

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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IN THE MATTER of the Application)	
of BLACK HILLS CORPORATION d/b/a)	UTILITY DIVISION
BLACK HILLS POWER & LIGHT CO.,)	DOCKET NO. D96.12.219
for Authority to Increase Their)	DEFAULT ORDER NO. 5968
Quarterly Fuel Rate Rider.)	

On December 26, 1996, Black Hills Corporation d/b/a Black Hills Power and Light Company (BHP&L or Applicant) filed a petition with the Montana Public Service Commission pursuant to §§ 69-3-101 et seq., MCA, for an order authorizing the Applicant to increase its electric rates in order to reflect the increased cost of fuel used in the generation of electricity. The fuel costs concerned are for the months of September, October and November 1996.

On January 3, 1997, the Commission issued a Notice of Opportunity For Public Hearing. A provision in that notice stated, "If, however, no hearing is requested by January 27, 1997, the Commission will consider the matter and a default order may be issued."

Having considered the application and the documentation furnished by the Applicant in support of its application and deeming itself fully advised in the premises, the Commission makes the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. If increased fuel costs for the months of September, October and November 1996, are to be recovered, a charge of \$.00603 must be added to the base fuel cost of \$.01240 approved in Docket No. 83.4.25, which results in a total fuel charge of \$.01843 per Kwh. The Quarterly Fuel Rate Rider will increase revenues by approximately \$19,486 above fuel costs authorized in Docket No. 83.4.25.

2. The number of customers presently being served in Montana is 49.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Commission has jurisdiction over parties and proceeding in this matter.
2. The resulting rate levels are reasonable and just.

ORDER

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. The Quarterly Fuel Rate Rider for the billing period of February, March and April 1997 is \$.00603 per Kwh. This charge shall be added to the base fuel cost approved in Docket No. 83.4.25.
2. The approved rates shall be effective for electric service rendered on and after February 1, 1997.

DONE IN OPEN SESSION at Helena, Montana, on this 27th day of January, 1997, by a 5
- 0 vote.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

DAVE FISHER, Chairman

NANCY McCAFFREE, Vice Chair

BOB ANDERSON, Commissioner

DANNY OBERG, Commissioner

BOB ROWE, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kathlene M. Anderson
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)

NOTE: Any interested party may request that the Commission reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See 38.2.4806, ARM.