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Subject: Public hearings set in Idaho Power rate case

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
For Immediate Release
Case No. IPC-E-03-13
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Public hearings set in Idaho Power rate case

Boise - Public hearings are scheduled in five southern Idaho communities regarding Idaho Power Company's request to the Idaho Public Utilities Commission for an average 17.7 percent rate increase.

Idaho Power filed an application to the commission for authority to raise rates last October. Since then, commission staff members have conducted public workshops and the commission has received testimony from the company, commission staff and other intervenors in the case. At the public hearings, citizens will be able to provide testimony to the three commissioners who will decide the case. Hearings are slated for Pocatello, Jerome, McCall, Payette and Boise.

If Idaho Power's application were granted in full, rates would increase an average of 17.7 percent, but the increase would vary by customer class because the costs of serving each class differ. For residential customers, the increase would be 19.9 percent; for small commercial, 21 percent; for large commercial, 15 percent; for industrial, 13.9 percent and for irrigation, 25 percent. Included as part of the average 17.7 percent increase is a proposed increase in the customer service charge for residential and small commercial customers from \$2.51 per month to \$10.

Those rate increases to generate an additional \$85.5 million in revenue Idaho Power says it needs to meet the demands of a growing customer base and significant system upgrades since the company's last rate case in 1993.

Commission staff, which filed testimony last week, is proposing a revenue increase of \$14.8 million, which would increase rates an average 3.06 percent. Under staff's proposal, residential rates would increase by 2.5 percent; small commercial, 4.2 percent; large commercial 1.2 percent, industrial, no increase and irrigation, 15 percent. Staff proposes an increase in the residential customer service charge from \$2.51 per month to \$3.

The company proposes an annual increase in revenue of about \$86 million while commission staff proposes about \$15 million. The commission is free to adopt, reject or modify proposals from staff as well as other intervenors in the case.

Location, dates and times for the public hearings are as follows:

- * Pocatello, Monday, March 15, 1 p.m., City Hall, 911 N. Seventh St.
- * Jerome, Monday, March 15, 6:30 p.m., Sawtooth Inn, 2653 S. Lincoln.
- * McCall, Wednesday, March 17, 6:30 p.m., Best Western, 415 N. Third St.
- * Payette, Thursday, March 18, 2:30 p.m., Payette High School auditorium, 1500 Sixth Ave. South.
- * Boise, Wednesday, March 31, 6:30 p.m., Idaho Public Utilities Commission hearing room, 472 W. Washington St.

Citizens can also submit written comments through April 30 from the commission's Web site at www.puc.state.id.us. Click on "Comments and Question," insert the case number, IPC-E-03-13, and enter your comments. Comments can also be mailed to the commission at P.O. Box

83720, Boise, ID, 83720-0074, or faxed to 208-334-3762.

All the documents regarding this case, including testimony from the company, commission staff and intervenors can be accessed from the commission Web site. Click on "Idaho Power rate case," in the upper right-hand corner. The documents are also available for public inspection at commission offices at 472 W. Washington St, Boise.

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