



## News Release

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## **BLACK HILLS POWER'S ELECTRIC OPERATIONS PREPARED FOR WINTER WEATHER**

RAPID CITY, SD December 22, 2009 – The National Weather Service in Rapid City has issued a winter storm watch effective Tuesday, Dec. 22, through Thursday Dec. 24 and Black Hills Power is prepared should there be weather-related electric service outages.

Although a key component of the company's preparedness includes constant monitoring of weather forecasts, much of the company's ability to respond quickly is the result of actions taken long before a storm actually hits, including:

- Alerting and being able to mobilize additional Black Hills Power line and service crews from surrounding areas to provide assistance.
- Coordinating efforts with local emergency officials.
- Providing ongoing service restoration updates to customers.

"We regularly inspect and maintain our system to ensure reliability and safety, which is a top priority for Black Hills Power," said Chuck Loomis, operating vice president for Black Hills Power.

Regardless of whether power is on or off, never touch or attempt to pick up a fallen power line, and keep children and pets away. Assume any downed power line is energized. Do not attempt to rescue someone in contact with a power line. If you see a downed power line, immediately call Black Hills Power's emergency toll-free number: 800-839-8197.

### **Black Hills Power offers the following tips to help customers prepare at home for winter storms:**

- If any member of your family has a medical condition, plan and make arrangements to have their specific needs met in the event electricity is not available for an extended period during a storm.
- Prepare for a storm by setting up an emergency drawer or kit that is easy to access, even in darkness. Stock it with fresh batteries, a battery-powered radio and a flashlight. Avoid using candles, lanterns or oil lamps because of the risk of fire. Be sure everyone in the family knows where the emergency drawer or kit is located.
- Unplug or protect sensitive computer and electronic equipment with a high-quality surge protector.

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### **If the power does go out, Black Hills Power offers the following advice to customers:**

- First see if your neighbors have lights. If they do, check for blown fuses or a tripped circuit breaker in your home. If your neighbors don't have lights or you can't locate the problem, contact Black Hills Power immediately — day or night — by calling Black Hills Power at 800-839-8197. Black Hills Power's outage reporting system is automated; when customers go through the process over the phone, their outage information is logged, and Black Hills Power will dispatch crews to restore power as quickly as possible. .
- Leave a lamp or radio switched on so you'll know when electric service is restored.
- Flip your porch-light switch "on." This will help speed the power restoration process, as Black Hills Power will be able to quickly confirm that your power is back on without knocking on your door or checking the meter.
- Do not open your refrigerator or freezer more than is necessary. Undisturbed food will remain frozen in most freezers for as long as 48 hours.
- Do not use charcoal grills to heat your home or for cooking indoors. Dangerous carbon monoxide fumes can build up and cause serious injury or death.
- If you use a portable generator, follow the manufacturer's safety and operating guidelines. Be sure to operate the generator in a well-ventilated area. Never operate a generator inside your home or in your garage. Again, dangerous carbon monoxide fumes can build up and cause serious injury or death.
- Because carbon monoxide is odorless, colorless and tasteless, have a carbon monoxide detector with fresh batteries installed to warn you of potentially dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

### ABOUT BLACK HILLS POWER

Black Hills Power is the legacy utility business of Black Hills Corp. (NYSE: BKH) and has been delivering energy for more than 125 years. The electric utility serves 69,000 customers in 20 communities in western South Dakota, northeastern Wyoming and southeastern Montana. Black Hills Corp. — 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 Denver, 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](http://www.blackhillscorp.com).

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