

Dear PUC.

I am writing in response to the most recent request for Black Hills Power for a rate increase.

I feel they have increased more than enough in the last two years to last them 10 years!

I personally cannot afford another increase.

We had an Energy Audit of our home in Lead and have been working to remedy any issues found. There are a few that are not fixable at this time but we are looking for affordable adjustments to such things as our ceiling pot light air gaps. We have a gas furnace, gas fireplace. Our addition above our garage is electric, the water heater is electric and our stove is electric. Our January power bill was \$414 and our gas bill was \$139. We cannot afford to pay more. The utilities and the taxes have almost forced us from our home. We are both employed and cannot afford these bills. I worry about retired people and the fact they will need to sell their homes due to their inability to pay for taxes and power. How is this fair for residents of South Dakota. Our wages have not increased to help off set these outrageous price hikes by BHP. Someone needs to stop them from robbing the citizens of South Dakota and you have been elected to ensure we are treated fairly by utility companies.

We, as consumers of power in South Dakota feel you have not been good stewards for us and have allowed the Power Companies to run rough shod over the residents of our state. This needs to stop or people will need to return to burning wood like in the 70's and 80's. This will not help the elderly, infirm, poor and us struggling to make it.

Please ensure Black Hills Power is stopped from these unsustainable increases to the public before people are forced from their homes due to their inability to pay for electricity.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely and with great concern,

René and Dale Larson

[REDACTED]

Lead SD 57754