



Northwestern Public Service

33 Third Street SE
Huron, SD 57350-1605
Telephone: (605) 352-8411
Facsimile: (605) 353-8286

NG97-014

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SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC
UTILITIES COMMISSION

August 29, 1997

William Bullard, Jr
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission
State Capitol Building
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Mr. William Bullard, Jr.:

The following is a line item Northwestern Public Service wishes to run on all residential gas customers' bills:

"Fall is fast approaching. Ensure your family's safety by scheduling a furnace inspection today. Call your local heating and cooling contractor or Northwestern at 1-888-677-9995."

The reasoning behind this bill message is two-fold. 1) to encourage customers to call Northwestern early for their annual inspection instead of at the first sign of cold weather. This sudden influx of calls often times requires our service people to work overtime and also lengthens the response time to customers that get caught in the backlog. 2) to remind customers of the safety issues such as carbon monoxide associated with a fuel burning furnace that is not operating at top efficiency.

I would appreciate any opinions and direction you could provide in how Northwestern should proceed with this issue. I can be reached at (605)353-8217 or you may also contact Rod Leyendecker at (605)353-8293. Thank you for your assistance in this manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim Thompson".

Kim Thompson
Residential Marketing Analyst

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE FILING BY) NORTHWESTERN PUBLIC SERVICE) COMPANY FOR APPROVAL OF) ADVERTISING ON RESIDENTIAL NATURAL) GAS BILLS) ORDER APPROVING) SAFETY ADVERTISING) LANGUAGE) NG97-014
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On September 2, 1997, Northwestern Public Service Company (NWPS) filed an application with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) requesting the Commission to approve advertising to be placed on residential natural gas customer bills which recommends an early furnace inspection for efficiency and safety purposes and recommends that customers call either their local contractor or NWPS to have the service performed.

At its regularly scheduled September 9, 1997, meeting, the Commission considered NWPS' application. Commission staff recommended approval.

The Commission finds that it has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL 49-34A-4(14) and ARSD 20 10 17 03 and 20 10 23 01(6). After its review the Commission found that the safety advertisement language was fair and reasonable as it conveyed information as to what NWPS recommended customers should do in utilizing electric or gas service to protect their health and safety. The Commission voted to approve the application. It is therefore

ORDERED, that Northwestern Public Service Company may include the safety advertisement language on its customer billings.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 23rd day of September, 1997.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE
The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon.
By <u><i>William Kaito</i></u>
Date <u><i>9/23/97</i></u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg

JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson

PAM NELSON, Commissioner

Laska Schoenfelder

LASKA SCHOENFELDER, Commissioner