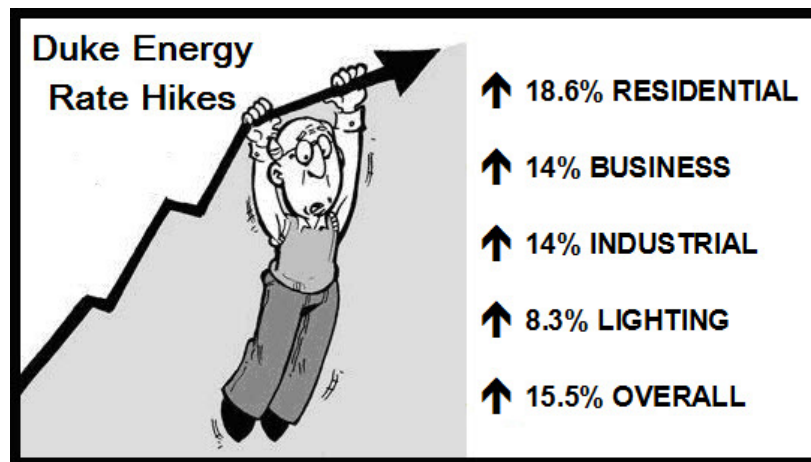


Join the Wave of Voices against Duke Energy's 18.6% rate hike

Hearing next Monday in Raleigh – ALL North Carolina Electricity Customers are at Risk



Over recent weeks, thousands of North Carolina voices are opposing Duke Energy's huge rate hike – and its business model based on more fossil and nuclear power.

You're being heard by the NC Utility Commission's Public Staff and the attorney general, who are now opposing the rate hike. And just last Friday, even Duke Energy made an unheard of move by announcing a (small) reduction in the 2012 rate hike request.

Now is the time to get thousands more people involved – to the Monday hearing and/or to send short emails to the Commission.

Raleigh Hearing: begins 1pm and could last all afternoon. NC Utilities Commission: Dobbs Building, 430 Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC (Public Parking Deck is directly across Salisbury Street)

Rally and Press Conference at 11:45 am outside the Dobbs Building. Bring signs and banners!

Urge NC Utilities Commission members to reject Duke's rate hike.

1) Speak at the hearing. Or just come to show you care!

To speak, just come early and sign up. Plan to speak for up to 3 to 5 minutes. It is good, but not required, to bring 10 copies of written comments for the Commissioners and others.

2) Send comments – short or long – to NC Utilities Commission Chair Ed Finley: finley@ncuc.net

Use your own words about how rate hikes affect you and are wrong for our economy and environment. (see more information below)

WHY YOUR VOICE IS IMPORTANT:

Duke Energy is seeking an 18.6% rate hike for residential electricity customers and over 14% for businesses.

That's on top of an 8% increase since January 2010, and this September's 5% increase in fuel surcharges. That's a 30% increase for homes since the beginning of last year.

It gets worse. Duke says it wants another rate hike next year.

And Duke and Progress Energy are pushing for an *ANNUAL RATE HIKE BILL* to force customers to pre-pay for risky new nuclear plants that are not needed.

The utilities' business path would double our power bills, and wreck our economy and environment. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

More On Duke Energy's Serial Rate Hikes & 20th Century Business Model

Instead of rewarding Duke Energy's 20th Century business model, the NC Utilities Commission should enforce state requirements prioritizing energy-saving programs over expansion of generation capacity through high-cost coal, natural gas and nuclear power.

Increasing our power bills year after year will stretch many families to the breaking point. More rate hikes will cause additional hardships for businesses, strain city and county budgets, and cost new businesses and jobs – all while Duke Energy makes record profits.

Duke's 2011 rate hike is largely to pay for new coal-burning and natural gas power plants and to put band-aids on coal-fired plants that soon must be retired due to global warming.

Instead of rate increases for old polluting technologies – including new power plants that are not needed – we must demand the shift to energy efficiency, solar and wind power. This path will save families money, create jobs, protect our health, cut greenhouse gases, and promote a green energy economy. Duke and Progress are blocking that path.

Duke is seeking to substantially raise its monopoly-guaranteed rate of return from 10.7% to 11.5%. This rate is meant to offset business risk, but Duke is demanding that customers get stuck with more financial risk as Duke expands its sales and profits.

Long-term electricity demand is expected to fall nationally. But Duke Energy is expanding electricity sales beyond its service area to increase profits, while North Carolina ratepayers are forced to pay for Duke's risky investments.

With demand down, Duke is trying to prop up justification for building new nuclear plants by encouraging energy-hogging server farms to come to NC in exchange for electricity at half the rate residential customers pay. The cost is passed on to residential ratepayers!

In competitive markets where Duke operates, such as Ohio, ratepayers in 2012 will get an 11% rate *reduction*. That's because, unlike in NC, ratepayers in these states can choose competing alternatives for the electricity they use.

Duke Energy and Progress Energy, which are seeking a corporate marriage, will soon be requesting even more rate increases to finance a new generation of high-risk nuclear power plants in North and South Carolina.

In addition to speaking to NC Utilities Commissioners, urge elected officials to stand with the people of North Carolina against the utilities' pay-to-play influence over crucial decisions. Don't let these power companies wreck our economy, health and environment.