

STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UTILITIES BOARD

IN RE: BLACK HILLS/IOWA GAS UTILITY COMPANY, LLC d/b/a BLACK HILLS ENERGY	DOCKET NO. RPU-2021-0002
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**ORDER APPROVING CUSTOMER NOTICES AND SCHEDULING CONSUMER
COMMENT MEETINGS**

On April 15, 2021, Black Hills/Iowa Gas Utility Company, LLC d/b/a Black Hills Energy (Black Hills), filed with the Utilities Board (Board) an application for approval of non-standard notice, pursuant to 199 IAC 26.4(1), and a proposed customer notice of rate increase. Black Hills' application was identified as Docket No. RPU-2021-0002. Black Hills stated it plans to file an application for increased retail natural gas rates, pursuant to Iowa Code 476.6, on or about June 1, 2021. Black Hills states its proposed non-standard notice is based on the requirements contained in proposed rules 199 Iowa Administrative Code (IAC) 26.4(1)(b)(2)(1-13) as issued in the Board's chapter 26 rule-making proceeding in Docket No. RMU-2020-0026. Black Hills states it is required to file a non-standard notice because its application to increase rates contains proposals to implement new riders, modify non-recurring charges, and implement interim rates under Iowa Code § 476.6(9).

On April 29, 2021, the Office of Consumer Advocate (OCA), a division of the Iowa Department of Justice, filed its response requesting Black Hills to make a number of changes to its proposed customer notice. These changes included:

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1. Paragraph 1(A): Include the word “proposed” in all instances where the customer notice references “Notice of Rate Increase,” including the outside of the mailing.
2. Paragraph 1(B): Move the paragraph discussing interim rates from page 2 to page 1.
3. Paragraph 1(C): Include “final” in the description of the proposed effective date of the rate increase on page 1, paragraph 1.
4. Paragraph 1(D): Include an option for a virtual customer comment hearing.
5. Paragraph 1(E): Include a statement clarifying that the riders will be recurring charges adjusted annually without notice to customers.

On May 6, 2021, Black Hills filed its “Response to OCA Response to Customer Notice” and a revised customer notice of rate increase, incorporating OCA’s requested changes. On May 11, 2021, OCA filed a reply stating that it has no objection to Black Hills’ May 6, 2021 revised customer notice.

PROPOSED NOTICES

Black Hills’ notice contains the information required by the Board’s rule in proposed rules 199 IAC 26.4(1)(b)(2)(1-13) as issued in the Board’s chapter 26 rule-making proceeding in Docket No. RMU-2020-0026. After reviewing the proposed notice; OCA’s April 29, 2021 response; Black Hills’ May 6, 2021 response and revised customer notice; and OCA’s May 11, 2021 reply, the Board finds the revised customer notice filed by Black Hills on May 6, 2021, is acceptable.

CONSUMER COMMENT MEETINGS

To provide customers with an opportunity to present comments about Black Hills’ proposed general rate increases and general service quality, the Board will schedule seven consumer comment meetings at locations throughout Black Hills’ natural gas service territory and one virtual consumer comment meeting. Black Hills’ proposed draft

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notice contains space for including the information about the consumer comment meetings. Black Hills will be required to include in its customer notice the information about the meetings, specified below in Ordering Clause Number 2. Persons with specific service complaints must follow the complaint procedure specified in the Board's rule at 199 IAC 6.2.

Black Hills will be required to provide a presentation at each consumer comment meeting that explains the rate increase, the requested changes to rates and riders, and an overview of the changes, as applied to residential and other customer classes.

ORDERING CLAUSES

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. The revised non-standard rate case notice filed by Black Hills/Iowa Gas Utility Company, LLC d/b/a Black Hills Energy, in Docket No. RPU-2021-0002 on May 6, 2021, is approved.

2. Consumer comment meetings shall be held on the following dates at the following locations to receive comments from the general public:

- Tuesday, September 14, 2021, 1:30 p.m. – Council Bluffs Public Library, 400 Willow St., Council Bluffs.
- Tuesday, September 21, 2021, 1:30 p.m. – DMACC Newton Campus, 600 N. Second Ave. W., Newton.
- Tuesday, September 21, 2021, 6:30 p.m. – Leonard Good Community Center, 114 S.W. Eighth St., Ogden.
- Tuesday, September 28, 2021, 6 p.m. – Lake Mills Civic Center, 227 W. Main St., Lake Mills.
- Wednesday, September 29, 2021, 5:30 p.m. – Hotel Winneshiek, 104 E. Water St., Decorah.
- Thursday, September 30, 2021, 5 p.m. – Dubuque Carnegie-Stout Library, Aigler Auditorium, 360 W. 11th St., Dubuque.
- Thursday, October 7, 2021, 5:30 p.m. – Clay County Event Center, 800 W. 18th St., Spencer.

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- A virtual consumer comment meeting is set for 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 12, 2021. Details about participating online or accessing information presented at the customer comment meetings will be available on the Board's website at iub.iowa.gov.

3. Persons with disabilities requiring assistive services or devices to observe or participate in a consumer comment meeting should contact the Utilities Board at (515) 725-7300 or customer@iub.iowa.gov at least five days in advance of the scheduled date to request appropriate arrangements.

UTILITIES BOARD

Geri Huser Date: 2021.05.14
12:30:58 -05'00'

Richard Lozier Date: 2021.05.14
12:00:37 -05'00'

ATTEST:

Anna Hyatt Date: 2021.05.14
14:57:53 -05'00'

Josh Byrnes Date: 2021.05.14
10:42:23 -05'00'

Dated at Des Moines, Iowa, this 14th day of May, 2021.