

RECEIVED

OCT 26 2009

**SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION**

South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 577501-5070

October 22, 2009

Re: Black Hills Power's request to raise utility rates

To Whom it May Concern:

We are writing after receiving notice from Black Hills Power that they have requested to raise our rates 26.6%. We absolutely object to this rate increase. Our reasons are as follows:

- The rate increase would make electric power unaffordable.
- BHP is requesting the increase to pay for a new power plant as well as other improvements that have already been made. Why are we being forced to pay for something that has already happened. I do not remember approving anything that justifies such a large increase.
- Customers are without option to receive electric power from another company. This increase would make BHP far more expensive than the other company in our area and we are not allowed to switch over.
- Our home is an all electric home. One of the benefits was a discounted rate by using a Demand Controller. Where is the savings if this rate increase is passed?

We feel that BHP is abusing us as customers and taking advantage of the fact that we are not able to choose another power company. If that was possible, BHP would have no choice but to be more competitive. A 26.6% increase is robbery!

We are especially disappointed that this increase will not fund any future improvements. We have power outages of varying length every week, if not more often. We have been told by BHP that "this happens often this time of year". That is unacceptable but we are forced to live with it since we cannot change to another power company. Our hands are tied.

We are aware that BHP has suspended the rate increase and a public hearing will be held. We plan to attend the hearing and BHP has agreed to inform us when the hearing is scheduled. However, we ask that you take our concerns into consideration.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Donald Agate
Carolyn Agate

Donald and Carolyn Agate

Keystone, SD 57751