

**STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
JEFFERSON CITY
October 12, 2000**

CASE NO: EM-2000-369

Office of the Public Counsel
P.O. Box 7800
Jefferson City, MO 65102

**James C. Swearengen/Paul A.
Boudreau/Dean Cooper/Gary Duffy**
Brydon, Swearengen & England, P. C.
P. O. Box 456
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0456

William A. Jolley
Jolley, Walsh, Hurley & Raisher
204 West Linwood
Kansas City, MO 64111

Jeffrey A. Keevil
Stewart & Keevil Law Offices
1001 Cherry St., Suite 302
Columbia, MO 65201

James B. Deutsch
Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, L.C.
308 East High Street, Suite 301
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Leslie Jackson Parrette, Jr.
Utilicorp Inc.
20 W. 9th Street
Kansas City, MO 64105

General Counsel
Missouri Public Service Commission
P.O. Box 360
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Shelley A. Woods
Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 899
Jefferson City, MO 65102

James J. Cook
Union Electric Company d/b/a AmerenUE
P. O. Box 66149 (MC 1310)
St. Louis, MO 63166

Stuart W. Conrad
Finnegan, Conrad & Peterson
3100 Broadway, 1209 Penntower Office
Kansas City, MO 64111

Enclosed find certified copy of an ORDER in the above-numbered case(s).

Sincerely,



Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

In the Matter of the Joint Application of)
UtiliCorp United Inc. and The Empire)
District Electric Company for Authority to)
Merge The Empire District Electric Company) Case No. EM-2000-369
with and into UtiliCorp United Inc., and,)
in Connection Therewith, Certain Other)
Related Transactions)

ORDER ESTABLISHING TIME IN WHICH TO RESPOND
TO MOTION TO ESTABLISH HEARING DATE

On October 12, 2000, UtiliCorp United Inc. (UtiliCorp) and The Empire District Electric Company (Empire) filed a motion asking the Commission to schedule a date to hear evidence regarding the issues raised by a group of retired employees of The Empire District Electric Company (Empire retirees). The Commission did not previously hear evidence on those issues because UtiliCorp, Empire and the Empire retirees announced at the hearing that they had reached an agreement in principle to resolve the areas of dispute between them. UtiliCorp reports that the parties have continued to negotiate and expect to be able to work out the final details of their agreement. However, they do not yet have a final, signed agreement. Because they wish to ensure that the Commission is able to issue a decision in this case as soon as possible, UtiliCorp and Empire ask that the Commission schedule a hearing now so that the remaining issues may be heard, if they are not resolved by agreement of the parties. UtiliCorp and Empire's motion indicates that counsel for UtiliCorp and Empire has discussed this motion with counsel for the Empire retirees and reports that the Empire retirees do not object to the relief requested.

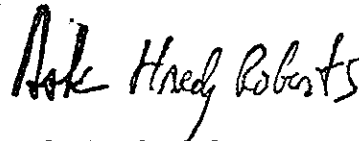
So that the Commission may promptly consider their request for the establishment of a hearing date, UtiliCorp and Empire request that the Commission shorten the time for filing responses to their motion to October 16. The Commission does wish to act quickly on UtiliCorp and Empire's motion. However, allowing only two business days to respond to the motion is not sufficient. The Commission will allow the other parties until October 18 to respond.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. That any party wishing to respond to the Motion to Establish Hearing Date filed by UtiliCorp United Inc. and The Empire District Electric Company shall do so on or before October 18, 2000.

2. That this order shall become effective on October 18, 2000.

BY THE COMMISSION



Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge

(S E A L)

Morris L. Woodruff, Senior Regulatory
Law Judge by delegation of authority
pursuant to Section 386.240, RSMo 1994.

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 12th of October, 2000.

STATE OF MISSOURI

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and
I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission, at Jefferson City,
Missouri, this 12th day of Oct. 2000.



Dale Hardy Roberts

Dale Hardy Roberts
Secretary/Chief Regulatory Law Judge