

Cal Joy,

Thanks for taking the time to write. You raise some excellent points, and I know the ability of many people to absorb the requested increase is limited.

I want to make it clear that I do not yet know if the request is "beyond reason," however. It does seem quite high, and is larger than we have seen in quite a few years. We are in the process of examining the Black Hills Power request, and I can promise you that we will be subjecting it to great scrutiny. We have both internal and external experts reviewing the filing, trying to determine which costs have been prudently incurred by Black Hills Power and which have not been. Our ultimate decision will need to be based on what the costs look like after that review.

I am glad you shared your thoughts, Cal, as you raised some points we will absolutely be considering as a part of this process. I will make sure your comments are added to our docket.

Thanks,
Dusty

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

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

From: Cal Joy
Sent: Friday, November 20, 2009 9:33 AM
To: Johnson, Dustin (PUC)
Subject: Black Hills Power proposed rate increase

Dear Mr. Johnson,

I am writing to express my concern over the proposed rate increase submitted by Black Hills Power. This increase is beyond reason! I am in the same position as most small business owners in South Dakota. We are struggling with this economy and have all experienced the same struggle with keeping things afloat during the recession. I am in the apartment business in Spearfish and my primary market is college students. I am in no position to raise rents to keep up with an increase like Black Hills Power is purposing. This is totally beyond the capabilities of a college student to expect a 26 percent increase in their rent and I cannot absorb this in my budget. I am hoping that government will come to the rescue on the outlandish request by Black Hills Power and deny their it. I am hearing from the students that rent my apartments on a daily basis about the difficulties that they and their parents are experiencing in keeping them in college. Many of them are going through college on grants and loans and they depend on people like myself to keep my rates the same so that they can live on the budget that they started school with this fall. The moms and dads in western South Dakota will have to find a way to deal with this rate increase in their homes as well and we are dealing with one of the highest unemployment rates in South Dakota since the 1980's. I am hoping that you use the power of your office to deny this extreme rate increase.

Sincerely
Cal Joy