

Service Date: December 24, 1997

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

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IN THE MATTER OF MONTANA-DAKOTA) UTILITY DIVISION
UTILITIES CO., Application for Approval of)
a Refund Disbursement Plan Pertaining to) DOCKET NO. D97.12.229
Natural Gas Service) ORDER NO. 6036

FINAL ORDER

On December 3, 1997, Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (MDU), filed an application before the Public Service Commission (PSC), requesting approval of a Refund Plan proposing a refund to customers through means other than MDU's gas cost tracking procedure. MDU expects a refund from Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline prior to 1997 year end and states that it must have an order from the PSC approving disbursement of that refund by year end to avoid tax consequences. MDU's disbursement plan proposes an offset to its unreflected gas cost account balance and a cash refund, less administrative expenses, to all MDU gas customers receiving sales service during the 12 months prior to this PSC Final Order on the matter. The amount of the refund is not known at this time.

On December 11, 1997, the PSC issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing on MDU's proposal. The response date for requesting a hearing was set at December 22, 1997. No requests for hearing were received.

The PSC determines that MDU's Refund Plan, as filed, is in the public interest. The PSC hereby orders that MDU's plan is approved. A copy of MDU's application for approval, which describes the plan in detail, is incorporated herein as an integral part of this Final Order and is attached as Appendix A for convenience.

Done and dated this 23rd day of December, 1997, by a vote of 5-0.

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 the Commission to reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See ARM 38.2.4806.