



Montana Public Service Commission

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PSC Stresses Customer Protection Aspect of Temporary MDU Rate Increase

The Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) voted 4-1 today to allow Montana-Dakota Utilities (MDU) to temporarily charge electricity customers an additional 6.28% in rates, approximately half of what MDU has applied for. If the Commission ultimately determines that an increase is not warranted, MDU customers will be awarded rebates for any overcharge plus 10.25% interest. Today's vote on this temporary, or interim, measure is a prelude to action on a much more comprehensive review of the MDU application scheduled for February 28th in Miles City, known as a general rate case.

PSC Chair Bill Gallagher noted, "Interim rates address the regulatory lag time between when a company experiences a change in costs, and applies for a corresponding change in rates, and when the PSC makes a final determination on the rate change request. MDU customers can be assured that if the evidence presented by MDU in the general rate case does not convince a majority of the PSC that an increase is warranted, customers will get their money back, plus interest."

MDU electricity service is available in eastern Montana, including in the towns of Forsyth Glendive, Miles City, Sidney, and Wolf Point; the company is headquartered in North Dakota.

Detailed information related to the interim rates, as well as the general rate case, can be found under Docket D2010.8.82 on the PSC website, <http://psc.mt.gov/>. The general rate case hearing is February 28-March 1 in Miles City at the Community College. It is also possible to participate via teleconference in Helena at the Old Livestock Building. Those wishing to submit electronic comments about the case can do so at <http://psc.mt.gov/Consumers/comments/>. Hard copy remarks can be sent to the Commission at PO Box 202601; Helena, MT 59620-2601.

Made up of 5 elected commissioners, the PSC works to ensure that Montanans receive safe and reliable service from regulated public utilities while paying reasonable rates. Utilities regulated by the PSC generally include private investor-owned natural gas, electric, telephone, water, and sewer companies. In addition, the PSC regulates certain motor carriers, and oversees natural gas pipeline safety and intrastate railroad safety.

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