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### **BLACK HILLS ENERGY CONDUCTS NATURAL GAS FIRE SAFETY TRAINING IN WAYNE, NEB., FOR 5 AREA FIRE DEPARTMENTS**

**NORFOLK, Neb., AUG. 12, 2010** – Nebraska natural gas service provider Black Hills Energy conducted natural gas fire safety training Tuesday for the Wayne (Neb.) Volunteer Fire Department and four other fire departments from the surrounding area. The Wayne department hosted the event at its station.

Approximately 45 area firefighters from the Wayne Volunteer Fire Department and fire departments in Winside, Neb.; Wakefield, Neb.; Winnebago, Neb.; and Jackson, Neb./Dakota City, Neb., participated in the natural gas education and safety training session led by Black Hills Energy’s natural gas operations trainers. The training provided firefighters the opportunity to practice techniques to effectively contain and extinguish actual natural gas fires under controlled circumstances using portable fire extinguishers and hose streams.

“Although natural gas is a safe fuel, and fires are rare, experience is the best way to learn how to fight this type of fire, and it’s much better to gain that experience during a training exercise instead of during an actual emergency,” said Scott Zaruba, operations manager, North Region, Black Hills Energy. “This training is a partnership between Black Hills Energy and the local fire departments in a joint effort to protect the public. These sessions provide firefighters with the experience they need to effectively extinguish these types of fires if one should ever occur.”

The Wayne training session was one of a series of fire safety seminars that Black Hills Energy has offered to firefighters throughout Nebraska for a number of years. Another one is being held today in Gretna, Neb. Training sessions about natural gas releases and fires provide hands-on experience and instruction for firefighters. These sessions also educate firefighters about the various characteristics of natural gas so they can safely and effectively manage potential natural gas incidents in the future.

In one exercise, firefighters used hose streams and chemical extinguishers to put out ignited natural gas fueled by an open gas pipe underneath an old automobile. In another, they practiced additional techniques to safely contain and extinguish different types of natural gas fires, including simulated pipeline punctures.

**Black Hills/Nebraska Gas Utility Company, LLC d/b/a Black Hills Energy**

Black Hills Energy serves 196,000 natural gas customers in 106 eastern Nebraska communities. Black Hills Energy is a subsidiary of Black Hills Corp. — a diversified energy company with a tradition of exemplary service and a vision to be the energy partner of choice — based in Rapid City, S.D., with corporate offices in Denver and Omaha, Neb. Black Hills Corp. serves 763,300 natural gas and electric utility customers in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wyoming, and its non-regulated businesses generate wholesale electricity, produce natural gas, oil and coal, and market energy. Black Hills' 2,200 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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