



## NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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### **PUC TO TAKE PUBLIC COMMENT ON ATMOS GAS RATE REQUEST**

DENVER – The Colorado Public Utilities Commission will hold public hearings in Buena Vista and Greeley this month to take public comment on a request by Atmos Energy to increase its gas distribution rates by \$3.93 million annually.

The public comment hearings will be from 4-6 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 10, in the Buena Vista Public Library meeting room, 131 Linderman Ave.; and from 4-6 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 15, in the Weld County Centennial Center, 915 10<sup>th</sup> St. in Greeley.

Atmos 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 addition to the proposed revenue increase, Atmos is asking to:

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

Those unable to attend the public hearings may submit written comments on the proposal. Comments should be sent to the PUC, 1560 Broadway, Suite 250, Denver, CO 80202, or submitted electronically via the PUC website. Comments should be addressed to Docket No. 09AL-507G and should be received by Nov. 6.

*DORA is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the marketplace and is committed to promoting a fair and competitive business environment in Colorado. Consumer protection is our mission.*

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