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BLACK HILLS ENERGY BRINGING MORE EFFICIENT, ACCURATE METER READING TO SOUTHWEST KANSAS

LIBERAL, Kan., Feb. 13, 2012 – Black Hills Energy will deliver more efficient service to southwest Kansas by expanding its Automated Meter Reading system to 33,000 of the company’s natural gas customers in the area. There is no direct charge to the customer for the AMR upgrade.

Black Hills representatives currently are equipping meters in Garden City, Liberal and ten other towns in the region with a small transmitter to efficiently and effectively send monthly meter readings to a passing company vehicle using harmless radio waves. The contractors will upgrade service to Dodge City next, with the project scheduled for completion in May.

“We are making significant investments in our Kansas natural gas system to automate the meter reading process,” said southwest Kansas Gas Operations Manager Lon Meyer. “This technology increases operational efficiencies and improves the service that we provide to our customers. With AMR, utility workers no longer need access to a customer’s property each month to read the meters. Locked gates and protective pets no longer block the path to an accurate reading, which translates to an accurate monthly statement.”

Transmitter installation does not require a service interruption in most cases. About 650 of the 33,000 meters must be exchanged, requiring a brief service interruption and indoor access to relight pilots on gas appliances, water heaters and furnaces. Those customers will receive a letter describing the appointment process.

The project’s scope makes it practical to again have utility contractor Kore Services complete the installations. “Kore demands the same dedication to safety and customer service of its employees as we do,” Meyer said. Kore employees wear a “BHE Contractor” safety vest and carry identification provided by Black Hills. Their vehicles will carry “Contractor For Black Hills Energy” signs.

The company previously introduced the more efficient service to 65,000 Black Hills customers in Lawrence and Wichita. With completion of the southwest Kansas project, virtually all 110,000 Black Hills Energy-Kansas Gas customers in 56 Kansas communities will benefit from the more efficient, accurate meter reading that AMR provides. Outside Garden City and Liberal, installers have been or will be visiting Copeland, Elkhart, Fowler, Hugoton, Meade, Moscow, Plains, Rolla, Satanta and Sublette.

Customers with questions can call Black Hills Energy’s 24-hour Customer Service Center toll-free at 888-890-5554. Information also is available at www.blackhillsenergy.com/customers/amr

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

Black Hills Energy serves 110,000 natural gas customers in 56 Kansas 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 Papillion, Neb. Black Hills Corp. serves 762,000 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' 2,100 employees partner to produce results that improve life with energy. More information is available at www.blackhillscorp.com.

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