

Higher Heat Bills Coming

continued ▲ from front

ing people to write to Congress to restore LIHEAP funds to \$5.1 billion nationally. If federal energy assistance is reduced by 59 percent, the LIHEAP program will dramatically reduce the number of Multnomah County households qualifying for energy assistance this year, officials said.

The rate case decision issued the Oregon Public Utilities Commission on Friday will increase Pacific Power rates in January by 8.4 percent to cover all new expenses for operating the utility. But the total increase will move to 14.5 percent next week when the commission is expected to approve a second rate increase of 6.1 percent for higher power costs. PacifiCorp had requested a 20 percent increase.

"Commission staff and customer groups worked very hard to trim expenses where they could. I also know that the impact of this decision will be difficult for many households and businesses to absorb given our difficult economic times," Commission Chairman Ray Baum said. "I hope we can avoid the situation in the future where large capital projects and power costs hit customers in the same year. However, these are resources that will serve customers for decades."

The monthly bill of a typical residential customer of Pacific using 900 kilowatt hours of energy a month will increase by \$9.38 from \$88.21 to \$97.59 or 11.5 percent. \$5.38 is due to the general rate case and \$4 is for power costs. The increase includes the monthly service charge. The amount will vary for customers using above or below 900 kilowatt hours.

Energy rates for Pacific Power industrial customers will rise by 17 percent and large commercial customers by 17.6 percent.

For Portland General Electric customers, PUC approval an overall price increase of about 3.9 percent, which will climb to 4.2 percent when adjusted with various credits and deferred costs. Under the rate schedule, residents could see their power costs rise between 3.3 to 6.2 percent depending on power demand.

Is the game becoming more than a game?



Let us help you put it in perspective.

For help call



1 877 MY LIMIT

or chat



1877MYLIMIT.ORG

Treatment for a gambling problem is free, confidential and it works.

Sponsored by the Oregon Lottery

Advertise with diversity in **The Portland Observer**

Call 503-288-0033 ads@portlandobserver.com