

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF)	ORDER OF ASSESSMENT
NORTHWESTERN PUBLIC SERVICE FOR)	OF FILING FEE, NOTICE OF
AUTHORITY TO INCREASE RATES FOR)	OPPORTUNITY TO
NATURAL GAS SERVICE)	INTERVENE, AND
)	SUSPENSION OF
)	IMPOSITION OF TARIFF
)	NG99-002

On June 1, 1999, NorthWestern Public Service, a division of NorthWestern Corporation (NWPS), filed with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) an application to increase natural gas rates in South Dakota. The application seeks an overall increase in rates in the amount of \$2,108,112 or approximately 6%. The Company requested a change in rates to become effective for billings after July 1, 1999.

SDCL 49-1A-8 authorizes the Commission to require a deposit of up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission's (SDPUC) regulatory assessment fee fund to defray Commission expenses incident to analyzing and ruling upon this type of filing. The Commission has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapters 1-26, 49-1A, 49-34A and ARSD 20:10:01:15.02 and 20:10:01:15.03.

At its regularly scheduled meeting of June 22, 1999, the Commission considered this matter. The Commission found that pursuant to SDCL 49-1A-8, NWPS shall be assessed a filing fee as requested by the executive director up to the statutory limit of \$100,000. The Commission further established an intervention deadline of July 22, 1999. Pursuant to SDCL 49-31-14, the Commission suspended the operation of the schedule of rates proposed by NWPS for 90 days beyond July 1, 1999. It is therefore

ORDERED, that NWPS shall deposit a filing fee, to be established by the executive director, in the SDPUC regulatory assessment fee fund and it shall deposit any additional amounts as requested by the executive director, not to exceed the statutory limit; it is further

ORDERED, that any individual or entity may file with the Commission its petition to intervene no later than July 22, 1999; and it is further

ORDERED, that the proposed schedule of rates shall be suspended for 90 days beyond July 1, 1999, pursuant to SDCL 49-34A-14.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 25th day of June, 1999.

<p>CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE</p> <p>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.</p> <p>By: <u>Debra Kaelo</u></p> <p>Date: <u>6/25/99</u></p> <p align="center">(OFFICIAL SEAL)</p>
--

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson
PAM NELSON, Commissioner

Laska Schoenfelder
LASKA SCHOENFELDER, Commissioner