
From: Lorayne Schaefer
Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2010 9:01:42 AM
To: PUC Consumer Info
Subject: Black Hills Power & Light rate increase
Auto forwarded by a Rule

I am a Black Hills Power & Light customer in Sturgis and I am very concerned and upset about the rate increase they are going to put in place in April **BEFORE** approval from the PUC (according to the news media.) The news media says that the increase could be as high as 26%. This will be extremely hard on every customer; private, city, schools, etc. because budgets are set and there are no provisions for such a huge increase, especially in today's financial climate. As a former employee of the school district for 33 years, I know what such an increase could cause for the school district, **LOSS OF JOBS!** There is no other place to cut. At this time in our nation's history, everyone needs their job or this country will never get back on our feet.

If this increase goes into effect I will only have 2 options to work with:

1. Shut the electricity off and live like the early Americans lived; candles, woodstoves, etc.
2. Cancel some other important obligation such as my medical insurance premium and be without medical coverage and hope for the best. This is the option that I am sure I will take along with many other customers.

If Black Hills Power and Light is allowed to proceed, I am sure that MDU will follow, especially since they have done the same thing in Sheridan Wyo. The two companies chose to make huge financial acquisitions at a time of uncertainty and now they aren't working out very well. The customers did not ask them to expand at this time and I am not sure why the customers have to pay the price. This appears to me to be the same situation as the Wall Street mess.

I know that you have been holding hearings on this matter and I am asking you to consider denying such a huge increase. A small increase would be difficult for everyone, but could be workable. 26% is outrageous!

Thank you for your consideration.

Lorayne A. Schaefer
Sturgis, SD 57785