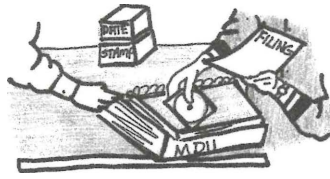


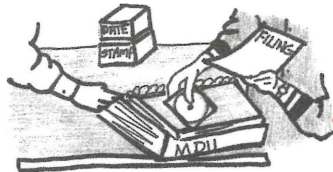
1. Utility identifies need to increase rates



2. Utility files application to increase rates with PSC



3. Commission notifies public of rate case filing and parties intervene



6. Parties file discovery, responses and rebuttal testimony



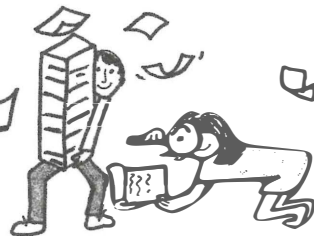
5. Commission issues notice of public hearing



4. Commissioners and PSC staff review the utility's application and crunch numbers.



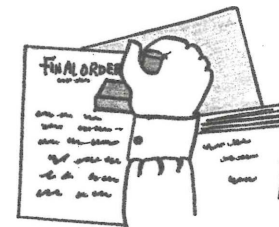
7. PSC holds public hearing where witnesses are cross examined



8. Commissioners and PSC staff study evidentiary record.



9. Commission deliberates during public work session.



10. Commission issues final order



11. Utility adjusts rates to reflect the Commission's ruling

How the Montana Public Service Commission sets rates for the state's regulated utilities:

- A typical rate case filed with the Commission is processed within nine months of the utility's application.
- Intervenor are given multiple opportunities to file discovery, responses and rebuttal testimony.
- The public has an opportunity to weigh in before the Commission.
- Witnesses are cross examined during a public hearing before the Commission and parties file post-hearing briefs and responses.
- After the hearing, Commissioners and PSC staff study the evidentiary record, staff makes a recommendation, and the Commissioners deliberate during a public work session.
- Finally, the Commission issues its final order and the utility adjusts its rates accordingly.

