



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contact:

MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

Julie Maus
Director of Corporate Communications
417-625-5101
jmaus@empiredistrict.com

INVESTOR RELATIONS

Dale Harrington
Secretary & Director of Investor Relations
417-625-4222
dharrington@empiredistrict.com

THE EMPIRE DISTRICT ELECTRIC COMPANY ANNOUNCES NEW RATES FOR MISSOURI CUSTOMERS

JOPLIN, MO – June 24, 2015 – The Empire District Electric Company (NYSE:EDE) announced today that the Missouri Public Service Commission (MPSC) has granted new rates for Missouri customers, effective by July 26, 2015. The order approves an annual increase in base revenues of about \$17.1 million or 3.88 percent, consistent with the non-unanimous stipulation and agreement filed April 8, 2015. A residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours per month will see an increase of approximately \$8 per month or about 6.5 percent. The increase to residential customers reflects the MPSC adoption of the position recommended by Midwest Energy Consumers Group (MECG). MECG represents a subset of industrial consumers.

The order establishes a tracking mechanism for expenses related to the Riverton 12 long-term maintenance contract; continues tracking of pension and other post-employment benefit expenses; and discontinues tracking of vegetation management expenses and Iatan 2, Iatan Common and Plum Point operating and maintenance costs.

In addition, the order provides for the tracking and recovery of a portion of future changes in total transmission expense through the Fuel Adjustment Charge. Empire's calculations show this to be approximately 34 percent of total Southwest Power Pool transmission expense. Empire's current level of funding for energy efficiency programs will continue.

(more)

According to Brad Beecher, President and CEO, “We believe the MPSC order represents a fair decision. The order allows Empire to recover the cost of environmental upgrades made to the Asbury Power Plant and the new maintenance contract for Riverton 12. These investments are necessary to comply with new EPA standards.”

Beecher adds, “We are pleased with the improved ability to recover changes in transmission costs. The order is also reflective of lower fuel costs. As a result, our 2015 earnings per share guidance of \$1.30 to \$1.45, issued in February 2015, remains unchanged.”

Based in Joplin, Missouri, The Empire District Electric Company (NYSE:EDE) is an investor-owned utility providing electric, natural gas (through its wholly owned subsidiary The Empire District Gas Company), and water service, with approximately 218,000 customers in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. A subsidiary of the Company also provides fiber optic services. For more information regarding Empire, visit www.empiredistrict.com.

###

The earnings guidance range assumes 30-year average weather, overall system energy growth of less than 1%, and increased operating costs, driven by a full year of service from the Asbury AQCS upgrade. Other factors that may impact earnings include variations in customer growth and usage projections and unanticipated or unplanned events that may impact operating and maintenance costs. The effects of assumptions and other factors evaluated for the purpose of providing guidance are not necessarily independent of one another, and the combination of effects can cause individual impacts smaller or larger than the indicated guidance range.

Certain matters discussed in this press release are “forward-looking statements” intended to qualify for the safe harbor from liability established by the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Such statements address future plans, objectives, expectations, and events or conditions concerning various matters. Actual results in each case could differ materially from those currently anticipated in such statements, by reason of the factors noted in our filings with the SEC, including the most recent Form 10-K and 10-Q.