



Board of County Commissioners

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August 12, 2020

Colorado Public Utilities Commission

1560 Broadway, Suite 250

Denver, CO 80202

submitted online: <https://puc.colorado.gov/>

The Eagle County Board of Commissioners thanks the Colorado Public Utilities Commission for their review of Demand Side Management (DSM) plans, and respectfully submits this letter in response to the proposed DSM plan changes submitted by Black Hills Energy. We request that funding to support affordable in-home energy assessments be included as a component of the Black Hills Energy 2021-2023 Demand Side Management Plan.

Energy audits to show how homeowners can save money have long been a foundational step of identifying and implementing cost-saving energy improvements. In-home energy assessments are critical because they provide education and set in motion home energy improvements. Over the past two years, each Black Hills Energy customer in Eagle County who has implemented recommendations from their in-home energy assessment has reduced natural gas use by 155 therms, reduced GHG emissions by one ton, and saved \$233 per year on utility bills. (Source: Energy Smart Colorado)

In addition, in-home assessments also identify health and safety problems in homes, mostly resulting from natural gas appliances. Energy Smart Colorado, which provides marketing, management and data services for Eagle County's energy efficiency programs, reports that 15% or more of the in-home energy assessments in our region have identified significant health and safety risks, including natural gas leaks and carbon monoxide inside the home from gas water heaters, furnaces and boilers. Northwest Colorado Council of Governments (NWCCOG), which provides weatherization services for manufactured and mobile homes in our region, estimates that over 50% of the homes they study through in-home assessments have these same natural gas appliance problems that threaten the health and safety of residents.

The Energy Smart Colorado in-home assessments include testing for natural gas leaks, carbon monoxide, and measuring the air leakage and portion of indoor air that is exchanged each hour with fresh air from outside. These tests are part of the Building Performance Institutes national protocol and are all critical components of the Energy Smart home energy assessment - and they can only be provided through in-home visits.



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Continued funding from Black Hills Energy is also important because it helps to make in-home energy assessments affordable for Eagle County residents. In-home energy assessments in Eagle County are managed by the Energy Smart Colorado program at Walking Mountains Science Center. The total cost of the assessment is \$400, with \$100 paid by the resident and the remainder paid by Eagle County and the utility providers. Loss of this funding support from Black Hills Energy will create a funding gap of \$30,000 per year.

The Eagle County Board of Commissioners asks that the Colorado Public Utilities Commission consider the importance of in-home energy assessments for supporting cost-saving energy improvements and protecting the health and safety of our residents. We ask for the inclusion of funding to support affordable in-home energy assessments as a component of the Black Hills Energy 2021-2023 Demand Side Management Plan.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathy Chandler-Henry

Chair

Matt Scherr

Commissioner

Jeanne McQueeney

Commissioner