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Title 18 - Conservation of Power and Water Resources
Chapter I - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Department of Energy
Subchapter C - Accounts, Federal Power Act

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PART 125 - PRESERVATION OF RECORDS OF PUBLIC UTILITIES AND LICENSEES

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 825, 825c, and 825h; 44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*

§ 125.1 Promulgation.

This Part is prescribed and promulgated as the regulations governing the preservation of records by public utilities subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission and by licensees holding licenses issued by the Commission, to the extent and in the manner set forth therein.

[Order 617, 65 FR 48155, Aug. 7, 2000]

§ 125.2 General instructions.

(a) **Scope of this part.**

- (1) The regulations in this part apply to all books of account and other records prepared by or on behalf of the public utility or licensee. See item 40 of the schedule (§ 125.3) for those records that come into possession of the public utility or licensee in connection with the acquisition of property, such as purchase, consolidation, merger, etc.
- (2) The regulations in this part should not be construed as excusing compliance with other lawful requirements of any other governmental body, Federal or State, prescribing other record keeping requirements or for preservation of records longer than those prescribed in this part.
- (3) To the extent that any Commission regulations may provide for a different retention period, the records should be retained for the longer of the retention periods.
- (4) Records other than those listed in the schedule may be destroyed at the option of the public utility or licensee: *Provided, however,* That records which are used in lieu of those listed shall be preserved for the periods prescribed for the records used for substantially similar purposes. And, *provided further,* That retention of records pertaining to added services, functions, plant, etc., the establishment of which cannot be presently foreseen, shall conform to the principles embodied herein.
- (5) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Records Retention Schedule, the Commission may, upon the request of the Company, authorize a shorter period of retention for any record listed therein upon a showing by the Company that preservation of such record for a longer period is not necessary or appropriate in the public interest or for the protection of investors or consumers.

(b) **Designation of supervisory official.** Each public utility or licensee subject to the regulations in this part shall designate one or more persons with official responsibility to supervise the utility's or licensee's program for preservation and the authorized destruction of its records.

(c) **Protection and storage of records.** The public utility or licensee shall provide reasonable protection for records subject to the regulations in this part from damage by fire, floods, and other hazards and, in the selection of storage spaces, safeguards the records from unnecessary exposure to deterioration from excessive humidity, dryness, or lack of proper ventilation.

(d) **Record storage media.** Each public utility and licensee has the flexibility to select its own storage media subject to the following conditions.

- (1) The storage media must have a life expectancy at least equal to the applicable record retention period provided in § 125.3 unless there is a quality transfer from one media to another with no loss of data.
- (2) Each public utility and licensee is required to implement internal control procedures that assure the reliability of, and ready access to, data stored on machine readable media. Internal control procedures must be documented by a responsible supervisory official.

- (3) Each transfer of data from one media to another must be verified for accuracy and documented. Software and hardware required to produce readable records must be retained for the same period the media format is used.
- (e) **Destruction of records.** At the expiration of the retention period, public utilities and licensees may use any appropriate method to destroy records.
- (f) **Premature destruction or loss of records.** When records are destroyed or lost before the expiration of the prescribed period of retention, a certified statement listing, as far as may be determined, the records destroyed and describing the circumstances of accidental or other premature destruction or loss must be filed with the Commission within ninety (90) days from the date of discovery of the destruction.
- (g) **Schedule of records and periods of retention.**
- (1) Records related to plant in service must be retained until the facilities are permanently removed from utility service, all removal and restoration activities are completed, and all costs are retired from the accounting records unless accounting adjustments resulting from reclassification and original costs studies have been approved by the regulatory commission having jurisdiction. If the plant is sold, the associated records or copies thereof, must be transferred to the new owners.
- (2) Records related to hydroelectric facilities and additions, retirements, and betterments thereto must be retained until:
- (i) The Commission has determined the actual legitimate original cost of the facilities, or the licenses are surrendered. If the plant is sold, the associated records or copies thereof, must be transferred to the new owners.
- (ii) Records related to the determination of amortization reserves pursuant to section 10(d) of the Federal Power Act must be retained until a final determination and adjudication of the amortization reserves are made.
- (h) **Retention periods designated "Destroy at option".** "Destroy at option" constitutes authorization for destruction of records at managements' discretion if it does not conflict with other legal retention requirements or usefulness of such records in satisfying pending regulatory actions or directives.
- (i) **Records of services performed by associated companies.** Public utilities and licensees must assure the availability of records of services performed by and for associated or affiliated companies with supporting cost information for the periods indicated in § 125.3 as necessary to be able to readily furnish detailed information as to the nature of the transaction, the amounts involved, and the accounts used to record the transactions.
- (j) **Index of records.** Public utilities and licensees must arrange, file, and index records so records may be readily identified and made available to Commission representatives.
- (k) **Rate case.** Notwithstanding the minimum retention periods provided in these regulations, if a public utility or licensee wants to reflect costs in a current, future, or pending rate case, or if a public utility or licensee has abandoned or retired a plant subsequent to the test period of the utility's rate case, the utility must retain the appropriate records to support the costs and adjustments proposed in the current or next rate case.
- (l) **Pending complaint litigation or governmental proceedings.** Notwithstanding the minimum requirements, if a public utility or licensee is involved in pending litigation, complaint procedures, proceedings remanded by the court, or governmental proceedings, it must retain all relevant records.
- (m) **Life or mortality study data.** Life or mortality study data for depreciation purposes must be retained for 25 years or for 10 years after plant is retired, whichever is longer.

(Secs. 3, 4, 15, 16, 308; 41 Stat. 1063-1066, 1068, 1072, 1075; 49 Stat. 838-841; 82 Stat. 617 (16 U.S.C. 796, 797, 803, 808, 809, 816, 825b, 825g, 826i); secs. 8, 10, 16; 52 Stat. 825, 826, 830 (15 U.S.C. 717g, 717i, 717o))

[Order 450, 37 FR 6293, Mar. 28, 1972, as amended by Order 567, 42 FR 30615, June 16, 1977; Order 258, 47 FR 42724, Sept. 29, 1982; Order 335, 48 FR 44483, Sept. 29, 1983; Order 617, 65 FR 48155, Aug. 7, 2000]

§ 125.3 Schedule of records and periods of retention.

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Schedule of Records and Periods of Retention

Item No. and description	Retention period
Corporate and General	
1. Reports to stockholders: Annual reports or statements to stockholders	5 years.
2. Organizational documents:	
(a) Minute books of stockholders', directors', and directors' committee meetings	5 years or termination of the corporation's existence, whichever occurs first.
(b) Titles, franchises, and licenses: Copies of formal orders of regulatory commissions served upon the utility	6 years after final non-appealable order.
3. Contracts, including amendments and agreements (except contracts provided for elsewhere):	
(a) Service contracts, such as for management, accounting, and financial services	All contracts, related memoranda, and revisions should be retained for 4 years after expiration or until the conclusion of any contract disputes pertaining to such contracts, whichever is later.
(b) Contracts with others for transmission or the purchase, sale or interchange of product	All contracts, related memoranda, and revisions should be retained for 4 years after expiration or until the conclusion of any contract disputes or governmental proceedings pertaining to such contracts, whichever is later.
(c) Memoranda essential to clarifying or explaining provisions of contracts listed above, including requests for discounts	For the same periods as contracts to which they relate.
(d) Card or book records of contracts, leases, and agreements made, showing dates of expirations and of renewals, memoranda of receipts, and payments under such contracts	For the same periods as contracts to which they relate.

Item No. and description	Retention period
4. Accountants' and auditors' reports:	
(a) Reports of examinations and audits by accountants and auditors not in the regular employ of the utility (such as reports of public accounting firms and commission accountants)	5 years after the date of the report.
(b) Internal audit reports and working papers	5 years after the date of the report.
Information Technology Management	
5. Automatic data processing records (retain original source data used as input for data processing and data processing report printouts for the applicable periods prescribed elsewhere in the schedule): Software program documentation and revisions thereto	Retain as long as it represents an active viable program or for periods prescribed for related output data, whichever is shorter.
General Accounting Records	
6. General and subsidiary ledgers:	
(a) Ledgers:	
(1) General ledgers	10 years.
(2) Ledgers subsidiary or auxiliary to general ledgers except ledgers provided for elsewhere	10 years.
(b) Indexes:	
(1) Indexes to general ledgers	10 years.
(2) Indexes to subsidiary ledgers except ledgers provided for elsewhere	10 years.
(c) Trial balance sheets of general and subsidiary ledgers	2 years.
7. Journals: General and subsidiary	10 years.
8. Journal vouchers and journal entries including supporting detail:	
(a) Journal vouchers and journal entries	10 years.
(b) Analyses, summarization, distributions, and other computations which support journal vouchers and journal entries:	
(1) Charging plant accounts	25 years. See § 125.2(g).
(2) Charging all other accounts	6 years.
9. Cash books: General and subsidiary or auxiliary books	5 years after close of fiscal year.
10. Voucher registers: Voucher registers or similar records when used as a source document	5 years. See § 125.2(g).
11. Vouchers:	

Item No. and description	Retention period
(a) Paid and canceled vouchers (one copy-analysis sheets showing detailed distribution of charges on individual vouchers and other supporting papers)	5 years. See § 125.2(g).
(b) Original bills and invoices for materials, services, etc., paid by vouchers	5 years. See § 125.2(g).
(c) Paid checks and receipts for payments of specific vouchers	5 years.
(d) Authorization for the payment of specific vouchers	5 years. See § 125.2(g).
(e) Lists of unaudited bills (accounts payable), list of vouchers transmitted, and memoranda regarding changes in audited bills	Destroy at option.
(f) Voucher indexes	Destroy at option.
Insurance	
12. Insurance records:	
(a) Records of insurance policies in force, showing coverage, premiums paid, and expiration dates	Destroy at option after expiration of such policies.
(b) Records of amounts recovered from insurance companies in connection with losses and of claims against insurance companies, including reports of losses, and supporting papers	6 years. See § 125.2(g).
Operations and Maintenance	
13.1 Production - Public utilities and licensees (less Nuclear):	
(a) Boiler-tube failure report	3 years.
(b) Generation and output logs with supporting data:	3 years.
(c) Station and system generation reports and clearance logs:	
(1) Hydro-electric	25 years. See § 125.2(g).
(2) Steam and others	6 years. See § 125.2(g).
(d) Generating high-tension and low-tension load records	3 years.
(e) Load curves, temperature logs, coal, and water logs	3 years.
(f) Gauge-reading reports	2 years, except river flow data collected in connection with hydro operation must be retained for life of corporation.
(g) Recording instrumentation charts	1 year, except where the basic chart information is transferred to another record, the charts need only be retained 6 months provided the record containing the basic data is retained 1 year.

Item No. and description	Retention period
13.2 Production - Nuclear:	
For informational purposes, refer to the document retention requirements of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.	
14. Transmission and distribution - Public utilities and licensees.	
(a) Substation and transmission line logs	3 years.
(b) System operator's daily logs and reports of operation	3 years.
(c) Transformer history records	For life of transformer.
(d) Records of transformer inspections, oil tests, etc.	Destroy at option.
15. Maintenance work orders and job orders:	
(a) Authorizations for expenditures for maintenance work to be covered by work orders, including memoranda showing the estimates of costs to be incurred	5 years.
(b) Work order sheets to which are posted in detail the entries for labor, material, and other charges in connection with maintenance, and other work pertaining to utility operations	5 years.
(c) Summaries of expenditures on maintenance and job orders and clearances to operating other accounts (exclusive of plant accounts)	5 years.
Plant and Depreciation	
16. Plant ledgers:	
(a) Ledgers of utility plant accounts including land and other detailed ledgers showing the cost of utility plant by classes	25 years. See § 125.2(g).
(b) Continuing plant inventory ledger, book or card records showing description, location, quantities, cost, etc., of physical units (or items) of utility plant owned	25 years. See § 125.2(g).
17. Construction work in progress ledgers, work orders, and supplemental records:	
(a) Construction work in progress ledgers	5 years after clearance to plant account, provided continuing plant inventory records are maintained; otherwise 5 years after plant is retired.
(b) Work orders sheets to which are posted in summary form or in detail the entries for labor, materials, and other charges for utility plant additions and the entries closing the work orders to utility plant in service at completion	5 years after clearance to plant account, provided continuing plant inventory records are maintained; otherwise 5 years after plant is retired.

Item No. and description	Retention period
(c) Authorizations for expenditures for additions to utility plant, including memoranda showing the detailed estimates of cost, and the bases therefor (including original and revised or subsequent authorizations)	5 years after clearance to plant account except where there are ongoing Commission proceedings.
(d) Requisitions and registers of authorizations for utility plant expenditures	5 years after clearance to plant account except where there are ongoing Commission proceedings.
(e) Completion or performance reports showing comparison between authorized estimates and actual expenditures for utility plant additions	5 years after clearance to plant account except where there are ongoing Commission proceedings.
(f) Analysis or cost reports showing quantities of materials used, unit costs, number of man-hours etc., in connection with completed construction project	5 years after clearance to plant account except where there are ongoing Commission proceedings.
(g) Records and reports pertaining to progress of construction work, the order in which jobs are to be completed, and similar records which do not form a basis of entries to the accounts	Destroy at option.
18. Retirement work in progress ledgers, work orders, and supplemental records:	
(a) Work order sheets to which are posted the entries for removal costs, materials recovered, and credits to utility plant accounts for cost of plant retirement	5 years after plant is retired.
(b) Authorizations for retirement of utility plant, including memoranda showing the basis for determination to be retired and estimates of salvage and removal costs	5 years after plant is retired.
(c) Registers of retirement work	5 years.
19. Summary sheets, distribution sheets, reports, statements, and papers directly supporting debits and credits to utility plant accounts not covered by construction or retirement work orders and their supporting records	5 years.
20. Appraisals and valuations:	
(a) Appraisals and valuations made by the company of its properties or investments or of the properties or investments of any associated companies. (Includes all records essential thereto.)	3 years after appraisal.
(b) Determinations of amounts by which properties or investments of the company or any of its associated companies will be either written up or written down as a result of:	
(1) Mergers or acquisitions	10 years after completion of transaction or as ordered by the Commission.
(2) Asset impairments	10 years after recognition of asset impairment.

Item No. and description	Retention period
(3) Other bases	10 years after the asset was written up or down.
21. The original or reproduction of engineering records, drawings, and other supporting data for proposed or as-constructed utility facilities: Maps, diagrams, profiles, photographs, field survey notes, plot plan, detail drawings, records of engineering studies, and similar records showing the location of proposed or as-constructed facilities	Retain until retired.
22. Contracts relating to utility plant:	
(a) Contracts relating to acquisition or sale of plant	6 years after plant is retired or sold.
(b) Contracts and other agreements relating to services performed in connection with construction of utility plant (including contracts for the construction of plant by others for the utility and for supervision and engineering relating to construction work)	6 years after plant is retired or sold.
23. Records pertaining to reclassification of utility plant accounts to conform to prescribed systems of accounts including supporting papers showing the bases for such reclassifications	6 years.
24. Records of accumulated provisions for depreciation and depletion of utility plant and supporting computation of expense:	
(a) Detailed records or analysis sheets segregating the accumulated depreciation according to functional classification of plant	25 years.
(b) Records reflecting the service life of property and the percentage of salvage and cost of removal for property retired from each account for depreciable utility plant	25 years.
Purchase and Stores	
25. Procurement:	
(a) Agreements entered into for the acquisition of goods or the performance of services. Includes all forms of agreements not specifically set forth in Subsection 7 such as but not limited to: Letters of intent, exchange of correspondence, master agreements, term contracts, rental agreements, and the various types of purchase orders:	
(1) For goods or services relating to plant construction	6 years. See § 125.2(g).
(2) For other goods or services	6 years.
(b) Supporting documents including accepted and unaccepted bids or proposals (summaries of unaccepted bids or proposals may be kept in lieu of originals) evidencing all relevant elements of the procurement	6 years. See § 125.2(g).

Item No. and description	Retention period
26. Material ledgers: Ledger sheets of materials and supplies received, issued, and on hand	6 years after the date the records/ledgers were created.
27. Materials and supplies received and issued: Records showing the detailed distribution of materials and supplies issued during accounting periods	6 years. See § 125.2(g).
28. Records of sales of scrap and materials and supplies:	
(a) Authorization for sale of scrap and materials and supplies	3 years.
(b) Contracts for sale of scrap materials and supplies	3 years.
Revenue Accounting and Collecting	
29. Customers' service applications and contracts: Contracts, including amendments for extensions of service, for which contributions are made by customers and others	4 years after expiration.
30. Rate schedules: General files of published rate sheets and schedules of utility service. Including schedules suspended or superseded	6 years after published rate sheets and schedules are superseded or no longer used to charge for utility service.
31. Maximum demand, and demand meter record cards	1 year, except where the basic chart information is transferred to another record the charts need only be retained 6 months, provided the basic data is retained 1 year.
32. Miscellaneous billing data: Billing department's copies of contracts with customers (other than contracts in general files)	Destroy at option.
33. Revenue summaries: Summaries of monthly operating revenues according to classes of service. Including summaries of forfeited discounts and penalties	5 years.
Tax	
34. Tax records:	
(a) Copies of tax returns and supporting schedules filed with taxing authorities, supporting working papers, records of appeals of tax bills, and receipts for payment. See Subsection 11(b) for vouchers evidencing disbursements:	
(1) Income tax returns	2 years after final tax liability is determined.
(2) Property tax returns	2 years after final tax liability is determined.
(3) Sales and other use taxes	2 years.
(4) Other taxes	2 years after final tax liability is determined.

Item No. and description	Retention period
(5) Agreements between associate companies as to allocation of consolidated income taxes	2 years after final tax liability is determined.
(6) Schedule of allocation of consolidated Federal income taxes among associate companies	2 years after final tax liability is determined.
(b) Filings with taxing authorities to qualify employee benefit plans	5 years after discontinuance of plan.
(c) Information returns and reports to taxing authorities	3 years after final tax liability is determined.
Treasury	
35. Statements of funds and deposits	For nuclear decommissioning funds, retain records for all items listed for 3 years after final decommissioning is completed. If amortization reserve funds related to licensed projects are maintained, retain until the Commission makes a final determination of the disposition of amortization reserves.
(a) Statements of periodic deposits with fund administrators or trustees	Retain records for the most recent 3 years.
(b) Statements of periodic withdrawals from fund	Retain records for the most recent 3 years.
(c) Statements prepared by fund administrator or trustees of fund activity including:	Retain records until the fund is dissolved or terminated.
(1) Beginning of the year balance of fund;	
(2) Deposits with the fund;	
(3) Acquisition of investments held by the fund;	
(4) Disposition of investments held by the fund;	
(5) Disbursements from the fund, including party to whom disbursement was made;	
(6) End of year balance of fund.	
36. Records of deposits with banks and others:	
(a) Statements from depositories showing the details of funds received, disbursed, transferred, and balances on deposit	Destroy at option after completion of audit by independent accountants.
(b) Check stubs, registers, or other records of checks issued	3 years.
Miscellaneous	
37. [Reserved]	

Item No. and description	Retention period
38. Statistics: Financial, operating and statistical reports used for internal administrative or operating purposes	5 years.
39. Budgets and other forecasts (prepared for internal administrative or operating purposes) of estimated future income, receipts and expenditures in connection with financing, construction and operations, including acquisitions and disposals of properties or investments	3 years.
40. Records of predecessor companies	Retain consistent with the requirements for the same types of records of the utility.
41. Reports to Federal and State regulatory commissions including annual financial, operating and statistical reports	5 years.
42. Advertising: Copies of advertisements by or for the company on behalf of itself or any associate company in newspapers, magazines, and other publications, including costs and other records relevant thereto (excluding advertising of appliances, employment opportunities, routine notices, and invitations for bids all of which may be destroyed at option)	2 years.

[Order 617, 65 FR 48156, Aug. 7, 2000; 65 FR 50638, Aug. 21, 2000]