

# Connections

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

SEPTEMBER 2007

## STARTING POINT



By Doug Dean  
Director

One of the goals of state government is to integrate new technology solutions into our processes to make it easier and more cost effective for customers to access our services and conduct business with us on a daily basis.

The Public Utilities Commission has taken another step along that path by implementing an Internet-based electronic insurance filing system. Upon registration, the e-filing system provides immediate access to PUC motor carrier data, including proper name, address, permit numbers, status, insurance filings, and the number of vehicle identification stamps purchased. Based on this data, the system provides for the electronic filing and cancellation of proof of insurance for motor carriers.

The system is available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Errors caused from miscommunication between motor carriers, their insurance providers and the PUC are no longer an issue for users of this system because e-filings are based on information already in PUC permitting systems. Additionally, this system includes administrative tools allowing registered users to see, review, print and actively manage their filings with the PUC.

We are excited to introduce this new system and hope that motor carriers and their insurance companies will take advantage of the improved efficiencies it offers.

Insurance e-filings are just one of several e-filing activities that the PUC is working on in conjunction with DORA's IT department. A system that allows motor carriers the ability to purchase their annual renewal stamps on-line already has been implemented and is successfully working. Also, a system allowing the on-line filing of over-the-counter transportation applications has been developed and is currently being tested.

Other proposed e-filing applications for future development include the on-line filing of utility annual reports, and on-line filings for special telecommunications programs, such as the Colorado High Cost fund, and the Low-Income Telephone Assistance program. We also continue to explore a broader e-filing system that will allow all utilities and interested parties to submit and receive documents electronically via the Internet.

We think there are many benefits to be realized from implementation of e-filing systems, and the PUC will continue to look for other ways to better serve the people of Colorado through the application of technology solutions.

## Conference draws state energy leaders

*Governor, Xcel CEO among noted speakers at October 30 forum*

More than 30 state energy leaders, including Gov. Bill Ritter, will discuss Colorado's energy future at a conference sponsored by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC), the Governor's Energy Office (GEO) and the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC). The state agencies are partnering with Energy Outreach Colorado (EOC) for the conference, which is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 30, at the Denver Marriott City Center, 1701 California St. in Denver.

"This is the first time the four entities have hosted jointly such a comprehensive educational forum," said **D. Rico Munn**, Executive Director of the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA). The PUC and the OCC are divisions within DORA. The GEO reports directly to Gov. Bill Ritter and the EOC is a non-profit, low-income assistance organization.

The conference, called "Colorado's New Energy Economy: The Path Forward," will examine current and future energy issues as Colorado moves toward more renewable and alternative energy technologies. Gov. Ritter will provide the opening address, setting the stage for a comprehensive look at the opportunities and challenges facing the

state's governmental agencies, utilities and consumers.

Attendees at the conference will be made aware of Colorado's current energy profile with respect to energy generation, transmission and costs by PUC Chairman Ron Binz, GEO Director Tom Plant and OCC Director Jim Greenwood.

The keynote luncheon speaker will be Chuck Kutscher, senior policy analyst for the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). His speech is titled: "The Role of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy in Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change."

Throughout the day there will be 11 diverse sessions. Richard C. Kelly, Chairman of the Board, President & CEO of Xcel Energy, will provide his company's viewpoint on the topic of "Financial Markets: What is the Reaction to a Carbon-Constrained World?" On the same panel with Mr. Kelly will be Greg Wasserman, Vice-President of Alternative Energy Investing, for Goldman Sachs.

The conference topics will address a variety of energy issues including new generation technologies. There will be a discussion on strategies that will meet future energy demand as well as electric transmission issues of "How to Get Power to the People."

Consumer issues will be thoroughly examined with sessions such as: "Consumer Demand: What do Consumers Want and at What Price?," "Going Green: Will the Benefits Exceed



the Costs to Consumers?," and "Changing Consumer Behavior: Do Incentives & Price Signals Work?"

The economic advantages to the state will be outlined by panelists discussing "Colorado's Energy Resources: What are the Opportunities for the State?" Issues concerning meeting energy demand will be detailed by panelists discussing "Land Use Issues: Not in My Backyard?"

Attendees at the conference will also learn from the Governor's Climate Change and Energy Advisor Heidi VanGenderen, local government representatives and a representative from a Rural Electric Association about current energy initiatives—"Who's Doing What?"

"This should be an amazing conference," Binz said. "For the first time, we'll have Colorado's diverse energy leadership, from the governor on down, in one place to explore our state's energy future."

The conference has been accredited by the Colorado Supreme Court for seven general credits.

To register for the conference, go to [www.energyoutreach.org/conf/index.htm](http://www.energyoutreach.org/conf/index.htm).

See conference agenda on back page

## Town meetings burn with bright ideas

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) spent part of its summer traveling around the state trading members of the public energy-efficient light bulbs for their bright ideas about the state's energy future.

The PUC and the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) of the Department of Regulatory Agencies conducted a "listening tour" in August and September to eight different communities in Colorado. Town meetings were held in Windsor, Yuma, Springfield, Alamosa, Canon City, Steamboat Springs, Montrose and Vail.

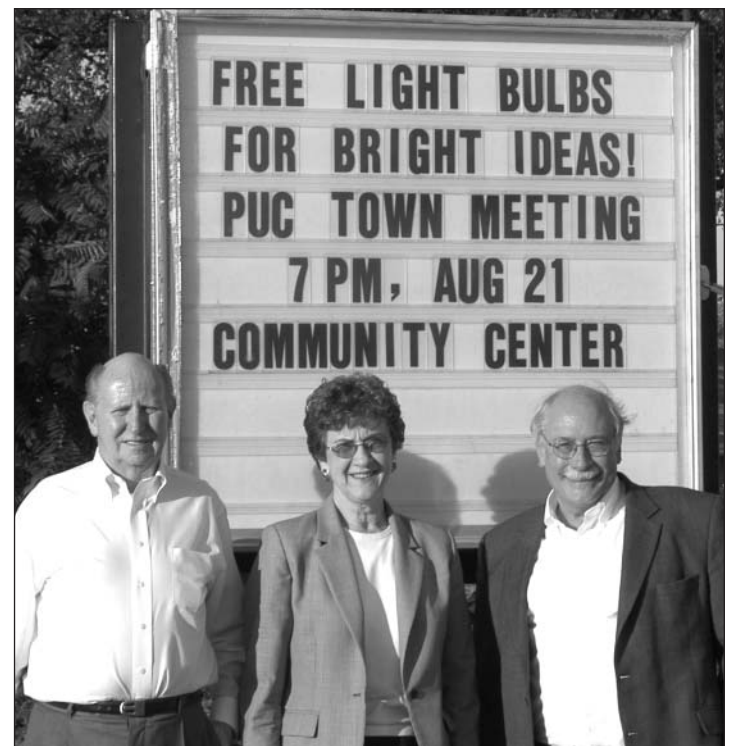
Along with the rest of the nation and the world, Colorado is facing unprecedented change in terms of selection of electric generation resources, transmission, and clean energy and energy-efficiency goals. Utilities are making planning choices now that will have economic and environmental implications for decades to come.

The meetings were conducted to give consumers an opportunity to provide their comments about these and other important energy issues, including consumers' thoughts about the impact that PUC decisions on these issues might have on electric and natural gas bills.

"In some cases, we picked locations where the PUC has never gone before," Chairman **Ron Binz** said. "All of the places we visited are on the front lines of the debate about future energy resources in Colorado. If ever there was a time for public input into our energy future, this is it."

Members of the public who attended the town meetings received a free compact fluorescent light bulb. The

*PUC commissioners (from left) Carl Miller, Polly Page and Ron Binz check out the West Yuma County Chamber of Commerce sign announcing the PUC town meeting in Yuma. Yuma was one of eight stops on a PUC/OCC listening tour this summer.*



PUC and the OCC teamed up with Lowe's hardware stores and the Governor's Energy Office to sponsor the light bulb giveaway.

All three PUC commissioners, OCC Director Jim Greenwood and PUC Director Doug Dean attended the meetings, along with other PUC and OCC staff members. Local government, legislative and economic development leaders also participated.

Among the topics most frequently raised were local residents' attitudes about renewable energy and the development of new transmission facilities to bring that energy to market. The PUC

also solicited participants' input on issues such as the PUC's role in encouraging energy efficiency; whether Colorado should become an exporter of renewable energy to other states in the West; the need for additional baseload power plants; consumers' willingness to pay more in rates so that utilities can shift toward more wind and solar resources; and consumers' support for the construction of a new nuclear power plant in Colorado.

Input received at the meetings will be valuable as the PUC considers important energy decisions it must make in the coming months, Binz said.



# Complaints resolved, money saved for consumers

The PUC's External Affairs section took in 3,254 complaints and secured a total of \$687,995 in credits and refunds for consumers during fiscal year 2006-2007, according to the section's annual consumer assistance summary.

Both totals were slightly lower than the previous fiscal year, during which the section took in 3,608 complaints and saved ratepayers \$827,479.

The section also fielded 11,143 phone calls for the fiscal year ending June 30, up from last year's total of 9,721 calls. This demonstrates that staff complaint specialists resolve or answer more than two-thirds of all consumer inquiries to the PUC without filing a complaint directly with a utility.

The External Affairs section expanded its consumer complaint function during the year, adding complaints involving transportation companies in

addition to those concerning fixed utilities, such as Qwest and Xcel Energy. Prior to Jan. 1, 2007, transportation complaints were handled separately within various units of the Transportation section.

In all, the staff addressed inquiries regarding 114 different telecommunications, gas, electric and water utilities, along with 84 transportation carriers, in its efforts to resolve a wide variety of consumer concerns. The section received 3,254 contacts and closed 3,223 for the fiscal year, compared with 3,608 contacts and 3,671 closed contacts a year ago.

A contact is a phone call, letter or e-mail that requires some follow-up action from the External Affairs staff. The number of contacts received and closed is not the same because a contact is not necessarily opened

and closed within the same month.

In addition to resolving complaints, the section also provided input to the Commission on major rate and reliability cases involving Xcel Energy, and staff attended the National Low Income Energy Conference to keep up-to-date on issues and trends affecting this at-risk population during times of decreasing low-income benefits and sharply rising energy costs, according to consumer complaint supervisor **Doug Platt**.

For the fiscal year, the section closed 581 complaints concerning Qwest, down from last year's total of 773. The PUC closed 1,310 complaints relating to Xcel Energy, a decrease compared to 1,429 contacts during the previous fiscal year.

When closing a contact, the staff determines the appropriate category. If

the consumer files a general inquiry requiring follow-up by a specialist, the contact is closed as an "information" request. If the complaint is in opposition to a proposed rate increase or a utility's services or actions, it is counted as an "objection." When the staff determines that a utility has not complied with PUC rules or regulations, the complaint is closed as "not in compliance."

The section also handled 444 media contacts and issued 14 news releases for the fiscal year. Of these media contacts, 50 concerned telecommunications issues, 234 concerned energy issues, 85 related to transportation issues, and 75 involved miscellaneous issues.

The complete 2006-07 Consumer Assistance Summary is available on the PUC website: <http://www.dora.state.co.us/puc/publications/ConsumerReports.htm>.

## Customer service award winner chosen

**Deborah Fajen** was selected by PUC co-workers to receive the 2007 Dom Hidalgo customer service award.

Fajen was one of three finalists nominated by a panel of PUC employees. The other finalists were **Ron Jack** and **John Opeka**.

As part of the PUC's Internal Support team, Fajen helped provide assistance to Commissioners and the rest of the PUC staff in preparing documents and decisions for mailing and posting on the website, maintaining data bases, and various other internal support activities.

"Deb maintains and promotes a positive working environment, helps employees who ask for assistance, and shows a true spirit of cooperation among those she assists," wrote a co-worker in submitting her nomination. "Deb is a true professional and she is able to handle herself in all situations in an appropriate manner."

The annual customer service award was established in 1998 to recognize the PUC employee who displays consistent and superior customer service throughout the year. The award is named for former PUC employee Dom Hidalgo, who exemplified exceptional customer service for more than 35 years in the PUC's Transportation



*PUC Director Doug Dean (right) presents this year's Dom Hidalgo customer service award to Deborah Fajen at an awards luncheon in August.*

section before he died in 1997.

Nominees for the award must have worked at the PUC for a minimum of three years and exhibit consistent and sustained effort in the following areas:

demonstrated patience and tolerance; maintained and demonstrated a positive attitude; assisted other employees; promoted a spirit of cooperation with  
(Continued on next page)

## POSITIVE CHARGES

⚡ Congratulations to PUC Relay Administrator **Joe Benedetto**, who was one of four state employees honored by Gov. Bill Ritter during Colorado Public Employee Recognition Week this spring. Joe was cited for his service on many boards and commissions on behalf of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals, as well as his work collecting food, toys and cash for such charities as Working Together, Toys for Tots, the Holy Cross Church food distribution program, and the Gathering Place, which helps homeless women and children.

⚡ Kudos to PUC advisory staff engineer **Jeff Hein**, who organized the very successful Commissioners' informational meeting on electric transmission issues in July. More than 120 people, including state utility commissioners from Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming, packed the Old Supreme Court chambers at the Capitol to gain a better understanding of the connection between electric transmission development and the developing state energy policy.

⚡ Congratulations to the following PUC employees who were recently recognized for their years of service to the state of Colorado:

- 5 years—**Harris Adams, Inez Dominguez, Larry Shiao**
- 10 years—**Christine Lowe, Carl Miller, Mark Schumann**
- 15 years—**Ron Jack, Terry Bote**
- 20 years—**Barbara Fernandez**
- 25 years—**Bill Fritzel**

⚡ Welcome to new PUC employee **Scott England**, an economist in the Fixed Utilities section. Also, two new attorneys recently joined Commission counsel staff. Assistant Attorney Generals Becky Bye and Mariya Barmak have joined Paul Gomez in providing legal advice to the commissioners.



*Scott England*

## INSIDE CONNECTIONS

"Seize the moment and always be prepared for whatever comes your way. It's better to be prepared and not have the opportunity than to have the opportunity and not be prepared."

That's a tenet that **Elizabeth Hayes** strongly believes in, and one that she put to the test last April when the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) reorganized its administrative personnel into three support teams. Liz, who had worked at the PUC since 2001 as an administrative assistant in the

Fixed Utilities section, seized the opportunity and was named supervisor of the Internal Support unit.

In that role, she manages a five-person unit responsible for evaluating filings and supporting documentation to ensure that the weekly agenda is accurately produced; entering data into the PUC's information tracking system regarding the status of filings; and responding to inquiries from applicants and other staff members.

"I enjoy the daily challenges of the job," Liz said. "You never know what you're going to be up against on any given day."

Liz has worked for the state of Colorado for nearly 18 years. Prior to joining the PUC, she spent nine years with the Civil Rights Division and three years with the Colorado Student Loan Program. She is currently taking classes at Columbia College in Aurora, hoping to complete her degrees in business and criminal justice. She is also a licensed cosmetologist, and hopes one day to own and operate a beauty school.

The seventh of 10 children, Liz enjoys spending time with her large, and still-growing family.

"We have continued to multiply, so there is no such thing as a small family



*Elizabeth Hayes*

gathering. I have been married to the same man for 22 years and we have two daughters and one son," she said.

Liz said church activities consume much of her time, and she also enjoys music, reading and watching sports, especially basketball and football.

"I believe that life is a journey and that happiness is found along the way and not at the end of the road," she said. "So I have learned to be content in my journey and encourage others to do the same."

(Inside Connections will feature a PUC employee each edition as selected by PUC section chiefs.)

**CONNECTIONS** is the newsletter of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission. It covers Commission cases and actions of importance to consumers, utilities, consumer groups, and decision makers.

Comments, suggestions, and requests for more information should be directed to:

Terry Bote  
1560 Broadway, Suite 250  
Denver, Colorado 80202

Photographer . . . . . Tony Munoz

Printed on recycled paper



# Tri-State appeals transmission line decision to PUC

Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association has filed an appeal with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) over requirements by two local governments that Tri-State install a proposed 4.5-mile transmission line underground at Tri-State's expense.

Tri-State is asking the PUC to rule that the requirement to bury the line, along with other conditions imposed by Commerce City and Adams County, will unreasonably impair Tri-State's ability to provide safe, reliable and economic service to the public.

Tri-State, headquartered in Westminster, is a wholesale electric power generation and transmission coopera-

tive that supplies electricity to 44 member systems in Colorado and three surrounding states.

The dispute involves a proposed overhead 115 kilovolt (kV) electrical transmission line that is part of the United Power System Improvement Project. Approximately 3.5 miles of the line will cross through the city limits of Commerce City, and the remaining 1 mile of line will be located in unincorporated Adams County. According to Tri-State, the project is needed to serve the electricity requirements of United Power, Inc., one of Tri-State's electric distribution cooperative members.

In approving Tri-State's request for a conditional use permit, both Adams County and Commerce City imposed a condition that Tri-State construct the line underground at the company's expense within the E-470 multi-use easement. Adams County also imposed additional conditions that Tri-State "obtain all necessary easements/agreements with property owners and utility companies and obtain transmission line interconnection agreements, if necessary;" and that Tri-State "pay all incremental increases in property taxes resulting from the physical improvements to the property as a result of the transmission pole/line as determined by the County Tax Assessor, if any."

Under a law passed in 2001, public utilities may appeal to the PUC if a local

government denies a permit or application that relates to the location, construction or improvement of major electrical or natural gas facilities, or imposed unreasonable conditions on such a permit or application. Tri-State is asking the PUC to overturn the conditions imposed by Commerce City and Adams County.

In reviewing the appeal, the law requires the PUC to balance local government determinations with the broader statewide interest of meeting growing demands for electric and natural gas service.

A public hearing on Tri-State's appeal will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 7, at the Commerce City Civic Center, 7887 E. 60th Ave., in Commerce City.

## PUC grants Xcel power line

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has approved Xcel Energy's application to construct a 345-kilovolt (kV) transmission circuit to connect new electric generation near Colorado Springs to the transmission system carrying power to the Denver metro area.

The PUC on Aug. 2 granted Xcel Energy a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) to construct the Midway-Waterton 345kV transmission project and also deemed that the noise and electro-magnetic field (EMF) levels proposed by the company in its application were reasonable.

The transmission project is needed to accommodate 500 megawatts (MW) of new electric generation that will be produced by the Squirrel Creek Energy Center, which will be located about 6 miles northeast of Xcel's Midway Substation. Squirrel Creek was selected to fulfill a portion of the company's 2003 Least Cost Plan resource need.

The transmission project will tie in the east circuit of a double-circuit,

345kV capable transmission line, which is being rebuilt in the Midway-Daniels Park corridor and will be operated at 345kV. In addition, an existing 230kV line between Daniels Park and Waterton will be rebuilt as a double-circuit transmission line with 345kV capability.

The estimated cost of the project is \$30 million, and the company expects to have the line in service by May 2010.

The additional transmission capability is expected to accommodate the new generation from Squirrel Creek while avoiding overloads on the Colorado Springs Utilities network and the transmission north of Daniels Park. The project is also expected to provide additional operational flexibility and increase the reliability of the regional network in southern Colorado.

In ruling on the noise and EMF reasonableness issues, the PUC noted that levels proposed in the project were less than levels approved by the PUC in previous applications and were in line with levels adopted by other states.



About 130 people, including utility commissioners from three states, packed the Old Supreme Court chambers at the Capitol in July for a day-long PUC informational meeting on transmission issues. It was the first of what is hoped to be a series of meetings to explore electric transmission development from a state and regional perspective.

## Ruling on Aquila transfer due by end of year

A Public Utilities Commission (PUC) administrative law judge has scheduled hearings for seven days in September on an application by Aquila, Inc. to transfer ownership and control of all of its electric and natural gas utility operations in Colorado to Black Hills Corp. of South Dakota.

Evidentiary hearings are scheduled for Sept. 17-21 and Sept. 24-25 at the PUC in Denver, beginning at 9 a.m. each day.

Aquila announced in February that it had executed a definitive agreement to sell off its electric and gas operations in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa to Black Hills for \$940 million, with the company's remaining electric assets in Missouri to be acquired by Missouri-based Great Plains Energy. The transaction requires various state and federal

approvals, including approval from the Colorado PUC.

In Colorado, Aquila currently serves about 92,000 electric customers in 21 communities, including Pueblo, Canon City, Rocky Ford and Florence. It also provides natural gas service to about 64,000 customers in 27 communities, including Castle Rock, Larkspur, Monument, Widefield and Woodland Park.

Black Hills currently provides retail natural gas and electric service to approximately 137,000 customers in South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana. It also provides wholesale energy production and marketing throughout the western U.S. and western Canada. The acquisitions in the four states will add about 616,000 new utility customers to Black Hills' overall operations.

If the transaction is approved, Black

Hills said it will provide utility service in Colorado under the legal names of Black Hills/Colorado Electric Utility Company (BH/CO Electric) and Black Hills/Colorado Gas Utility Company (BH/CO Gas). The trade names under which BH/CO Electric and BH/CO Gas will do business in Colorado will be determined and announced at a later date.

In its application, Black Hills stated that it will initially provide service to Colorado customers at the same rates and tariff conditions currently provided by Aquila.

Under the procedural schedule established by the administrative law judge, a PUC decision on the application is expected by the end of the year. If regulatory approvals are obtained, Aquila said it expects the transaction to close in early 2008.

## Hidalgo award

(Continued from previous page)

others; dealt effectively in hostile, difficult or negative situations; maintained positive working relations; identified and implemented improvements in processes or procedures; was innovative in problem solving efforts; and followed up with customers when necessary.

In her nomination, Fajen was cited for helping a co-worker on a large mailing to local exchange carriers earlier this year. She assisted with compiling the list, and also suggested a way to maintain the list, update it as new information comes in to the PUC and make it available for future mailings, all in an easy format.

Nominations for the award were solicited from all PUC employees. After the panel narrowed the field to the three finalists, the winner was chosen by a vote of all PUC employees.

Fajen received \$250 along with an individual plaque, and her name was engraved on a permanent plaque displayed in the reception area. Jack and Opeka each received \$100 and individual plaques.

### PREVIOUS WINNERS

- 2006 . . . . . Lloyd Petersen
- 2005 . . . . . April Woods
- 2004 . . . . . Suzette Scott
- 2003 . . . . . Jonell Poley
- 2002 . . . . . Michele Gronewold
- 2001 . . . . . Marisela Chavez
- 2000 . . . . . Frank Shafer
- 1999 . . . . . Barbara Fernandez
- 1998 . . . . . Joyce Reed

## PUC accepts Xcel natural gas rate changes

New rates increasing Xcel Energy's annual natural gas base rate revenues by \$32.3 million went into effect on July 30.

The new rates were part of a gas rate case settlement approved by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) in June. The PUC approved most of the provisions of an agreement negotiated by Xcel Energy, PUC staff and the Office of Consumer Counsel. However, one modification required the company to shoulder some of the revenue loss from declining customer gas usage for the next three years.

As a result of the settlement, overall monthly bills for Xcel Energy's residen-

tial customers increased by about 2.56 percent, or \$1.61, based on an average use of 65 therms of natural gas. Monthly bills for commercial customers went up about \$5.48 per month, based on an average use of 329 therms.

The agreement lowered the company's authorized rate of return on equity from its previous level of 10.5 percent to 10.25 percent. The rate of return on equity is the profit that a utility is authorized to earn, but it is not guaranteed.

The PUC modified a provision of the settlement that allows Xcel Energy to institute an adjustment to recover dis-

tribution costs associated with declining customer gas usage. This three-year pilot program, known as "decoupling," would adjust the company's revenues received from residential customers from year to year to compensate for reductions in gas use, such as through energy efficiency or conservation measures.

The PUC ruled that Xcel must absorb the cost of the first 1.3 percent of the reduction in sales each year, but would be allowed to recover reductions above that threshold. Over the past five years, usage per customer has declined about 2.6 percent annually.



## Colorado's New Energy Economy: The Path Forward

A one-day conference sponsored by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission, the Governor's Energy Office, and the Office of Consumer Counsel partnering with Energy Outreach Colorado

Tuesday, October 30, 2007—Denver Marriott City Center, 1701 California St.

### 7:30 a.m. Registration

### 8:00 a.m. Breakfast

### 8:45 a.m. Welcome

D. Rico Munn, Executive Director, Department of Regulatory Agencies

### 9:00 a.m. Colorado's New Energy Economy

Governor Bill Ritter, Jr.

### 9:30 a.m. Colorado's Energy Profile: Where Are We Now?

Ron Binz, Chairman, Colorado Public Utilities Commission; Tom Plant, Director, Governor's Energy Office; and Jim Greenwood, Director, Office of Consumer Counsel

### 10:30 a.m. Break

### 10:45 a.m. Break-Out Sessions

#### Coal & Gas: What are the Challenges to Utility Fuel Supplies?

**Speakers:** John A. Harpole, President, Mercator Energy; Rick Smead, Director of Regulatory and Fuels Resources, Navigant Consulting; Stuart A. Sanderson, President, Colorado Mining Association; Bruce Driver, Consultant, Western Resource Advocates  
**Moderator:** Vincent Matthews, State Geologist & Director of Colorado Geological Survey

#### Consumer Demand: What Do Consumers Want and at What Price?

**Speakers:** Floyd Ciruli, President, Ciruli Associates; Jeff Lyng, Program Manager for Commercial Sector, Governor's Energy Office; Eric Wittenberg, President & CEO, McStain Neighborhoods  
**Moderator:** Patricia Limerick, Chair of the Board & Faculty Director, Center of the American West

#### New Generation Technologies:

##### What is Feasible and at What Cost?

**Speakers:** Douglas J. Arent, Director of Strategic Energy Analysis & Applications Center, National Renewable Energy Laboratory; Steve Jenkins, Vice President of Gasification Services, CH2M Hill  
**Moderator:** Craig Cox, Director, Interwest Energy Alliance

#### Colorado's Energy Resources: What are the Opportunities for the State?

**Speakers:** Don Elliman, Director, Economic Development & International Trade; Paul Jerde, Executive Director of the Robert H. & Beverly A. Deming Center for Entrepreneurship, CU Leeds Business School; Tucker Hart Adams, Regional Economist of Energy Industries Division, U S Bank  
**Moderator:** Rep. Bernie Buescher, Vice-Chairman, Joint Budget Committee, Colorado Legislature

### 12:00 p.m. Lunch

### 12:45 p.m. Keynote Speaker

Chuck Kutscher, Principal Engineer & Manager of the Thermal Systems Group, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

### 1:30 p.m. Break

### 1:45 p.m. Break-Out Sessions

#### Electric Transmission: How Do We Get Power to the People?

**Speakers:** Joel Bladow, Senior Vice President of Transmission, Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association; Ron Lehr, Attorney, American Wind Energy Association; Jim Tarpey, of Counsel, Holland & Hart  
**Moderator:** Doug Larson, Executive Director, Western Interstate Energy Board

#### Going Green: Will the Benefits Exceed the Costs to Consumers?

**Speakers:** Thor Nelson, Partner, Holland & Hart; Howard Geller, Director, Southwest Energy Efficiency Project  
**Moderator:** Robert Hix, Former Chairman, Colorado Public Utilities Commission

#### Clean Energy Initiatives:

##### Who's Doing What?

**Speakers:** Heidi VanGenderen, Climate Change & Energy Advisor for Governor Ritter; Michele Weingarden, Director, Greenprint Denver; Judy Dorsey, Executive Director, Northern Colorado Clean Energy Cluster; Dan McClendon, General Manager, Delta Montrose Electric Association  
**Moderator:** Mark Ruzzin, Mayor, City of Boulder

#### Land Use Issues: Not in My Backyard?

**Speakers:** Marc W. Smith, Executive Director, Independent Petroleum Association of Mountain States; Tresi Houpt, Commissioner, Garfield County; Ken Reif, Senior Vice President & General Counsel, Tri-State Generation & Transmission Association; Mary Ellen Denomy, Representative, Western Colorado Congress  
**Moderator:** James van Hemert, President Elect, Colorado Chapter of American Planning Association

### 3:00 p.m. Break

### 3:15 p.m. Break-Out Sessions

#### Meeting Future Demand: What Strategies Will Work?

**Speakers:** Jim Sims, President, Western Business Roundtable; Matt Baker, Director, Environment Colorado  
**Moderator:** Harris Sherman, Director, Colorado Department of Natural Resources

#### Changing Consumer Behavior:

##### Do Incentives & Price Signals Work?

**Speakers:** Janee Briesemeister, Senior Legislative Representative, State Consumer Issues Team, AARP; (other speaker to be determined)  
**Moderator:** Skip Arnold, Director, Energy Outreach Colorado

#### Financial Markets: What is the Reaction to a Carbon-Constrained World?

**Speakers:** Richard C. Kelly, Chairman of the Board, President & CEO, Xcel Energy; Greg Wasserman, Vice President Alternative Energy Investing, Goldman, Sachs & Co  
**Moderator:** Doug Dean, Director, Colorado Public Utilities Commission

### 4:30 p.m. Conference Ends



## Grand, Custer counties seek 9-1-1 rate hikes

Grand County and Custer County emergency telephone service authorities are seeking approval from the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to raise their E-9-1-1 monthly surcharges effective Jan. 1, 2008.

Grand County is seeking to raise its monthly surcharge 50 cents to \$1.50, and Custer County is seeking an increase from \$.70 to \$1.25 per month.

Grand County Emergency Telephone Service Authority is responsible for administering the operation of the emergency telephone service program for all of Grand County, including the towns of Fraser, Granby, Grand Lake, Hot Sulphur Springs, Kremmling and Winter Park. The authority serves an area of 1,870 square miles with a combined population of 12,442.

Custer County Emergency Telephone Service Authority, based in Westcliffe, handles 9-1-1 calls for all of Custer County, more than half of which is U.S. Forest Service land. The 2006 census shows the county with a population of 3,860.

Both authorities said they are facing significant changes to 9-1-1 systems in the near future, including the evolution of E-9-1-1 technology to receive emergency calls from text messages, video cell phones and computer-based telephone services along with traditional land lines. The increased funding would ensure that the counties would be in a position to deal with those changes, as well as provide funding for needed communications capital improvements and upkeep, according to the applications.

All wireline and wireless customers in Colorado pay a monthly surcharge to fund the equipment and operational expenses of the 9-1-1 system. Individual authority boards establish the amount needed to cover the costs of equipment, personnel and access to telephone lines. The surcharge is collected by the telephone provider and passed on to the authority boards.

Under Colorado law, a 9-1-1 authority board may assess a surcharge of up to 70 cents per customer per month for 9-1-1 service without the permission of the PUC. Anything over that amount requires PUC approval.

The Grand County authority board received permission from the PUC in 1998 to increase its surcharge from 50-cents to \$1 per month. It was the first county to exceed the statutory 70-cent cap. Since then, another 10 emergency authority boards have been granted surcharges above 70 cents, primarily in rural and mountainous areas where 9-1-1 surcharge collections have not kept up with increasing expenses.

## Comcast curtailing non-VoIP phone service

Comcast Phone of Colorado has asked the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for permission to phase out its circuit-switched local residential telephone service by the end of November.

Under the application filed in August, all Comcast Digital Phone customers would have the option of transferring to Comcast's new Internet-based voice service, or switching to a different service provider. Comcast has proposed to discontinue its circuit-switched residential service on a city-by-city basis beginning Sept. 26 and ending on Nov. 28.

Comcast, which has been authorized to provide competitive local telephone service in Colorado since 2001, has offered its Comcast Digital Phone service pursuant to an interconnection

agreement with an underlying third-party carrier that will expire in June 2008. As a result, Comcast stated it has made a decision to no longer provide its traditional circuit-switched local telephone service to residential customers. Instead, Comcast has developed a phone service delivered over its cable infrastructure involving Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

Comcast has been actively marketing its new VoIP service to its current residential voice customers. The company said less the discontinuance should affect less than 13,000 remaining customer lines due to attrition of residential circuit-switched customers as a result of customer notice and on-going marketing efforts.

Comcast proposed weekly waves of

discontinuance starting with cities having a relatively low number of expected remaining subscribers, and ending in November with the highest current customer penetration—Lakewood, Denver and Aurora—allowing more time for customers in these cities to choose alternatives.

There are a small number of Comcast residential customers who cannot currently switch to an alternative provider because no alternative providers have built facilities at these customers' premises. For these customers, Comcast proposed to offer a VoIP-based service plan at a reduced monthly rate for 12 months beyond the discontinuance date.

Comcast's local business customers would not be affected by the proposed discontinuance.



COLORADO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

1560 Broadway, Suite 250  
Denver, Colorado 80202

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DENVER CO  
PERMIT 738