



Capitol Network News

Today's news from Oklahoma's best government information resource

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OG&E ANSWERS EDMONDSON'S TESTIMONY

By Gerry Cherry
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Friday, Grant Ringel, corporate spokesman for OG&E, said the company is "surprised at the difference in the reduction Attorney General Drew Edmondson called for and the reduction we filed for."

Originally, OG&E asked the Oklahoma Corporation Commission to approve a reduction for ratepayers of about \$14.2 million per year, beginning in March, 1997. Monday was the deadline for parties wishing to respond to OG&E's request.

Monday, Edmondson responded. He filed testimony with the Corporation Commission, asking for OG&E to reduce rates by \$79.8 million, \$65.6 million more than OG&E's request. "We commend OG&E for coming forward and asking for a rate reduction," Edmondson said, "however, we believe the evidence will support a much greater reduction than the company proposed."

"OG&E believes the numbers we filed were very fair and justified," Ringel said. "Now we're preparing responses to the Attorney General's testimony and the Corporation Commission staff."

Edmondson also recommended the elimination of nearly \$7 million in marketing and

advertising costs, saying, "we don't believe it is in the best interest of ratepayers of either electric or gas utilities to fund this sort of competition for the same customers."

"We are a business, not a government agency. There's an important difference. To remain in business, we have to be successful at selling our service."

Grant Ringel
OG&E

Ringel replied, "OG&E doesn't spend \$7 million in advertising. It is made up of a number of different things. Marketing activities are an important part of any company's business."

"We are a business," Ringel continued, "not a government agency. There's an im-

portant difference. To remain in business, we have to be successful at selling our service."

"Some people may think marketing and advertising shouldn't be an important part of what their electric company does," Ringel continued, "but we face competition today and will face stronger competition in the future."

"We try to tailor our services to our customers," Ringel said.

Next week, Edmondson anticipates filing "rate design" testimony. Rate reductions will be allocated among the various customer classes as fairly as possible," Edmondson said.

Rate hearings will begin Nov. 22. "OG&E looks forward to the rate case process," Ringel said. "All issues will be resolved."

OKLAHOMA VOTER ROLLS CONTINUE TO GROW

By Shawn Ashley
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Oklahoma's voter registration rolls are continuing to grow, according to information obtained by *Legislative Information Network/Capitol Network News*.

Last Friday, Oct. 11, was the final day for new voters to add their names to the voting rolls, and according to State Election Board officials, they will not know until Nov. 1 exactly how many Oklahomans are registered to vote. According to figures compiled at the beginning of October, however, more than 1.9 million Oklahomans have registered.

Of those registered voters, the state election board's records indicate that there are 1,151,965 registered Democrats; 672,355 Republicans, 112,448 independents; and 68 voters who are registered either as members of the Reform or Libertarian parties.

At the beginning of 1996, some 1.8 million Oklahomans had registered to vote, according to the board's figures.

A total of 39,194 registration transactions were recorded by the election board during

the month of September, the latest month for which figures are available, including:

- ✓ 24,882 new registrations;
- ✓ 8,995 address changes;
- ✓ 96 changes of political affiliation; and
- ✓ 5,221 name changes.

During the same period, 5,156 cancellations were reported, including:

- ✓ 2,968 cancellations by other states or counties;
 - ✓ 39 cancellations by written notice from the voter;
 - ✓ 666 cancellations by the State Health Department's list;
 - ✓ 781 cancellations by the voters' next of kin.
 - ✓ 68 cancellations by felony conviction.
- Some 634 duplication cancellations were also recorded during the period.

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★★ Important Date ★★

General Election

Tuesday, November 5