

Service Date: September 14, 1999

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	)	UTILITY DIVISION
Cut Bank Gas Company to Increase	)	DOCKET NO. D99.6.145
Rates for Natural Gas Service.	)	INTERIM ORDER 6192a

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On June 9, 1999, Cut Bank Gas Company filed an application before the Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) requesting approval of increased rates for natural gas service. In its application Cut Bank Gas requested approval of an increase in the monthly service charge from \$4.25 per month charge to an \$8.25 per month charge. Cut Bank Gas also requested an increase in the commodity charge, from \$3.97 per mcf charge to \$4.28 per mcf charge. This would result in a \$160,000 increase in annual revenue.

2. On June 16, 1999, the Montana Public Service Commission issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing.

3. On July 7, 1999, Montana Consumer Counsel (MCC) petitioned the PSC for general intervention, which was granted.

4. On July 13, 1999, Commercial Energy of Montana (CE) petitioned the PSC for general intervention, which was granted.

5. On July 21, 1999, the Montana Public Service Commission a Procedural Order, Order No. 6192.

6. On July 28, 1999, the Montana Consumer Counsel filed a Motion to Amend Procedural Schedule with the PSC. MCC requested that the September 16, 1999, date for prefiled testimony from intervenors be extended to September 23, 1999. MCC also requested that the September 28, 1999, date for discovery on intervenor prefiled testimony be extended to September 30, 1999. All parties were contacted and do not object, the PSC issued an Amended Procedural Schedule on August 25, 1999

7. On July 30, 1999, Cut Bank Gas filed a Supplemental Request for Interim Relief with the PSC.

8. On September 3, 1999, Cut Bank Gas Company and the Montana Consumer Counsel filed a stipulation with the Montana Public Service Commission. That stipulation agrees to an increase in the monthly service charge from \$4.25 per month to \$5.25 per month. An agreement was reached allowing an increase in the commodity charge from \$4.171 per mcf to \$4.3910 per mcf. The two increases will produce an annual revenue increase of approximately \$75,000.

#### CONCLUSION OF LAW

1. Cut Bank Gas Company offers regulated natural gas service in the state of Montana and is a public utility under MCA §69-3-102.

2. The Montana Public Service Commission properly exercises jurisdiction over Cut Bank Gas Company's Montana operations pursuant to Title 69, Chapter 3, MCA.

3. The rates approved herein are a reasonable means of providing interim relief to Cut Bank Gas customers.

#### ORDER

1. Cut Bank Gas is hereby authorized to increase rates for natural gas service by \$75,000.

2. Cut Bank Gas must file tariffs in compliance with the Findings of Fact agreed to in the Stipulation, in this Interim Order.

3. Nothing in this Interim Order precludes the Commission from adopting in its Final Order, after reviewing the entire record in this Docket, a revenue requirement different from that contained in this Interim Order.

4. Interim approval of any matters in this Docket should not be viewed as final endorsement by the Commission of any issues, calculations, or methodologies approved in this Interim Order.

5. Should the Final Order produce an increase lower than what has been granted in this Interim Order, a rebate will be issued, with interest, based on last the approved Cut Bank Gas Return on Equity of 15 percent.

6. Rates which implement the increase approved in this Interim Order will be effective for meters read on and after September 14, 1999.

DONE IN OPEN SESSION at Helena, Montana, this 14th day of September 1999, by a vote of 5 to 0.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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DAVE FISHER, Chairman

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NANCY MCCAFFREE, Vice Chair

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BOB ANDERSON, Commissioner

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GARY FELAND, Commissioner

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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.