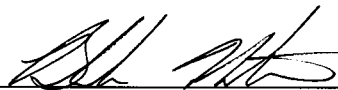


**AFFIDAVIT OF BLAKE A. MERTENS**

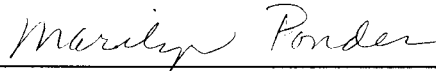
STATE OF MISSOURI )  
 ) ss  
COUNTY OF JASPER )

On the 2 day of April, 2008, before me appeared Blake A. Mertens, to me personally known, who, being by me first duly sworn, states that he is the Manager of Strategic Projects of The Empire District Electric Company and acknowledges that he has read the above and foregoing document and believes that the statements therein are true and correct to the best of his information, knowledge and belief.



Blake A. Mertens

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2 day of April, 2008.



Notary Public

My commission expires: June 27, 2009.

