

Randy,

Thanks for your email.

"What is going on here?" I understand your frustration, but we are doing our job. There are thousands and thousands of pages of evidence to review, hundreds of questions that need to be asked of Black Hills Power, and millions of dollars to be accounted for. That type of due diligence should not be rushed.

We are going to subject Black Hills Power to all of the scrutiny their sizable request warrants (and that's a lot of scrutiny). We have six regulatory experts and two outside regulatory consulting firms working on this case, and they need to have enough time to prepare their case. Just think about how long most court cases and legal processes take. That's what this is -- an administrative law proceeding. There will be discovery, witnesses testifying under oath, cross-examination by attorneys, and evidence introduced into the record. All of that takes time.

I suspect that the party most irritated by the Commission's methodical and thorough review is Black Hills Power. That is too bad, but I am not going to rush this process. The ratepayers deserve sufficient scrutiny of this filing.

Am I happy that they apparently plan to put interim rates into effect? No, I am not. That is an option they have available to them under state law, however, and I don't have the power to change that. I do have the power to make sure we do our job on the pending rate case carefully, thoroughly, and fairly, and that's what we are going to do. I hope you can understand that.

What makes you say, "thus far the PUC is not being very impressive in the handling of this matter!!!!!!"? I am interested in any specifics you might have to offer, as I am always looking for ways we can improve our performance.

Thanks for your email,
Dusty

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

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

From: Randy Wolfe
Sent: Friday, February 26, 2010 10:55 AM
To: Johnson, Dustin (PUC); Johnson, Dustin (PUC)
Subject: Black Hills Power Rate Increase!!!!

Mr. Johnson,

I am totally disappointed in the PUC at this point after reading the article in the Rapid City Journal this morning: "Rate Can Rise Before Hearing"!!! The "Commission and your staff", has had well over 5 months to study, analyze and schedule meetings to determine the validity of Black Hills Powers request for rate increase "26.6%" (which is just totally out of hand) and now I read in the Journal that the Commission is "Working" to reschedule hearings on this matter in LATE SPRING (when the deadline is in early spring)!!!! Come on now, what the heck is going on here??

Mean while, the 180 days have come and are "almost" gone, and "The Mighty Corp." (Black Hills Corporation) will, as of 1 April 2010 increase our rates, without a decision from the PUC on this matter!!!! Sure The Corp. says that if the rate of 26.6% doesn't get approved they will credit our accounts "with interest" but that is just a load of poo!!!!

Additionally, Black Hills Corporation goes out and buys a couple new companies!! Hmmm, where did they get the money to do this if they are in such dire straights!! They build the new Wygen III plant (which they had to have planned and budgeted for well in advance, one would sure think anyway), and the Coal-Fired power plant in Gillette Wy. (which according to the Journal are both up and running and making them money).

Has anyone looked at all the new vehicles that have been purchases, new buildings and facility upgrades, employee raises, and bonuses, stock dividends received by the stock holders? Then on the flip side, how many people in the area that didn't receive a pay raise this year, or totally lost their jobs, and are barely making it by now with the current rates for Utilities????? It is called tighening your belt and cutting back on things to meet your current situation, "NOT REQUESTING A RATE INCREASE TO COVER YOUR BUTT BECAUSE YOU CAN'T MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS"!!!!!!

This whole situation has me very, very disturbed. It is the PUC's job to take care of the people of South Dakota, and thus far the PUC is not being very impressive in the handling of this matter!!!!!! We the people of South Dakota voted you into you current position to make a difference, and look what we are getting in return for our investment!!!!

Thank You for your time.

Randy Wolfe
Summerset S.D.