

Rick,

I am sorry for my delayed response. You raise some important issues. Here are some of my thoughts. First, rates in South Dakota only reflect the costs of providing power to South Dakota ratepayers. If that plant at some point in the future is no longer in operation, its costs would be removed from rates at the next rate proceeding. Second, yes, many South Dakotans are working relatively low-paying jobs and any increase will cause a hardship for them. That is something the Commission will keep in mind as we move forward. State law and case law calls for the commission to provide reasonable recovery of prudently incurred expenses, but none of us will turn a blind eye to the possible impact of any rates we might put into effect. Finally, Black Hills Power has stated that a coal plant was their least expensive way to provide new generation to their customers. We will certainly be testing that claim during our proceeding.

I truly appreciate you taking the time to email. I'll make sure your comments are filed in the record so my colleagues have an opportunity to read them.

Many thanks,
Dusty

Dustin "Dusty" Johnson
Public Utilities Commission
605-773-3201

-----Original Message-----

From: rick meyers
Sent: Friday, December 25, 2009 2:46 PM
To: Johnson, Dustin (PUC)
Subject: BHP

Black Hills Power is asking for a 26% increase mainly to build a new power plant mainly to build a new plant in Gillette. Lets keep in mind, this is not an increase that will go away after the plant is paid for. This is a 26% increase that will be in place 5 years from now, 25 years from now and even 100 years from now. South Dakota is a tourism state where a HUGE number of residents work 2-3 jobs at \$7-8 an hour with no benefits. We need a reality check here before it is to late. Also is this plant going to be natural gas like it should be?