

Service Date: November 27, 1996

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

* * * * *

IN THE MATTER OF MONTANA POWER)	UTILITY DIVISION
COMPANY, Revenue Requirements, Gas)	
Costs, Allocated Cost of Service and Rate)	DOCKET NO. D96.2.22
Design for Natural Gas, Service,)	
Restructuring, and Consolidation of Related)	ORDER NO. 5898c
Cases and Issues.)	

INTERIM ORDER ON CONSOLIDATED 1996 GAS COST TRACKER

On November 21, 1996 Montana Power Company (MPC) filed its annual gas cost tracker before the Public Service Commission (PSC). In the filing MPC requests approval of cost adjustments and projections resulting in gas commodity rate decreases of 2.59 percent for residential and general service customers and 4.93 percent for utility customers and transmission level gas commodity rate increases of 19.44 percent for firm and 9.93 percent for interruptible service. MPC's tracker filing has been consolidated with MPC's comprehensive gas case (above-entitled) and will be further processed in accordance with the additional issue schedule in the governing procedural order.

MPC is a "public utility" within the meaning of § 69-3-101, MCA. The PSC properly exercises jurisdiction over the MPC's rates and operations pursuant to Title 69, Ch. 3, MCA. The PSC may, in its discretion, make temporary approvals of requests pending a hearing or final decision pursuant to § 69-3-304, MCA.

For interim purposes the PSC determines that the rates proposed in MPC's filing are just and reasonable and that MPC's request for interim relief should be granted. Nothing in this Order precludes the PSC from adopting in any subsequent order, after reviewing the entire record, approval or requirements different from those approved herein. Interim approval of any matters in this proceeding should not be viewed as final endorsement by the PSC of any issues, calculations, or methodologies approved. This Interim Order is effective for service rendered on and after December 1, 1996.

Done and Dated this 25th day of November, 1996, by a vote of 5-0.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

NANCY MCCAFFREE, Chair

DAVE FISHER, Vice Chair

BOB ANDERSON, Commissioner

DANNY OBERG, Commissioner

BOB ROWE, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kathlene M. Anderson
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)

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