

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF) MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO. FOR) AUTHORITY TO INCREASE RATES FOR) NATURAL GAS SERVICE)		ORDER CONTINUING HEARING NG02-011
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On December 30, 2002, Montana-Dakota Utilities Co. (MDU), filed with the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) an application to increase natural gas rates in its Black Hills service territory. The application seeks an increase in rates in the approximate amount of \$2,173,380 or approximately 5.8%. On January 16, 2003, the Commission suspended the proposed schedule of rates for 90 days beyond January 30, 2003. On April 1, 2003, Commission Staff recommended that the suspension of the tariff be further extended for 60 days.

At its April 1, 2003, meeting, the Commission considered this matter. MDU concurred with Staff's recommendation. The Commission voted unanimously to grant the extension sought by Commission Staff.

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapters 1-26 and 49-34A, including 1-26-18, 1-26-19, 49-34A-2, 49-34A-3, 49-34A-4, 49-34A-6, 49-34A-8, 49-34A-8.1, 49-34A-10, 49-34A-11, 49-34A-12, 49-34A-13, 49-34A-13.1, 49-34A-14, 49-34A-16, 49-34A-17, 49-34A-19, 49-34A-19.1, 49-34A-19.2, 49-34A-20, 49-34A-21, 49-34A-22, and 49-34A-23.

By order dated March 20, 2003, a hearing was scheduled for May 7 and 8, 2003, beginning at 9:00 A.M., on May 7, 2003, in Room 412 of the State Capitol Building, 500 E. Capitol, Pierre, South Dakota. On April 30, 2003, the Commission received MDU's motion to continue and reschedule the hearing.

At its May 6, 2003, meeting, the Commission considered this matter. MDU agreed to suspend implementing the proposed rate increase for 30 days after the June 29, 2003, expiration date. The Commission voted unanimously to grant the continuance. It is therefore

ORDERED, that the hearing scheduled for May 7 and 8, 2003, is continued and a new hearing shall be rescheduled at a later time.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 16th day of May, 2003.

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>Melaine Kolbo</u>
Date: <u>5/19/03</u>
(OFFICIAL SEAL)

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

Robert K. Sahr
ROBERT K. SAHR, Chairman

Gary Hanson
GARY HANSON, Commissioner

James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Commissioner