

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF)	ORDER ASSESSING FILING FEE
MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO., A)	AND SUSPENDING OPERATION OF
DIVISION OF MDU RESOURCES GROUP,)	PROPOSED RATES
INC. FOR AUTHORITY TO INCREASE ITS)	
ELECTRIC RATES)	EL15-024

On June 30, 2015, the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an application by Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (MDU) for approval to increase rates for electric service to customers in its South Dakota service territory by approximately \$2.7 million annually or approximately 19.2% based on MDU's test year ending December 31, 2014. The Company states a typical residential electric customer using 854 kWh per month would see an increase of \$16.91 per month or 19.2%. The proposed changes may potentially affect approximately 8,600 electric customers in MDU's South Dakota service territory.

On July 2, 2015, the Commission electronically transmitted notice of the filing and the intervention deadline of September 11, 2015, to interested individuals and entities on the Commission's PUC Weekly Filings listserv. As of the date of this order, no petitions to intervene or comments had been filed.

SDCL 49-34A-14 authorizes the Commission to suspend the operation of the proposed rates for 180 following the date on which the proposed rates were filed. SDCL 49-1A-8 authorizes the Commission to require a deposit of up to two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) in the Commission's Regulatory Assessment Fee fund to defray Commission expenses incident to analyzing and ruling upon an application to increase rates as part of a general rate case. SDCL 49-1A-8 also authorizes the Commission to assess a filing fee of up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to defray expenses incident to analyzing and ruling upon an application for approval of a tariff mechanism for the automatic annual adjustment of charges for jurisdictional costs of new or modified transmission facilities and to assess a filing fee of up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to defray expenses incident to analyzing and ruling upon an application for approval of a tariff mechanism for the automatic annual adjustment of charges for jurisdictional costs of environmental improvements to existing electric generation facilities. The Commission has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapters 1-26, 49-1A, 49-34A and ARSD 20:10:13.

At its regularly scheduled meeting on July 21, 2015, the Commission considered this matter. In accordance with Staff's recommendation, the Commission voted unanimously to assess MDU filing fees pursuant to SDCL 49-1A-8 up to the statutory limit of \$250,000 for expenses related to the general rate case, up to the statutory limit of \$50,000 for expenses related to the transmission facility cost recovery tariff, and up to the statutory limit of \$50,000 for expenses related to the environmental cost recovery rider, and to suspend the operation of the schedule of rates proposed by MDU pursuant to SDCL 49-34A-14 for 180 days after the Application filing date of June 30, 2015. It is therefore

ORDERED, that MDU shall be assessed a filing fee in an amount up to the statutory limit of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) for expenses related to the general rate case, with payments made to the Commission's Regulatory Assessment Fee fund as periodically billed by the Commission. It is further

ORDERED, that MDU shall be assessed a filing fee in an amount up to the statutory limit of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for expenses related to the transmission cost recovery rider, with payments made to the Commission's Regulatory Assessment Fee fund as periodically billed by the Commission. It is further

ORDERED, that MDU shall be assessed a filing fee in an amount up to the statutory limit of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for expenses related to the environmental cost recovery rider, with payments made to the Commission's Regulatory Assessment Fee fund as periodically billed by the Commission. It is further

ORDERED, that the proposed schedule of rates shall be suspended for 180 days after June 30, 2015, pursuant to SDCL 49-34A-14.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 22nd day of July, 2015.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, electronically or by mail.

By: _____

Date: _____

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Chris Nelson
CHRIS NELSON, Chairman

Kristie Fiigen
KRISTIE FIIGEN, Commissioner

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Commissioner