

**Sent:** Thursday, December 06, 2012 11:58 AM

**To:** Nelson, Chris

**Subject:** Xcel rate hike

Honorable Chris Nelson, Sir:

It's my understanding that Xcel wants to raise electric rates 11%. I haven't done the background work to discover how long it has been since the company's last increase or what for particularly this request applies. It does not seem that we have had some sort of prolific weather disaster from which excess costs would be driven.

I do think that an 11% increase is unprecedented and excessive. I am easily able to pay the additional, however, I'm not living on Social Security as many in SD are. And it does concern me that Ms. Fiegen has or is serving on the Xcel Board, which seems to be a conflict of interest in the least, and a propensity to sway a vote in favor at most.

I think most of us in SD who are Xcel customers, who have no other choice than be Xcel customers (unless we develop our own power) would find a 5% incremental increase more palatable, perhaps over several years. It is easy for Jim Wilcox of Xcel to say 'it will affect the average customer by about \$10 a month. Yes, that is \$10 for this and \$10 for that, and all the time, less money to spend on food and basic living necessities.

I consider myself a cost efficient, green person, and am making use of zone heating in the wintertime, and zone cooling in the summertime, and use of less costly lighting and watching pirate electricity users. I don't have the ability to save another 10% of electricity any more, to offset additional costs, having already made those changes. I would guess that to be similar to what most reasonably intelligent South Dakotans have already done, to a varying degree. I hope that in the case of a large increase that people do not resort to unplugging refrigeration units which could lead to other problems.

I do not know if my request as a S.D. citizen carries any clout in the board's decision, or if the decision has already been made. There are too many points of anxiety right now, probably, for many people to convey concern. But I felt the need to express my opinion, and for that, I thank you.

Thank you for your careful assessment of the situation and your service to South Dakotans in manifold ways.

Respectfully,

Tom Hoy