



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE EMPIRE DISTRICT ELECTRIC COMPANY FILES FOR NEW MISSOURI ELECTRIC RATES

JOPLIN, MO – October 29, 2009 – The Empire District Electric Company (NYSE:EDE) announced today that it has filed a request with the Missouri Public Service Commission (MPSC) for changes in rates for its Missouri electric customers. The Company is seeking an annual increase in revenues of approximately \$68.17 million or about 19.6 percent. If approved, a residential customer using 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity would experience a monthly increase of approximately \$19.21. The Company is also asking to continue with the Fuel Adjustment Clause that was approved in its last case.

In making the announcement, Bill Gipson, president and CEO, stated, "We are seeking new rates to begin recovery of the investment we have made or are making to our electric system, specifically environmental upgrades at Iatan Unit 1 and new generating units Iatan 2 and the Plum Point Generating Station, plus the annual operating costs associated with these units. These additions will allow Empire to continue to provide reliable service to its customers with a balanced mix of resources."

The Iatan 1 environmental upgrades and the Iatan 2 addition are included in Empire's long-term and least-cost energy plan that was approved by the Missouri Public Service Commission in August 2005. At that time, the Commission stated, "The Agreement strikes a reasonable and appropriate balance between the interests of Empire's customers and shareholders."

(more)

APPENDIX 2

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After today's filing with the MPSC, an extensive audit of Empire's operations, a public hearing, and an evidentiary hearing will be held. The Company anticipates that any new rates approved would not become effective until the fall of 2010.

Based in Joplin, Missouri, The Empire District Electric Company (NYSE: EDE) is an investor-owned, regulated utility providing electricity, natural gas (through its wholly owned subsidiary The Empire District Gas Company), and water service, with approximately 215,000 customers in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. A subsidiary of the company provides fiber optic services. For more information regarding Empire, visit www.empiredistrict.com.

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Certain matters discussed in this press release are "forward-looking statements" intended to qualify for the safe harbor from liability established by the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Such statements address future plans, objectives, expectations, and events or conditions concerning various matters. Actual results in each case could differ materially from those currently anticipated in such statements, by reason of the factors noted in our filings with the SEC, including the most recent Form 10-K and Form 10-Q.