Service Date: December 1, 1997

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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IN THE MATTER Of The Application Of CUT BANK GAS COMPANY For Authority To Increase Charges for Natural Gas Service.	))))	UTILITY DIVISION DOCKET NO. D97.11.224 INTERIM ORDER NO. 6029

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Cut Bank Gas Company(Applicant) applied to this Commission for an order authorizing an increase in the rates Applicant charges for natural gas service. The application sought authority to increase rates in order to reflect all costs resulting from Montana Power Company's (Company) Docket No. D97.11.212.

2. On November 25, 1997, the Commission's Order No. 6026a granted Montana Power Company a natural gas rate increase.

3. Order No. 6026a will result in an increase for purchased gas costs to Applicant.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Applicant is a "public utility" within the meaning of Section 69-3-101, MCA.

2. The Montana Public Service Commission properly exercises jurisdiction over the Applicant's Montana operations pursuant to Title 69, Chapter 3, MCA.

3. Section 69-3-304, MCA, provides in part, "The Commission may, in its discretion, temporarily approve increases or decreases pending a hearing or final decision."

4. The rate levels and spread approved herein are reasonable. The rebate provisions of Section 69-3-304, MCA protect ratepayers in the event that any revenue authorized by this order are found to be unjustified in the final order in this Docket.

ORDER

1. Applicant is hereby granted interim relief reflecting Findings of Fact in this order.

BY ORDER OF THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

DAVE FISHER, Chairman

NANCY McCAFFREE, Vice Chair

BOB ANDERSON, Commissioner

DANNY OBERG, Commissioner

BOB ROWE, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Kathlene M. Anderson
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)

NOTE: Any interested party may request that the Commission reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See 38.2.4806, ARM.