



News Release

Media Contacts:

Janaan Harp 402-680-8928
Black Hills Media Line 866-243-9002

**BLACK HILLS ENERGY NAMES LAURA ROUSSELL AS
COMPANY'S IOWA 2009 LEADER OF THE YEAR**

*Roussell's recent leadership initiatives include coordination of the
Dubuque Area Weatherization Challenge and Dubuque's Walk for Warmth*

DUBUQUE, Iowa, Oct. 22, 2009 – Black Hills Energy is proud to announce Laura Roussell, external affairs manager located in Dubuque, as the recipient of the company's 2009 Iowa Leader of the Year Award. The annual award recognizes an Iowa natural gas employee that has demonstrated leadership in projects that are above and beyond the normal scope of the employee's responsibilities.

"Both employees and entire communities seem to appreciate Laura's leadership and respect her initiative," said Mark Ernst, operations manager for Black Hills Energy in Dubuque. "She has a way of exciting others about getting involved in their communities and lending their time and talents to important extracurricular activities. We are recognizing Laura for coordinating several significant community initiatives in our service areas; and specifically for her efforts in spearheading the annual Dubuque Area Weatherization challenge," continued Ernst.

Each fall, Black Hills Energy Weatherization Teams provide weatherization services at no charge to selected homeowners in preparation for the winter heating season. However, Roussell has taken the companywide program one step further – by collaborating with local Dubuque organizations and businesses, Black Hills Energy is able to weatherize many more homes.

By pulling together support from local groups, Roussell has coordinated the Dubuque Area Weatherization challenge to include 96 homes in 2007 and 106 homes in 2008. And so far, there are approximately 130 homes scheduled to be weatherized in Dubuque this Saturday. Roussell is co-chair of the Dubuque Area Weatherization challenge along with Tom Stovall, executive director of Operation New View Community Action Agency. There are also several other committee members who dedicate their time to this initiative.

"This weatherization effort is much bigger and we can provide more benefits to a larger group of homeowners when we partner with others in the community, and Laura's initiative has been critical to its success," said Ernst. The weatherization partnership in Dubuque has now caught on in Maquoketa,

an Iowa community also in Black Hills Energy's service territory, where 30 homes will be weatherized this winter. In addition, Roussell encouraged the Cresco Chamber of Commerce to submit an application for the Iowa Utility Board's \$2,500 Iowa Weatherization Challenge Community Grant, which they received and will now partner with Black Hills Energy to weatherize 20 homes in Cresco this year.

"Her energy and passion inspires others into action," said Ernst. "In both her words and what she accomplishes, Laura lives Black Hills Energy's mission of – *Improving live with energy.*"

Roussell is also a key contributor to the Dubuque Walk for Warmth, which is a partnership between Black Hills Energy and Hempstead High School Leadership Club to raise awareness and funds for energy assistance. The third annual walk is Saturday, Nov. 7 and community residents and Dubuque-area college and high school students will be invited to participate. The \$5 entry fee to participate will go towards Black Hills **Cares**, the company's energy assistance program that matches customer and company contributions dollar-for-dollar for residential energy assistance. In Iowa, Black Hills **Cares** funds are administered and distributed by the Iowa Community Action Partnership.

Black Hills Energy serves 149,500 natural gas customers in 130 Iowa communities, and is a proud recipient of the U.S. EPA 2009 Energy Star® Leadership in Housing Award. Black Hills Energy is part of Black Hills Corp. (NYSE: BKH) — a diversified energy company with a tradition of exemplary service and a vision to be the energy partner of choice — is based in Rapid City, S.D., with corporate offices in Golden, Colo., and Omaha, Neb. The company serves 759,000 natural gas and electric utility customers in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming. The company's non-regulated businesses generate wholesale electricity, produce natural gas, oil and coal, and market energy. Black Hills employees partner to produce results that improve life with energy. More information is available at www.blackhillscorp.com.

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