THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

DG 16-769

CONCORD STEAM CORPORATION

Petition for Emergency Rates and to Discontinue Service

ORDER OF NOTICE

On July 21, 2016, Concord Steam Corporation (Concord Steam), a public utility providing service to customers in Concord, filed with the Commission a petition for emergency rates pursuant to RSA 378:9, and requesting that the Commission grant Concord Steam permission to discontinue service, on or about May 31, 2017, pursuant to RSA 374:28. Concord Steam included the written testimony of Peter Bloomfield, P.E., Concord Steam's President, in support of its petition. This filing is related to the joint filing made by Concord Steam and Liberty Utilities (EnergyNorth Natural Gas) Corp. d/b/a Liberty Utilities (Liberty), made pursuant to RSA 374:30 and considered in Docket No. DG 16-770, for approval of Liberty's acquisition of certain assets of Concord Steam. The petition and subsequent docket filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, will be posted to the Commission's website at http://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2016/16-769.html.

Concord Steam states, due to ongoing severe deterioration in its financial position and business prospects, that it has elected to enter into an asset purchase agreement with Liberty and to plan for an orderly transition towards a termination of its service to customers on or about May 31, 2017. Concord Steam also states that a near-term financial emergency exists justifying a general emergency rate increase of approximately 23%, to be effective for service during the

upcoming 2016-2017 heating season no later than October 1, 2016, and that the Commission's acceptance of its termination-of-service petition would be in the public good, in light of the opportunities for transition to gas service for heating purposes offered by Liberty.

The filing raises, inter alia, issues related to RSA 378:9 and whether the affairs of Concord Steam have reached such a crisis that immediate and substantial disaster threatens unless prompt relief is given, and whether the financial crisis warrants the emergency rate relief requested; and issues related to RSA 374:28 and whether allowing Concord Steam to terminate service under the proposed timeframe is in the public good. Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that pursuant to RSA 541-A:31 and Puc 203.12, an adjudicative hearing be held before the Commission located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire on September 6, 2016 at 9:30 a.m. at which Concord Steam will be given the opportunity to present evidence and argument on the issue of whether an emergency exists and whether the requested relief is appropriate. Staff and any intervenors will be given the opportunity at hearing to respond and present evidence and argument on all issues involved; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that a technical session be held at the Commission premises on August 12, 2016 at 9:00 a.m. to discuss the petition and any data requests, at which Staff, Concord Steam, and Liberty shall be in attendance, and all potential intervenors and other interested parties are encouraged to attend; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, Concord Steam shall notify all persons desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this Order of Notice no later than August 9, 2016, in a newspaper with general circulation in those

portions of the state in which operations are conducted, publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before August 31, 2016; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that consistent with N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any party seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall submit to the Commission seven copies of a Petition to Intervene with copies sent to Concord Steam and the Office of the Consumer Advocate on or before August 31, 2016, such Petition stating the facts demonstrating how its rights, duties, privileges, immunities or other substantial interest may be affected by the proceeding, as required by N.H. Code Admin. Rule Puc 203.17 and RSA 541-A:32, I(b); and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that any party objecting to a Petition to Intervene make said Objection on or before September 6, 2016; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Concord Steam's outstanding request for approval of a special contract with Concord School District (considered in Docket No. DG 16-016) is hereby CONSOLIDATED with this instant proceeding; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that Concord Steam notify its customers by U.S. Mail, no later than August 5, 2016, of its intent to terminate service pursuant to the terms of its petition, with references made to this instant docket and the relevant links to the Commission website for this proceeding.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this twenty-sixth day of July, 2016.

Debra A. Howland
Executive Director

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, 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.