At a regularly scheduled Authority Conference held on July 22, 2014, the panel considered and voted unanimously to approve the Report, including the conclusions and recommendations contained therein.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

The Actual Cost Adjustment Compliance Audit Report of Atmos Gas Corporation's annual deferred gas cost account filing for the year ended June 30, 2013, a copy of which is attached to this Order as Exhibit 1, is approved and adopted, and it is incorporated in this Order as though fully rewritten herein.

Chairman Herbert H. Hilliard, Vice Chairman David F. Jones and Director James M. Allison concur.

ATTEST:



Earl R. Taylor, Executive Director

EXHIBIT 1

BEFORE THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

July 7, 2014



IN RE:

**ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION
ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT ("ACA") AUDIT**

)
)
) **Docket No. 13-00124**
)

**NOTICE OF FILING BY THE UTILITIES DIVISION OF THE TENNESSEE
REGULATORY AUTHORITY**

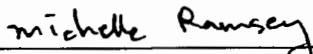
Pursuant to Tenn. Code Ann. §§65-4-104, 65-4-111 and 65-3-108, the Utilities Division of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority ("Authority") hereby gives notice of its filing of the Compliance Audit Report of the Actual Cost Adjustment Audit (hereafter "ACA") component of the Purchased Gas Adjustment Rule for Atmos Energy Corporation (the "Company") in this docket and would respectfully state as follows:

1. The present docket was opened by the Authority to hear matters arising out of the audit of the Company's ACA filing for the period July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013.
2. The Company's ACA filing was received on September 19, 2013, and the Staff completed its audit of same on June 24, 2014. The original 180-day deadline for the Staff's completion of the audit was extended to June 30, 2014 and again to July 31, 2014 by mutual consent of Atmos Energy Corporation and the TRA Audit Staff as provided for in the Purchased Gas Adjustment Rule 1220-4-7-.03(2).

3. On June 25, 2014, the Utilities Division submitted its preliminary ACA audit findings to the Company via e-mail. The Company responded on June 27, 2014 via e-mail and this response has been incorporated into the final report. The Report is attached hereto as Exhibit A and is fully incorporated herein by this reference.

4. The Utilities Division hereby files its Report with the Tennessee Regulatory Authority for deposit as a public record and approval of the Report and the recommendations contained therein.

Respectfully Submitted:


Michelle Ramsey, Audit Manager
Utilities Division of the
Tennessee Regulatory Authority

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on this 7th day of July, 2014, a true and exact copy of the foregoing has been either hand-delivered or delivered via U.S. Mail, postage pre-paid, to the following persons:

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Michelle Ramsey

COMPLIANCE AUDIT REPORT
OF
ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION
ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT
DOCKET NO. 13-00124

PREPARED BY
TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY
UTILITIES DIVISION

July 2014

EXHIBIT A

COMPLIANCE AUDIT
ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION
ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT
DOCKET NO. 13-00124
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I. INTRODUCTION

The subject of this audit is Atmos Energy Corporation's ("Company" or "Atmos") compliance with the Actual Cost Adjustment and Refund Adjustment of the Purchased Gas Adjustment Rule ("PGA Rule") of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority ("TRA" or the "Authority"). The objective of the audit is to determine whether the Purchased Gas Adjustments, which are encompassed by the Actual Cost Adjustment ("ACA") as more fully described in Section IV, for the year ended June 30, 2013 are calculated correctly and are supported by appropriate source documentation.

II. AUDIT OPINION

The Audit Staff ("Staff") concludes that, except for the findings noted in Section VIII, the Purchased Gas Adjustment mechanism as calculated in the Actual Cost Adjustment appears to be working properly and in accordance with the TRA rules for Atmos Energy Corporation. The amount of the findings contained herein is not material with respect to the total gas costs.

III. SUMMARY OF COMPANY FILING

The Company filed its annual report of the transactions in the Deferred Gas Costs Account ("ACA Account") for its Tennessee service areas on September 19, 2013. This ACA filing showed \$69,694,148.11 in total gas costs, with \$68,398,579.70 being recovered from customers through rates. Adding a beginning balance in the ACA account of negative \$6,055,919.56 in net over-recovered gas costs from the preceding ACA period and interest due to customers for the current period of \$77,804.96 resulted in an ACA Account balance at June 30, 2013 of negative \$4,838,156.11 in over-recovered gas costs.¹

ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION SUMMARY OF ACA FILING FOR PERIOD JULY 2012-JUNE 2013

<u>Line</u>		<u>Union City</u>	<u>Other TN Towns</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	Beginning Balance (July 2012)	(\$333,517.14)	(\$5,722,402.42)	(\$6,055,919.56)
2	Purchased Gas Costs	2,696,189.08	66,997,959.03	69,694,148.11
3	Gas Costs recovered through rates	2,062,232.03	66,336,347.67	68,398,579.70
4	Interest on monthly balances	<u>264.99</u>	<u>(78,069.95)</u>	<u>(77,804.96)</u>
5	Ending Balance (June 2013) (Line 1 + Line 2 – Line 3 + Line 4)	<u>(\$300,704.90)</u>	<u>(\$5,138,861.01)</u>	<u>(\$4,838,156.11)</u>

**A number in () is a negative or credit balance which represents an over-collection of gas costs.

¹ The filing was comprised individually of a \$300,704.90 under-recovered balance in the Union City service area and a \$5,138,861.01 over-recovered balance in the remaining Tennessee towns service area.

The Company began a refund to its Union City customers and customers in other Tennessee service areas on October 1, 2013, to distribute the balances in the ACA accounts as of June 30, 2013.² Staff's findings resulting from this audit are described in detail in Section VIII of this report.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASED GAS ADJUSTMENT RULE

Actual Cost Adjustment Audits:

The PGA Rule can be found in Chapter 1220-4-7 of the Rules of the Tennessee Regulatory Authority. The PGA Rule permits a gas company to recover, in a timely manner, the total cost of gas purchased for delivery to its customers and to assure that a company does not over-collect or under-collect gas costs from its customers. The PGA Rule consists of three major components:

- 1. The Actual Cost Adjustment (ACA)**
- 2. The Gas Charge Adjustment (GCA)**
- 3. The Refund Adjustment (RA)**

The ACA is the difference between the revenues billed customers by means of the GCA and the cost of gas invoiced the Company by suppliers plus margin loss (if allowed by order of the TRA in another docket) as reflected in the Deferred Gas Cost account. The ACA then "true-up" the difference between the actual gas costs and the gas costs recovered from customers through a surcharge or a refund. The RA refunds the "true-up" along with other supplier refunds. For a more complete definition of the GCA and RA, please see the PGA Formula in Appendix A.

Section 1220-4-7-.03(2) of the PGA Rule requires:

Each year, the Company shall file with the [Authority] an annual report reflecting the transactions in the Deferred Gas Cost Account. Unless the [Authority] provides written notification to the Company within one hundred eighty (180) days from the date of filing the report, the Deferred Gas Cost Adjustment Account shall be deemed in compliance with the provisions of these Rules. This 180 day notification period may be extended by mutual consent of the Company and the [Authority] Staff or by order of the [Authority].

Prudence Audit of Gas Purchases:

Section 1220-4-7-.05 of the PGA Rule requires, unless otherwise ordered by the Authority, an "Audit of Prudence of Gas Purchases" by a qualified consultant. This

² Tariff Filing No. 2013-0211 for ETN and 2013-0212 for Union City.

specialized audit evaluates and reports annually on the prudence of any gas costs included in the PGA. In Docket 97-01364, Atmos Energy was authorized to operate under a Performance-Based Ratemaking Mechanism ("PBR"), beginning April 1, 1999, and continuing each year unless terminated by the Company or the Authority. For each year that the mechanism is in effect, the requirements of Section 1220-4-7-.05 of the PGA Rule is waived.

V. SCOPE OF ACTUAL COST ADJUSTMENT AUDIT

The ACA audit is a limited compliance audit of the Company's ACA Account. The audit goal is to verify that the Company's calculations of gas costs incurred and recovered were materially correct,³ and that the Company is following all Authority orders and directives with respect to its calculation of the ACA Account balance. Also included in this audit is the Company's PGA filing implementing a net refund of the ACA Account balance, effective October 1, 2013. Refer to the ACA Account detail provided in Section III, Summary of Company Filing.

To accomplish the audit goal, Audit Staff reviewed gas supply invoices, as well as supplemental schedules and other source documentation provided by Atmos. Where appropriate, Staff requested additional information to clarify the filing.

VI. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON COMPANY AND GAS SUPPLIERS

Atmos Energy Corporation, with its corporate headquarters located in Dallas, Texas, has its local offices in Franklin, Tennessee. On October 4, 2002, the Company filed tariffs to officially change its name from United Cities Gas Company to Atmos Energy Corporation. Atmos is a multi-state gas distributor, providing service to customers in twelve cities and surrounding areas in Tennessee. The natural gas used to serve these areas is purchased from four natural gas pipelines in accordance with separate and individual tariffs approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The interstate pipelines are Tennessee Gas Pipeline (TGP), East Tennessee Natural Gas (ETNG), Texas Gas Transmission Corporation (TGTC), and Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation (TETC).

TGP and ETNG provide service to east Tennessee towns, which include Columbia, Shelbyville, Maryville, Morristown, Elizabethton, Greeneville, Johnson City, Kingsport, Bristol and adjacent areas in Maury, Bedford, Moore, Blount, Hamblen, Sullivan, Carter, Washington, and Greene Counties.

³ The audit goal is not to guarantee that the Company's results are 100% correct. Where it is appropriate, Staff utilizes sampling techniques to determine whether the Company's calculations are materially correct. Material discrepancies would dictate a broadening of the scope of Staff's review.

TETC provides service to Atmos in Murfreesboro and Franklin and adjacent areas in Rutherford and Williamson Counties. TGTC provides service to Atmos in Union City and adjacent areas in Obion County.

Atmos' gas Commodity requirements are currently met under a contract between Atmos and its affiliate Atmos Energy Marketing (AEM) approved by the Authority in Docket No. 11-00034. Asset Management fees are shared with ratepayers according to the terms of the contract as a credit to the ACA Account.

VII. JURISDICTION OF THE TENNESSEE REGULATORY AUTHORITY

Tennessee Code Annotated (T.C.A.) gave jurisdiction and control over public utilities to the Tennessee Regulatory Authority. T.C.A. §65-4-104 states that:

The [A]uthority has general supervisory and regulatory power, jurisdiction, and control over all public utilities, and also over their property, property rights, facilities, and franchises, so far as may be necessary for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this chapter.

Further, T.C.A. §65-4-105 grants the same power to the Authority with reference to all public utilities within its jurisdiction as chapters 3 and 5 of Title 65 of the T.C.A. have conferred on the Department of Transportation's oversight of the railroads or the Department of Safety's oversight of transportation companies. By virtue of T.C.A. §65-3-108, this power includes the right to audit:

The department is given full power to examine the books and papers of the companies, and to examine, under oath, the officers, agents, and employees of the companies and any other persons, to procure the necessary information to intelligently and justly discharge its duties and carry out the provisions of this chapter and chapter 5 of this title.

The TRA's Utilities Division is responsible for auditing those gas, electric, and water companies under its jurisdiction, to ensure that each company is abiding by Tennessee statute as well as the Rules and Regulations of the Authority. Michelle Ramsey and Savannah Mason of the Utilities Division conducted this audit.

VIII. ACA FINDINGS

Staff's audit findings totaled a **net over-recovery of \$789.12**. This amount results from the net total of four (4) findings and represents a decrease to the Company's reported over-recovered amount of \$(4,838,156.11). The finding added to the Company's calculated balance results in a net ending balance in the ACA account of a **negative \$4,838,945.23 in over-recovered gas costs.**⁴ A summary of the ACA account as filed by the Company and as adjusted by the Staff is shown below, followed by a description of the findings.

SUMMARY OF THE ACA ACCOUNT**:

<u>Line</u>		<u>Atmos Combined Filing</u>	<u>Staff Audit Results</u>	<u>Difference (Findings)</u>
1	Adj. Beginning Balance (July 2012)	(\$6,055,919.56)	(\$6,055,919.56)	\$ 0.00
2	Purchased Gas Costs	69,694,148.11	69,693,408.59	(739.52)
3	Gas Costs recovered through rates	68,398,579.70	68,398,605.38	\$25.68
4	Interest on monthly balances	<u>(77,804.96)</u>	<u>(77,828.88)</u>	<u>(23.92)</u>
5	Ending Balance (June 2013) (Line 1 + Line 2 – Line 3 + Line 4)	<u>(\$4,838,156.11)</u>	<u>(\$4,838,945.23)</u>	<u>(\$ 789.12)</u>

**A number in () is a negative or credit balance which represents an over-collection of gas costs.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

See page

FINDING #1	ETN-Storage Activity ⁵	(\$ 739.52)	Over-recovery	x
FINDING #2	ETN-Cost Recoveries	\$ 25.68	Over-recovery	x
FINDING #3	ETN-Gas costs Misclassification	No \$\$ effect		x
FINDING #4	ETN-Interest	<u>(\$ 23.92)</u>	Over-recovery	x
Net Result		<u>(\$ 789.12)</u>	Over-recovery	

⁴ The ending balance is made up of \$300,704.90 under-recovery for the Union City filing and \$(5,139,650.13) over-recovery for the ETN filing.

⁵ ETN is the portion of the ACA Account related to all towns in Tennessee except Union City.

FINDING #1:

Exception

The Company miscalculated the Storage Inventory Activities.

Discussion

In calculating the balance in the ACA Account each month, total invoiced gas costs are charged (debited) to the ACA Account. If some of that gas is injected into storage, the cost of the injected gas is credited back to the account, so that customers do not pay for gas until they actually use it. That occurs when gas is withdrawn from storage by the Company at a later date for delivery to its customers. The Company made several errors in calculating the monthly activity in the storage accounts, which are described below.

From November 2012 to January 2013, the Company used an incorrect rate in calculating the cost of gas injected into storage (Storage Account 1641-15933) for ETN. In June 2013, the Company used an incorrect allocation % between Virginia and Tennessee in calculating the cost of gas injected into storage (Storage Account 1641-15937) for ETN. The net result was a \$6,755.83 increase in the injected gas cost, which should have been credited to the ACA Account.

Since withdrawal rates used to calculate the cost of gas withdrawn from storage are based on the cost of the gas injected into storage, the withdrawal rates used for January 2013 through March 2013 for Storage Account 1641-15933) were also incorrect. These errors increased the cost of withdrawals which were debited to the ACA Account by \$6,016.31.

The net result of these errors decreased the total amount of purchased gas costs by **\$739.52 (over-recovery) for the ETN filing.**

Company Response

Atmos Energy Corporation agrees with this finding and have made appropriate corrections in the 2013 2014 ACA.

FINDING #2:

Exception

The Company understated its gas cost recoveries.

Discussion

In November 2012, the Company erroneously booked \$10.01 of gas cost recovery to Demand rather than to Commodity. Therefore, Staff reduced the \$10.01 in Demand cost recoveries and reflected it appropriately as Commodity cost recoveries. Staff's adjustment had no effect on total reported gas cost recoveries amount in ACA filing (excluding interest).

In June 2013, the Company made an adjustment \$25.68 in Commodity gas cost recovery. Upon inquiry by Staff and further review by the Company, Staff determined no adjustment was needed in June 2013. Staff eliminated this adjustment, which had the effect of increasing the ACA Commodity gas cost recoveries by \$25.68.

The net effect (excluding interest) of Staff's adjustments is an increase in the Company reported Commodity gas cost recoveries of **\$25.68 (over-recovery)**.

Company Response

Atmos Energy Corporation agrees with this finding and have made appropriate corrections in the 2013 2014 ACA.

FINDING #3:**Exception**

The Company erroneously booked a Purchase Gas cost as a Demand Cost rather than as a Commodity Cost.

Discussion

In January 2013, the Company erroneously booked \$124,000 of gas costs in Columbia Gulf invoice to Demand rather than to Commodity. Therefore, Staff reduced the \$124,000 in Demand costs and reflected it appropriately as Commodity Costs. Staff's adjustment doesn't affect reported gas cost in ACA filing (excluding interest).

Company Response

Atmos Energy Corporation agrees with this finding and have made appropriate corrections in the 2013 2014 ACA.

FINDING #4:

Exception

The Company overstated the amount of interest due to customers in the ACA filing.

Discussion

Staff recalculated the interest on monthly balances based upon audit findings #1- #2 above. The result was an **overstatement of \$1,858.28 interest due from customers in the Demand component** and an **overstatement of \$1,834.36 interest due to customers in the Commodity component of the ACA Filing**. The net difference of **\$23.92** represents an **over-recovery** of gas costs.

Company Response

Atmos Energy Corporation agrees with this finding and have made appropriate corrections in the 2013 2014 ACA.

IX. STAFF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff reviewed the gas costs and recoveries of Atmos Energy Corporation for the 12-month period ended June 30, 2013. As reported in the body of this report, Staff concludes that the Purchased Gas Adjustment mechanism, as calculated in the Actual Cost Adjustment, appears to be working properly and in accordance with the TRA rules for Atmos. Staff's audit procedures revealed three monetary findings and one nonmonetary finding reported in Section VIII, with which the Company concurs. Based on the Company's filing and the audit adjustments by Staff, the **net balance** in the ACA Account as of June 30, 2013 was a **negative \$4,838,945.23**. This means that as of June 30, 2013 the Company had over-collected this amount from its customers. The net balance is composed of a **total under-collection from Union City customers of \$300,704.90** and a **total over-collection from customers in Other Tennessee towns of negative \$5,139,650.13**. Staff recommends approval of the Company's adjusted ACA Account balances.

APPENDIX A

PGA FORMULA

The computation of the GCA can be broken down into the following formulas:

$$\text{Firm GCA} = \frac{D + \text{DACA}}{\text{SF}} - \text{DB} + \frac{P + T + \text{SR} + \text{CACA}}{\text{ST}} - \text{CB}$$

$$\text{Non-Firm GCA} = \frac{P + T + \text{SR} + \text{CACA}}{\text{ST}} - \text{CB}$$

where

GCA = The Gas Charge Adjustment in dollars per Ccf/Therm, rounded to no more than five decimal places.

D = The sum of all fixed Gas Costs.

DACA = The demand portion of the ACA.

P = The sum of all commodity/gas charges.

T = The sum of all transportation charges.

SR = The sum of all FERC approved surcharges.

CACA = The commodity portion of the ACA.

DB = The per unit rate of demand costs or other fixed charges included in base rates in the most recently completed general rate case (which may be zero if the Company so elects and the Commission so approves).

CB = The per unit rate of variable gas costs included in base rates in the most recently completed general rate case (which may be zero if the Company so elects and the Commission so approves).

SF = Firm Sales.

ST = Total Sales.

The computation of the RA can be computed using the following formulas:

$$\text{Firm RA} = \frac{\text{DR1} - \text{DR2}}{\text{SFR}} + \frac{\text{CR1} - \text{CR2} + \text{CR3} + i}{\text{STR}}$$

$$\text{Non-Firm RA} = \frac{\text{CR1} - \text{CR2} + \text{CR3} + i}{\text{STR}}$$

where

- RA = The Refund Adjustment in dollars per Ccf/Therm, rounded to no more than five decimal places.
- DR1 = Demand refund not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment, and received from suppliers by check, wire transfer, or credit memo.
- DR2 = A demand surcharge from a supplier not includable in the GCA, and not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment.
- CR1 = Commodity refund not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment, and received from suppliers by check, wire transfer, or credit memo.
- CR2 = A commodity surcharge from a supplier not includable in the GCA, and not included in a currently effective Refund Adjustment.
- CR3 = The residual balance of an expired Refund Adjustment.
- i = Interest on the "Refund Due Customers" account, using the average monthly balances based on the beginning and ending monthly balances. The interest rates for each calendar quarter used to compute such interest shall be the arithmetic mean (to the nearest one-hundredth of one percent) of the prime rate value published in the "Federal Reserve Bulletin" or in the Federal Reserve's "Selected Interest Rates" for the 4th, 3rd, and 2nd months preceding the 1st month of the calendar quarter.

SFR = Firm sales as defined in the GCA computation, less sales under a transportation or negotiated rate schedule.

STR = Total sales as defined in the GCA computation, less sales under a transportation or negotiated rate schedule.