

IDAHO PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Case No. INT-G-04-1, Order No. 29656

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Commission accepts Intermountain Gas growth plan

Boise – The Idaho Public Utilities Commission is accepting a five-year gas procurement plan for Boise-based Intermountain Gas Company.

The company, which serves 242,000 customers in 74 southern Idaho communities, anticipates its load growth at about 4 percent per year over the next five years. The company's residential and commercial customers increased 5 percent during the first quarter of fiscal year 2004. The company has about 9,500 miles of transmission, distribution and service lines, with more than 350 miles of those lines added in fiscal year 2003 to accommodate the company's growing customer base.

Without an increase in capacity, the company says it will fall short of meeting its delivery needs during peak use by about winter of 2007. The company plans to utilize a number of options to increase the amount of gas delivered, the capacity on its pipelines and its storage capabilities.

Commission staff noted the company must file an enhanced risk management policy by Dec. 20 that will guide its gas purchase strategies.

Since 1994, Intermountain Gas has been required to file a document every two years with the commission outlining how the utility plans to meet customer demand over the next five years at the lowest cost possible. The plan addresses both supply and demand-side management (conservation) issues. Intermountain Gas conducted two public workshops in Boise and Pocatello before finalizing the plan.

The commission determines whether to accept the plan, but acceptance should not be interpreted to mean approval of the plan or as a judgment of the prudence of any transactions undertaken as a result of the plan. The plan is the baseline against which the utility's performance will ordinarily be measured. The utility may and should deviate from the plan when presented with responsible and reliable opportunities to further lower its planned system cost.

A copy of the plan as well the commission's order and other documents related to this case, is available on the commission's Web site as www.puc.state.id.us. Click on "File Room" and then on "Gas Cases" and scroll down to Case No. INT-G-04-1. Copies are also available for review at the commission offices at 472 W. Washington St. in Boise.

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