

Jean Jewell

From: Tonya Clark
Sent: Friday, May 09, 2003 7:43 AM
To: Jean Jewell
Subject: FW: Comment on IPC-E-03-5 (Idaho Power rate decrease proposal)

-----Original Message-----

From: Sharon n Mary [mailto:sharmarl@mindspring.com]
Sent: Thursday, May 08, 2003 5:16 PM
To: Bill Eastlake; Lou Ann Westerfield; Lynn Anderson; Tonya Clark; Gene Fadness
Subject: Comment on IPC-E-03-5 (Idaho Power rate decrease proposal)

I've been following media coverage and Idaho Power customer flyers regarding two issues: the cost of electricity, and Idaho Power's Green Power Program.

My suggestion, in response to the current request for a rate decrease, is for Idaho Power to buy ALL of its power from "green" resources while keeping the rates at their current level (or lower, if possible).

Based upon the information I've seen, this appears completely do-able!

The "Proposed Rate Reduction" flyer from Idaho Power (dated 4/15/03 and included in our 4/21/03 monthly bill) stated: "...if the PCA is approved as requested, a typical monthly residential bill for 1,200 kilowatt-hours would decrease from \$85 to \$69. This decrease would become effective May 16, 2003..."

A recent "the Green Power program: A Resource of Choice" flyer from Idaho Power states "Our average residential customer uses 1,200 kilowatt-hours of electricity each month. If you were to match 100 percent of your electricity with green power, it would cost about \$15 per month in addition to your electricity charge."

Thus, it sounds like a company-wide conversion to 100% green power (i.e. green power for 100% of Idaho Power customers) would mean the average customer's bill would go from \$85 to \$84 per month (\$69 for the proposed/decreased amount, plus \$15 for green power). This would still reflect a slight decrease while providing a wonderful environmental benefit for all customers.

Here's even more reason for this to be done at the Idaho Power level (i.e. for all customers, thus providing real change for the environment and our collective health), than at the customer level (i.e. through a voluntary "donate some \$ each month" campaign):

"Lori Bird, a senior energy analyst with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Golden, Colo., said there will always be a portion of the population that will not support renewable energy because they believe it's more expensive than traditional power." "Green Power" article by Ken Dey, The Idaho Statesman, April 6, 2003. Of course, if customers must "add" an amount to their monthly bill, then green electricity IS more expensive than traditional sources - or at least such a payment method increases the perception that green costs more!

"Theresa Drake, who heads up the [Green Power] program for Idaho Power, would ultimately like to see at least 3,800 customers, about 1 percent of total customers, participating." Just 1 percent??? Surely Idaho Power has

employees in leadership positions who see the wisdom of generating ALL of their electricity from green sources such as solar, geothermal, ocean waves, wind, and fuel cells using "green" hydrogen (for example: via wind turbines separating water molecules, rather than derived from natural gas).

Also, I'd imagine that a "100% green power" policy at Idaho Power would help the company's bottom line, since green power is more stable and therefore wouldn't pose as many surprises in between rate adjustment proposals. According to the same April 6 article in the Statesman: "...unlike traditional power generation, the price of producing green power isn't dependent on the volatile price for fossil fuels. Bird said customers in a green power program in Austin, Texas, found out the benefits of renewable energy during the recent energy crisis. Customers in the program were paying a set price per kilowatt for their green energy, which at the outset of the program was higher than energy produced with natural gas. But during the energy crisis, when gas prices soared, the renewable energy suddenly became very affordable."

I realize that this suggestion is likely "too late", since some might think it too difficult to put positive spin on only a slight decrease since a large decrease has already been publicly proposed. However, I would like to strongly suggest that the PUC and Idaho Power work closely to develop the most aggressive possible "green" program - this year if possible, and definitely for years to come.

If my "100% green power company-wide this year" suggestion can't happen for this rate adjustment cycle, please at least consider phasing in a "100% green power" policy over a specified period. For example, changing the mix to green power at a rate of 10% more green power per year would get us there in 10 years, while the voluntary enrollment concept will apparently never get us there!

Finally, I would also like to see a requirement that Idaho Power publicly disclose on a regular basis (for example, on an annual basis at least a month or two before each requested rate adjustment is publicly announced) the current sources of power, along with their respective percentages ("x" percent hydro, "x" percent coal, "x" percent wind, and so forth). It would be helpful if such information were provided as a comparison to previous years, so that all customers could easily see how much progress is being made toward "greening" our electricity. (As a bonus, I suspect such a chart would encourage more of us to enroll in the voluntary program, if for some reason that has to continue due to absence of an Idaho Power commitment to our environment and health.)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Sharon Matthies
7103 Rosewood Dr.
Boise, ID 83709
208-375-9384

P.S. I have to say that statements along the lines of "well, if only 1 percent of our customers are invested in the idea of green power, then why should we as a company invest in the idea?" are simply bogus, flimsy excuses for not embracing what is clearly the right thing to do. It doesn't take a special kind of intelligence to see that coal power, and nuclear power, and even hydro power, are simply not healthy for our planet (and that includes those of us living on the planet). I'm absolutely certain that the level of voluntary enrollment in a green program does not correlate to the percentage of people who actually believe in it and desire it. For example, what if the EPA were funded through voluntary taxpayer dollars instead of as part of the federal budget? Let's say that people could add some dollars to their tax return each year in order to fund the EPA. What percentage of taxpayers

citizens would do so? And how would that correspond to the percentage of citizens who believe that the EPA should exist and that it does important work? I suspect that the numbers would be quite divergent!!!

P.P.S. I am one of the 99+ percent of customers who hasn't started participating in the Green Power Program, despite the fact that I'm quite a tree hugger (buy organic food whenever possible; buy recycled paper products whenever possible; don't use toxic chemicals in the yard or the house; my 13-year-old car gets 30/40 and my next car will be a hybrid or other such vehicle that gets much, much better mileage; belong to a variety of progressive non-profits; invest in socially responsible mutual funds; continue to educate myself on green products and buy more and more of them each year as a percentage of our household consumption; recycle everything possible and constantly work to reduce material consumption to begin with; keep the house around 68 in the winter; run the AC maybe one or two weeks in the summer; etc.!!!). So why haven't I yet enrolled in the Green Power program? I'm simply not convinced that the extra \$5, \$10 or \$15 per month would even buy green power, and I totally don't get why Idaho Power isn't aggressively investing in the conversion to green either by itself, or else right alongside the customers. Also, if all we'll ever get is one tiny percent of green power, then I'd rather invest my \$180 per year (\$15 per month times 12) in other green ways. On the other hand, if Idaho Power said something (or the PUC required something) like: "If x percent of customers support green power, then Idaho Power will support green power by a factor of 10 - or 20 - or 30..." and if there were regular public reports showing the conversion to green power really happening - then I'd start adding the money to my monthly payment.