

Connections

NEWSLETTER OF THE COLORADO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

SEPTEMBER 2009

STARTING POINT



By Doug Dean
Director

There have been a number of legislative and regulatory changes in the transportation arena over the last few months that impact both motor vehicle carriers and consumers. I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight some of the more important ones from our perspective.

As of August 4, the Colorado Public Utilities Commission no longer had jurisdiction over intrastate for-hire transportation of property, and all property carrier permits have been cancelled. Hazardous material, towing and household goods movers are still required to obtain permits from the PUC.

The change is a result of legislation approved earlier this year exempting intrastate property carriers from regulation by the PUC. The new law eliminated the PUC program and database that verified that motor carriers hauling commodities like grain, livestock and general freight for hire within Colorado had adequate commercial liability and cargo insurance.

As a result, responsibility for verification of insurance for intrastate property carriers has been shifted to the Department of Public Safety. DPS currently is working on its insurance verification rules.

Also this summer, the PUC established a new application fee for companies wishing to provide taxicab service within the eight-county Denver metro area. The application fee increased from \$35 to \$800. The fee is applicable to applications for permanent authority to operate a taxicab within or between the counties of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, El Paso and Jefferson.

The new fee more accurately covers the true administrative costs of processing large, contested taxi applications.

Finally, new amended transportation rules adopted by the PUC became effective on July 30. The rule changes include increased flat rates for Denver International Airport taxi service; increased non-consensual towing fees; revised disqualification standards regarding criminal history background checks for certain passenger carrier drivers; and new household goods mover rules requiring a consumer advisement and binding arbitration.

The new rules are available on the PUC's website at www.dora.state.co.us/puc/rules/723-6.pdf.

Jordanian electric regulators visit PUC

Week-long meetings build on partnership established last year

One commissioner and four staff members from the Electricity Regulatory Commission (ERC) of Jordan met with various members of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) August 4-7.

The visit was a continuation of meetings held at the ERC in May when Colorado commissioners **Ron Binz** and **Jim Tarpey**, as well as PUC staff members **Jeff Ackermann**, **Ron Davis**, and **John Reasoner** visited Jordan. The meetings are part of an exchange program sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC).

The visitors from Jordan included **Dr. Kamal Qudah**, Commissioner; **Meqdad Qadous**, Director of Studies and Economic Research Department; **Ali Obeidat**, Financial Analyst, Studies and Economic Research Department; **Nader Otoum**, Electrical Engineer, Technical Affairs Directorate, Consumer Services and Metering division; and **Khalidoun Habahbeh**, Electrical Engineer, Technical Studies Division.

The discussions in Denver focused on various regulatory topics, including rate design and cost of service; con-



PUC Chairman Ron Binz (left) accepts a plaque depicting Petra, the ancient stone city, from Dr. Kamal Qudah, Commissioner of the Electricity Regulatory Commission of Jordan, during a visit to Colorado in August.

sumer services and dispute resolution; resource adequacy and system reliability; and energy resource planning and demand-side management.

The ERC contingent also attended a public hearing regarding Xcel Energy's pending rate request, attended a PUC weekly meeting, visited a downtown office building to view energy conservation efforts, and toured a solar panel manufacturing facility. In addition, the PUC hosted a reception for the visitors at the beginning of the week, and a

farewell dinner on the last night of their visit.

"The visit was very productive and continued to build on the positive relationships that were established last November," Tarpey said. "At various times during the week the ERC visitors expressed their delight at the hospitality shown to them by everyone at the PUC."

Discussions are expected to start in the near future with respect to future meetings between the two agencies.

Energy conference set Oct. 20

The third annual "Colorado New Energy Economy: Powering the Future" conference will be held on Tuesday, October 20, at the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel. This year's conference will focus on current and future electric issues from both state and federal perspectives.

The one-day conference is sponsored by the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC), the Governor's Energy Office (GEO), the Office of Consumer Counsel (OCC) and Energy Outreach Colorado (EOC).

State and national energy leaders will explore challenges and opportuni-

ties for moving Colorado's new energy economy forward in a series of presentations and panel discussions throughout the day. Utility, regulatory and consumer issues will be addressed from a variety of policy viewpoints.

"With Congress poised to take action on climate change legislation, this conference is especially important and timely," PUC Chairman **Ron Binz** said.

Marc Spitzer, commissioner of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, will highlight a morning breakout session on transmission

(Continued on page 4)



Conference Agenda

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

Tuesday, October 20, 2009
The Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel
1550 Court Place, Denver, CO

7:30 a.m. Registration

8 a.m. Breakfast

8:45 a.m. Welcome
D. Rico Munn
Executive Director, Department of Regulatory Agencies

(Continued on page 4)

PUC to review Xcel energy portfolio this fall

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) will issue a decision this fall on Xcel Energy's proposed resource choices to meet its Colorado customers' electricity needs through 2015.

The company on August 10 filed a report with the PUC evaluating responses to a bid solicitation issued earlier this year. The request for proposals was part of Xcel Energy's Colorado Resource Plan, which was approved by the PUC in late 2008.

Xcel received 113 bids offering a total of 21,150 megawatts of electricity, according to the filing. The company's proposed portfolio would add nearly 1,000 megawatts of renewable energy resources by 2015, including more than 700 megawatts of wind and solar pho-

tovoltaic generating capacity, and approximately 280 megawatts of new solar technology.

In addition, the plan would acquire continued access to approximately 900 megawatts of existing natural gas-fired resources; and calls for the closing of two coal-fired units in Grand Junction by the end of 2010 and two more in Denver by 2014.

Xcel stated that its preferred plan puts the company well on target to meet the goals of the state's climate action plan, which calls for a 20 percent reduction in carbon emissions by 2020.

In conjunction with Xcel's evaluation of bids, the PUC will review a report from an independent evaluator, describing its assessment of the bids

and whether the solicitation and bid evaluation process was fair to all parties.

Under the PUC process, interested parties were given 45 days to review and comment on the reports. The PUC has scheduled initial deliberations on the proposed plan for October 15-16. A final, written decision on the preferred portfolio is due by November 6. Once the preferred portfolio is approved, the company will begin negotiations with successful bidders.

PUC rules require regulated utilities to file resource plans at least every four years forecasting future electric demand and how the utility will meet that demand. Xcel has said it intends to file its next resource plan in 2010.

Assistance report shows more savings to consumers

The PUC's External Affairs section helped keep more money in utility customers' pockets for the most recent fiscal year.

According to the section's annual consumer assistance summary, the section was responsible for securing a total of \$522,899 in credits and refunds from transportation and fixed utilities for ratepayers during the fiscal year. That compares to \$419,946 saved the previous year.

The section, with one fewer complaint specialist for most of the year, handled 5,571 phone calls and took in 3,336 complaints for the 12 months

ending June 30, 2009. The group fielded 9,232 phone calls and 2,934 complaints the previous year.

In all, the consumer assistance staff addressed inquiries regarding 225 different telecommunications, gas, electric, water and transportation companies in its efforts to resolve a wide variety of consumer concerns. The section received 3,336 contacts and closed 3,295 for the fiscal year, compared with 2,934 contacts and 2,950 closed contacts a year ago.

A contact is a phone call, letter or email 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 year.

For the fiscal year, the section closed 742 complaints concerning Qwest, an increase from last year's total of 586. The PUC closed 1,196 complaints relating to Xcel Energy, a slight increase compared to 1,145 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 External Affairs section also handled 378 media contacts and issued 20 news releases for the fiscal year.

The complete 2008-09 Consumer Assistance Summary is available on the PUC website at: <http://www.dora.state.co.us/puc/publications/ConsumerReports.htm>.

Customer service award winner chosen

Trudy Reinmuth was selected by PUC co-workers to receive the 2009 Dom Hidalgo customer service award.

Reinmuth was one of three finalists chosen by a panel of PUC employees. The other finalists were **Elizabeth Hayes** and **Gladys Rey**.

Reinmuth is part of the PUC's Records Management unit, which processes and tracks filings, organizes dockets and updates records. The unit also makes sure documents are electronically imaged and archived, and helps both staff and external customers locate and obtain copies of information relating to past and present proceedings.

"(Trudy) is innovative and informative, maintains a positive working environment and is a joy to be around," wrote a co-worker in submitting her nomination. "She is always volunteering to help and is considerate of others' feelings. She accepts new assignments with a positive attitude and quickly accomplishes each task."

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



PUC Director Doug Dean presents the 2009 Hidalgo Customer Service award to Trudy Reinmuth.

Hidalgo, who exemplified exceptional customer service for more than 35 years in the PUC's Transportation 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: demonstrating patience and tolerance; maintaining a positive attitude; assisting other employees, promoting a spirit of cooperation with others; dealing effectively in difficult situations; identifying improvements in processes or proce-

dures; and displaying innovation in problem solving.

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.

Reinmuth received 16 hours of administrative leave along with an individual plaque, and her name was engraved on a permanent plaque displayed in the reception area. Hayes and Rey each received 8 hours of administrative leave and individual plaques.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

2008	Terry Bote
2007	Deb Fajen
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

POSITIVE CHARGES

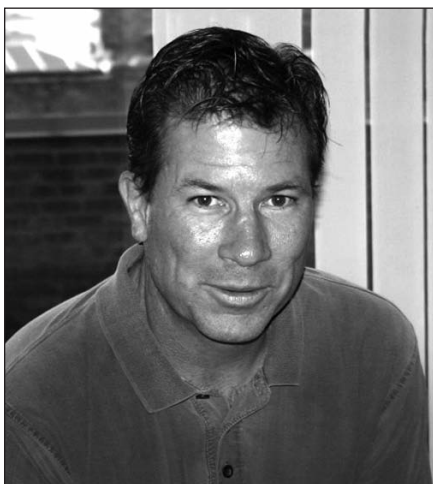
Colorado PUC Commissioner **Jim Tarpey** was one of the organizers for a one-day conference on "Multistate Decision Making for Renewable Energy and Transmission: Spotlight on Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming." The conference, which drew about 175 people to the Doubletree Hotel in Denver, provided a forum for state officials and stakeholders to explore options for multistate collaboration on transmission issues.

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

- 5 years—**Ellie Friedman, Tony Munoz, Jemima Obeng**
- 10 years—**Dale Isley, John Opeka, April Woods**
- 15 years—**Monita Pacheco, Alison Torvik**
- 20 years—**Della Menchaca, Jim Midyett, Sandy Potter**
- 25 years—**Jerry Enright**
- 30 years—**Jonell Poley**

Kudos to PUC Advisor **Jeff Ackermann**, who was awarded second prize in the first annual Bike To Work essay contest, sponsored by the Governor's Energy Office and Bike Depot. Jeff received a \$100 gift certificate to Bike Depot for his effort entitled, "Pedaling My Commute."

Welcome to new PUC employees **Cliff Hinson**, who transferred from the Division of Real Estate; and **Joe Kelley**, who returned to the PUC after a stint at the Department of Revenue. Both are compliance investigators in the Transportation Safety and Enforcement unit.



Bob Laws

Being a criminal investigator in the PUC's Transportation Section can be a thankless job when you're dealing with rogue motor carriers, angry drivers and frustrated passengers. But it can also have its rewarding moments.

For **Bob Laws**, one of those moments occurred recently when a Denver District Court proceeding resulted in a 30-day jail sentence against an operator for violating a court injunction. The PUC had pursued civil penalties and then an injunction

INSIDE CONNECTIONS

against the carrier for operating without authority and insurance, and finally sought a contempt of court ruling when the illegal activities continued.

"It's the first time I can remember where our enforcement activities resulted in a jail sentence," Laws said.

Laws, who has been with the PUC since 1994, is a Senior Criminal Investigator and supervisor of the Safety and Compliance unit of the Transportation section. His unit performs safety audits and investigations of motor carriers subject to PUC jurisdiction, including passenger carriers, household goods movers, and towing companies. It is also involved in all transportation civil penalty cases; and maintains inter-agency and industry relationships in regards to transportation issues.

"For the most part, the safety and compliance unit goes unnoticed by the general public," Laws said. "But, on occasion, we have the ability to make consumers whole, and when the out-

comes are successful, it is gratifying."

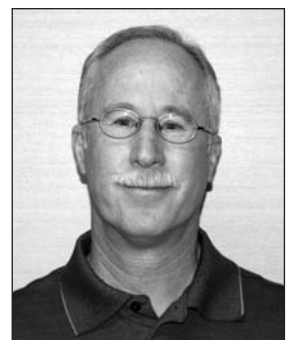
Laws, who has a degree in business from the University of Colorado, worked in real estate and the oil and gas industry during the 1980s, and also spent time in southern California working in the yachting industry, where he was involved in saving a California gray whale off the Baja coast about 20 years ago. The whale got tangled in the mooring line of a Mexican fishing boat, and the crew of the yacht he was working on spent several hours freeing it.

"An outfit that was studying the migrating whales down there at the time was able to film some of the ordeal. I call it my 'whale tale,'" he said.

When not working, Laws enjoys hiking throughout Colorado, traveling, watching sports and playing an occasional round of golf.

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

Cliff Hinson



Joe Kelley



Dora
Department of Regulatory Agencies

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:

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Denver, Colorado 80202

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Hearings on Xcel electric rate proposal begin Oct. 26

Hearings on the first phase of a \$180.2 million Xcel Energy electric rate case will start on October 26. The hearings, which will be held at a location still to be determined, are expected to last two weeks.

Xcel Energy filed its request on May 1—the second of two rate cases to recover about \$1.7 billion in investments in the company's electric generation, transmission and distribution systems. The PUC in May approved a settlement granting the company a \$112.2 million increase in electric base rates, or about 5 percent. Those rates went into effect on July 1.

The new proposal would increase

residential electric bills by an additional \$4.98 per month, and small business bills by about \$5.40 per month, with the new rates taking effect on January 1, 2010.

The proposed expenses include the completion of the third generating unit at the Comanche coal plant in Pueblo, the addition of 300 megawatts of natural gas-fired generation at the Fort St. Vrain station in Platteville, and statewide distribution system improvements, including \$6 million in expenses for "smart grid" technologies.

The first phase of the rate case will determine the company's annual

revenue requirement, or how much money it is allowed to recover from customers in rates. A decision on that phase is expected to early December.

Following that, a second proceeding will be held to determine the appropriate allocation of costs between the various customer classes. Hearings on the second phase, or "rate design," are scheduled for January 11–21.

Among the issues that will be included in the rate design phase is a proposal to adopt "inverted-block" rates for residential customers, to promote efficient use of energy during peak periods. Under the proposal,

customers would pay a lower charge for the first 500 kilowatt-hours of electricity used, and a higher rate thereafter, each month from June through September. A typical residential customer uses about 632 kilowatt-hours per month.

The company also has proposed shifting the costs from the Air Quality Improvement Rider and the Demand Side Management Cost Adjustment into base rates, eliminating those separate riders from the bill.

A decision on the rate design portion of the case is expected by March, with any changes to rates implemented by April 1, 2009

Atmos seeking increase in gas delivery base rates

Atmos Energy has filed a request for a \$3.93 million annual increase in gas base rates, along with a proposal for a yearly review that would automatically adjust customer rates to reduce the need for rate cases and provide the company with earnings stabilization.

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has scheduled evidentiary hearings on the proposed request from November 6–13 at the PUC in Denver. Public comment hearings will be held from 4–6 p.m. on Thursday, September 10, at the Buena Vista Public Library in Buena Vista, and from 4–6 p.m. on Tuesday, September 15, at the Weld County Centennial Center in Greeley.

Atmos serves about 110,000 customers in more than 60 communities in Colorado, including Greeley, Canon

City, Durango, Gunnison, Crested Butte, Lamar and Steamboat Springs.

The company currently has five gas rate areas—Northeast, Northwest/Central, Southeast, Southwest, and Buena Vista—all with different rate structures. The new proposal would establish a single, statewide rate for all Atmos customers in Colorado. Under the proposal, monthly residential customer bills would increase from 3 to 16 percent, depending on the current rate area, and changes to commercial bills would range from a 12 percent increase to a 6 percent decrease.

Base rates cover costs associated with infrastructure, equipment, labor, materials, meter reading and billing. They do not include the largest portion of the monthly bill, the natural gas commodity costs, which are passed on

to customers on a dollar-for-dollar basis under a separate charge.

In its request, Atmos states that it serves 19 percent more customers and has invested approximately \$60 million into its delivery system since its last base rate increase effective in 2001. It also states that steady declines in customer usage caused by energy conservation and efficiency have eroded its earnings.

In addition to the proposed revenue increase, other major provisions of the request include:

- Establishing an annual Customer Rate Stabilization (CRS) formula in place of the periodic traditional rate cases the company currently uses. This yearly financial review would provide automatic adjustments to rates (either upward or

downward) in order to set rates at a level that would allow Atmos to earn its authorized rate of return.

- Collecting a greater percentage of fixed costs through the monthly facilities fee.
- Removing the gas cost component of bad debt write-offs from base rates and recovering these costs through the Gas Cost Adjustment (GCA).
- Instituting a low-income rate affordability program.

Atmos customers wishing to submit written comments on the proposal may send them to the PUC, 1560 Broadway, Suite 250, Denver, CO 80202, or send them electronically via the PUC website. Comments should be addressed to Docket No. 09AL-507G and should be received by November 6.

ALJ to hear power line case in November

A Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) administrative law judge will conduct hearings in November on consolidated applications by Tri-State Generation and Transmission and Xcel Energy to jointly construct major new electric transmission facilities in southern Colorado.

Tri-State and Xcel are seeking certificates of public convenience and necessity (CPCNs) to build the San Luis Valley-Calumet-Comanche Transmission Project, a proposed 150-mile transmission line and new substation to accommodate expected new solar and wind generation in southeastern and south-central Colorado.

Evidentiary hearings are scheduled for November 17–20 and November 23 at the PUC offices in Denver. Public comment hearings have been scheduled for November 9 in Walsenburg and November 10 in Alamosa.

Utilities are required by law to seek PUC authority to build and own

certain major electricity infrastructure projects in Colorado. The PUC determines whether there is a need for the project, and whether the application is in the public interest. Siting of such projects is determined through a local government permitting process and is not controlled by the PUC.

The proposed project involves construction of three new transmission line segments, each from an existing substation to a new Calumet Substation, which would be built approximately 6 miles north of Walsenburg. The segments include:

- Approximately 95 miles of new double-circuit, 230-kilovolt transmission between the San Luis Valley Substation and the new Calumet Substation.
- Approximately 45 miles of new double-circuit 345-kilovolt transmission between the Calumet Substation and the existing Comanche Substation, near Pueblo.

- A new 6-mile 230-kilovolt transmission line that will be added between Calumet Substation and the Walsenburg Substation.

The project is currently estimated to cost approximately \$180 million and is expected to be in service by May 31, 2013. Tri-State and Xcel would share costs and capacity ownership rights for the individual transmission segments based on an agreement still to be negotiated.

Along with authority to construct the project, the companies are asking the PUC for specific findings that the expected noise and electro-magnetic field (EMF) levels associated with the project as designed and quantified in the application would be reasonable. The two companies also seek approval to transfer ownership interest as needed when the project is completed.

The PUC is expected to make a decision on the applications by the end of the year.

Black Hills increases renewable surcharge

Black Hills/Colorado Electric's renewable energy standard adjustment (RESA) increased from 1 percent to 2 percent on August 1.

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) allowed the increase based on the company's efforts to meet the renewable energy standards required by Colorado law. Under the standards, investor-owned electric utilities must derive 20 percent of their retail electricity sales from renewable sources by 2020, with at least 4 percent of that amount coming from solar generation technologies.

By law, utilities can charge customers up to a maximum of 2 percent of their annual energy bills to pay for investments in renewable energy resources to meet the standards. Black Hills implemented a 1 percent RESA in September, 2006.

The increase from 1 percent to 2 percent will add about 65 cents per month for typical Black Hills residential customers, and about \$2.28 per month for typical small business customers. The increase is expected to provide Black Hills with about \$1.8 million of additional annual revenues, which will be used to acquire eligible energy resources.

According to a PUC staff review of Black Hills' monthly renewable energy reports, the company's amount of customer-sited, small solar applications and installed solar capacity per month is currently more than twice as much in 2009 as it was in 2008.

Black Hills serves more than 90,000 customers in 21 Colorado communities, including Pueblo, Canon City and Rocky Ford.

Customers of Xcel Energy—the state's other investor-owned electric utility—also pay a 2 percent RESA charge on their monthly bills.

PUC staff questions Xcel 07–08 gas earnings

Staff of the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is requesting that the PUC initiate a formal complaint proceeding against Xcel Energy for unjust or unreasonable natural gas rates.

PUC staff alleges that the company exceeded its authorized rate of return in both 2007 and 2008 and that gas rates should be reduced by about 5 percent.

The PUC in 2007 approved new rates for Xcel's 1.3 million natural gas customers based on an authorized return on equity of 10.25 percent. The

new rates were effective July 30, 2007. In annual report filings with the PUC, Xcel reported that it earned a 10.45 percent return on equity for the 2007 calendar year, and an 11.99 percent return on equity in 2008. This corresponds to an over earnings of \$1,433,817 for 2007 and \$11,870,541 for 2008, according to PUC staff.

"Considering that (Xcel) over earned by 20 basis points for the year ending December 31, 2007 after rates were in effect for only five months, and that (Xcel) over earned by 174 basis points for the year ending December

31, 2008, there is reason to conclude that (Xcel) will continue to over earn," PUC staff said in its proposed complaint.

Based on its analysis, staff is asking the Commission to consider implementing a 5.18 percent across-the-board reduction in natural gas rates, and requiring Xcel to file a new natural gas rate case by the end of the year. Staff is also proposing the establishment of an annual earnings test to mitigate any negative impact on retail customers related to over earnings.

(Continued on page 4)

Rules establish new DIA taxi fares, towing charges

New flat-rate taxi fares between Denver International Airport (DIA) and three Denver-metro area zones took effect on July 30. The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) approved the fare increases as part of recent changes to its transportation rules.

Under PUC rules, all taxi companies serving the Denver-metro area are required to offer a uniform, non-metered fare for trips between the airport and three zones—downtown Denver, the Denver Tech Center, and Boulder. The non-metered airport rates had not been changed since 1999.

On July 30, rates for trips between DIA and downtown Denver increased from \$43 to \$51; between DIA and the Denver Tech Center increased from \$45 to \$57; and rates between DIA and Boulder went from \$70 to \$84. Any applicable airport gate fees may be added to the flat fare.

Metered rates, which apply to all other taxi fare situations, are set on a company-by-company basis and did not change.

Also as a result of the transportation rule changes, maximum allowed rates and associated charges for private property tows increased by about 10 percent. Towing carriers may charge up to \$154 for private property tows, up from the previous \$140.

The maximum allowable rate includes charges for all towing and storage services rendered, including hook-up fees, use of dollies or go-jacks, access to or release of the motor vehicle from storage, and all commissions paid.

The new rules also increased the maximum allowed release fee from \$64 to \$70 if the owner of a vehicle that is parked without authorization on private property attempts to retrieve the vehicle before it is removed.

One-way mileage charges, which may be charged in addition to the towing rate, increased from \$3.45 to \$3.80 per mile under the new rules. Storage charges for passenger vehicles increased from \$27 to \$30 per 24-hour period.

Among the other significant changes to the rules:

- The PUC may revoke the permit of towing carriers, household goods movers, limousine companies and other carriers on the first occasion of failure to comply with PUC rules or orders. A company whose permit is revoked is not eligible to apply for a new permit for one year following revocation.
- Qualification procedures for drivers under the fingerprint-based, criminal background check were strengthened and tightened.
- Common, contract and exempt carriers, including household

goods movers, cannot advertise under a name other than the one listed on their PUC registration.

- Household goods movers must provide the customer with a written “consumer advisement” prior to commencing the move or any ancillary services that generally outlines the consumer’s rights under the move.

Energy conference

(Continued from page 1)

issues, including federal preemption of siting; and **Dr. Susan Tierney**, a member of the National Commission on Energy Policy and Co-Chair of the Department of Energy Agency Review Team, will provide a view on national energy policy and legislation.

Michael Volocchi, Vice President of Global Energy Strategies for IBM, will deliver the luncheon address, “Understanding the Smart Energy Consumer.” Later in the day, an interactive breakout session will explore consumers’ opinions on various energy topics.

Additional breakout sessions will feature a forward look at the next generation of renewable energy generation; as well as the evolving definition of “baseload” capacity in utility generation.

Dr. Kristina M. Johnson, Under Secretary of Energy for the U.S. Department of Energy, will be the featured afternoon speaker. Dr. Johnson reports directly to Dr. Steven Chu, head of the Department of Energy, and is responsible for the Offices of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Environmental Management, Fossil Energy, Nuclear Energy, and Electricity Delivery & Energy Reliability.

Cost of the conference is \$125. Limited exhibition opportunities are also available. Registration will close on Tuesday, October 13. There will be no day-of-conference registration. For information on the agenda, registration or exhibiting, visit the conference website at: <http://energyoutreach.org/conf/index2009.htm>. The conference has been accredited for 7 Continuing Legal Education general credits.

PUC raises maximum for Qwest basic service

The Colorado Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has established a maximum rate of \$16.52 a month for Qwest Communication’s stand-alone basic residential telephone service, with the rate cap increasing to \$17.00 next August.

The PUC, at deliberations in July, rejected Qwest’s request to establish the rate ceiling at \$18.24 per month, instead choosing \$16.52 based on an analysis of cost changes and national price trends. If Qwest raises its residential rate to the cap, the increase will equal the 11 percent increase in national average prices since 1995, when the Colorado

legislature froze basic residential rates at \$14.88.

A law passed in 2008 lifted the statutory rate cap and gave the PUC the authority to determine the maximum basic residential rate based on each provider’s costs and revenues, the average national price for comparable service, and flexible-pricing options.

The PUC’s decision allows Qwest to make an immediate filing to raise the basic stand-alone residential rate up to \$1.62 more per month, or about 11 percent. A year from now, Qwest would be able to raise its residential rate up to

the \$17 cap, if it chooses to do so.

The PUC also approved an 11 percent increase in the rate cap for basic measured service and basic message service. Under measured service, customers pay a lower flat monthly rate and then a per-minute charge for each local call. Under message service, customers pay a lower flat monthly charge and can make up to 50 free local calls each month, paying a per-call charge for any calls over 50.

Customers who purchase Qwest residential service as part of a “bundle” or a package with several features, are not affected by the changes.

07–08 gas earnings

(Continued from page 3)

The PUC in August issued a letter to Xcel giving the company 30 days to respond to the allegations set forth in staff’s proposed formal complaint. Once the response is received, PUC Commissioners will determine whether to go forward with the formal complaint proceeding.

Conference Agenda

(Continued from page 1)

- 9 a.m. Leading Colorado Forward**
- 9:30 a.m. A View from Washington D.C.**
Dr. Susan Tierney
Managing Principal, Analysis Group; Member of the National Commission On Energy Policy and Co-Chair of the Department of Energy Agency Review Team
- 10 a.m. Networking Break**
- 10:30 a.m. Breakout Sessions**
- The Next Generation of Renewables**
Speakers:
- **Bob Hawsey**
Director for Renewable Electricity and End Use Systems National Renewable Energy Lab (NREL)
 - **Ellen Petrill**
Director of Public/Private Partnerships Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI)
 - **Frank Prager**
Vice President of Environmental Policy Xcel Energy
- Moderator: **Matt Baker**
PUC Commissioner
- Transmission Siting: Whose Decision is It?**
Speakers:
- **Marc Spitzer**
Commissioner, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
 - **William Burnidge**
Northeast Colorado Project Director The Nature Conservancy
 - **Dan Hodges**
Executive Director, Colorado Association of Municipal Utilities
 - **Matt Heimerich**
County Commissioner, Crowley County

Moderator: **Jim Tarpey**
PUC Commissioner

Noon Lunch

12:30 p.m. Lighting the Way: Understanding the Smart Energy Consumer
Speaker: **Michael Volocchi**
Vice President, Global Energy Strategies IBM

1:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions

The Mind of the Consumer: An Interactive Exercise

Facilitator:

- **Colorado Civic Canopy:**
A Real Time Survey

Moderator: **Bill Lewis**
The Consumer Counsel

Is Baseload an Outdated Concept?

Speakers:

- **Jackie Sargent**
Generation Dispatch & Power Marketing Director Black Hills Energy
- **Marc Peterson**
Western USA Power & Water Sales Manager, GE Energy
- **Stephen Doig**
Energy & Resources Vice President Rocky Mountain Institute
- **Mac McLennan**
Senior Vice President, External Affairs Tri-State Generation & Transmission

Moderator: **Polly Page**
Former PUC Commissioner

3 p.m. Networking Break

3:20 p.m. A Vision for the Future
Dr. Kristina M. Johnson
Under Secretary of Energy, U.S. Department of Energy

4:30 p.m. Conference Ends

