



## Press release

### **Elster's EnergyAxis® System to Provide Smart Grid Solutions to Black Hills Energy**

*Utility customers in Pueblo, CO to receive smart meters*

*Raleigh, North Carolina, U.S.A., 18 November, 2008.* Elster, a leader in smart metering and smart grid systems and solutions, today announced a multi-year agreement to supply smart grid solutions and smart meters to Black Hills Energy's residential and business customers in the electric utility's Pueblo, CO service area.

The smart meter deployment will allow Black Hills Energy to test energy conservation options for its customers. The pilot program will use Elster's EnergyAxis® System to further provide customers with safe, reliable electricity.

"As the demand for energy continues to increase, energy conservation becomes more critical," said Sharon Allan, president, Elster Integrated Solutions. "Elster is committed to helping its utility customers provide reliable, efficient and energy conservation services to their client bases. Smart metering will revolutionize energy management and grid reliability across the globe, ultimately allowing for a smarter electric grid."

Elster's EnergyAxis System will collect customer usage information such as load profile, demand, and time-of-use (TOU) information to analyze the distribution system and determine if system improvements are needed. The company will deploy smart meters as part of Phase I of the multi-phase program.

"This is an important investment in a proven technology," said Gary Stone, vice president, Black Hills Energy, Colorado electric operation. "Because they can be read remotely, smart meters do not require us to send workers out to read them in person, reducing gas costs, labor expenses and vehicle maintenance.

"The benefits of Elster's EnergyAxis system include a more efficient, accurate way to read meters. Customer convenience also is improved when meters are read remotely as it increases the number of actual reads and their accuracy, and reduces the need for a company representative to enter customers' property," he said.

Using wireless technology, smart meters automatically send customer usage information directly to the utility's computer system, ensuring that customer usage information is accurate, recorded regularly and eliminates the need for meter readers to enter customers' property. Pending the successful outcome of the Phase I of the project, Black Hills Energy will continue the installation of smart meters on homes and businesses in its territory within the next year or two.

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**For further information contact:**

Gabrielle Puccio, Elster, Director of Corporate Communications, +1-919-250-5413,  
[gabrielle.puccio@us.elster.com](mailto:gabrielle.puccio@us.elster.com)



### **About Black Hills Energy**

Black Hills/Colorado Electric Utility Company, LP, d/b/a Black Hills Energy, successor to Aquila Networks-WPC, a subsidiary of Black Hills Corporation. (NYSE:BKH), serves approximately 93,000 electric customers in 21 southeastern Colorado communities. Black Hills Corporation is a diversified energy company with a tradition of exemplary service and a vision to be the energy partner of choice is based in Rapid City, SD. with corporate offices in Golden, CO and Omaha, NE. The company serves 750,000 utility customers in Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Montana, South Dakota and Wyoming. The company's non-regulated businesses generate wholesale electricity, produce natural gas, oil and coal, and market energy. Black Hills partners to produce results that improve life with energy. More information is available at [www.blackhillscorp.com](http://www.blackhillscorp.com).

### **About Elster**

Elster, a global leader in smart metering and smart grid solutions, has delivered over 1.5 million smart metering devices worldwide with systems located in North America, Europe, Central America, Australia, New Zealand and the Caribbean. Elster smart metering system solutions provide utilities with energy conservation capabilities via demand response programs, smart grid applications, and operational efficiencies resulting in significant value creation across the utility enterprise. Elster has over 7,500 staff and operates globally in North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Middle East, and Asia. [www.elster.com](http://www.elster.com).