

CHAPTER 24. SUBSTANTIVE RULES APPLICABLE TO WATER AND SEWER SERVICE PROVIDERS.

Subchapter B. RATES, RATE-MAKING, AND RATES/TARIFF CHANGES.

§24.26. Suspension of the Effective Date of Rates.

- (a) Regardless of, and in addition to, any period of suspension ordered pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, after written notice to the utility, the commission may suspend the effective date of a rate change for not more than:
 - (1) 150 days from the date the proposed rates would otherwise be effective for an application filed pursuant to TWC §13.187; or
 - (2) 265 days from the date the proposed rates would otherwise be effective for an application filed pursuant to TWC §13.1871.
- (b) Regardless of, and in addition to, any period of suspension ordered pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the commission may suspend the effective date of a change in rates requested pursuant to TWC §13.187 or §13.1871 if the utility:
 - (1) has failed to properly complete the rate application as required by §24.22 of this title (relating to Notice of Intent and Application to Change Rates Pursuant to Texas Water Code §13.187 or §13.1871), has failed to comply with the notice requirements and proof of notice requirements, or has for any other reason filed a request to change rates that is not deemed administratively complete until a properly completed request to change rates is accepted by the commission;
 - (2) does not have a certificate of convenience and necessity or a completed application pending with the commission to obtain or to transfer a certificate of convenience and necessity until a completed application to obtain or transfer a certificate of convenience and necessity is accepted by the commission; or
 - (3) is delinquent in paying the regulatory assessment fee and any applicable penalties or interest required by TWC §5.701(n) until the delinquency is remedied.
- (c) If the commission suspends the effective date of a requested change in rates pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, the requirement under §24.28(b)(1) of this title (relating to Processing and Hearing Requirements for an Application Filed Pursuant to Texas Water Code §13.187 or §13.1871) to begin a hearing within 30 days of the effective date does not apply and the utility may not notify its customers of a new proposed effective date until the utility receives written notification from the commission that all deficiencies have been corrected.
- (d) A suspension ordered pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be extended two days for each day a hearing on the merits exceeds 15 days.
- (e) If the commission does not make a final determination on the proposed rate before the expiration of the suspension period described by subsections (a) and (d) of this section, the proposed rate shall be considered approved. This approval is subject to the authority of the commission thereafter to continue a hearing in progress.
- (f) The effective date of any rate change may be suspended at any time during the pendency of a proceeding, including after the date on which the proposed rates are otherwise effective.
- (g) For good cause shown, the commission may at any time during the proceeding require the utility to refund money collected under a proposed rate before the rate was suspended to the extent the proposed rate exceeds the existing rate.