

DIVISION OF ENERGY REGULATION

Activities for Calendar Year 1996

The Division of Energy Regulation assists the Commission in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities pursuant to Title 56, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia. Activities include reviewing investor owned electric, gas, water/sewer utilities' cost of service studies; reviewing allocation methods, depreciation rates and rate design philosophies; and providing expert testimony in that regard. The Division also provides expert testimony in certificate cases for service areas and major facility construction for these utilities and for independent power producers. Additional duties include the preparation and defense of prefiled testimony as it relates to electric cooperatives and other technical functions related to regulation of the cooperatives. It also has monitoring responsibilities relative to: the collection of gas costs by gas utilities; the incurrence of wholesale purchased power expenses by electric cooperatives; and the recovery of fuel expenses and the construction and operation of major facilities by the investor-owned utilities. It also reviews extraordinary costs and policies related to nuclear power, including the decommissioning of nuclear power plants and the storage of spent nuclear fuel. The Division administers pipeline safety programs for interstate jurisdictional gas and hazardous liquid companies in Virginia, including inspections of facilities, records and construction activities to determine compliance with pipeline safety regulations. It administers the enforcement of the new Underground Utility Damage Prevention Act; investigates all reports of violation of the Act; and makes enforcement recommendations to the Commission. The resolution of complaints/inquiries received against regulated utilities and the maintenance of official records/maps of utility certificated areas are also duties of the Division. It provides the Commission with technical expertise in policy related issues and has provided testimony in several hearings required by the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act and in other proceedings associated with restructuring of natural gas and electric utilities.

SUMMARY OF 1996 ACTIVITIES

Consumer Complaints, Letters of Protest, and Inquiries Received	2132
Tariff Filings Received	162
Tariff Sheets Filed	802
Gas Safety Pipeline Inspections (Person Days)	435
Testimony and Reports Filed by Staff	43
Certificates of Convenience and Necessity Granted, Transferred or Revised	18
Special Reports	7
Gas Accident Investigations and Incident Reports	6
Electric On-Site Construction Inspections	0
Underground Utility Damage Reports Investigated	577