



# News briefs from around the state of Wyoming

From Wyoming News Exchange newspapers

## SUV crashes into geyser

CODY (WNE) — All five occupants escaped their vehicle after it left a road and plunged into hot, acidic water in Yellowstone National Park on Thursday morning, July 11.

They escaped the vehicle on their own, and each one went by ambulance to a nearby hospital with non-life-threatening injuries. The car had gone off the road “inadvertently,” according to the park.

The incident occurred at a thermal feature called Semi-Centennial Geyser located near Roaring Mountain between Mammoth Hot Springs and Norris Junction. The vehicle was fully submerged in about nine feet of water.

The geyser has acidic and hot surface water temperatures ranging around 105 degrees Fahrenheit.

The next day, law enforcement rangers temporarily closed both lanes of the road near the accident in order to safely lift

the car out of the thermal feature. The road reopened after about two hours.

The incident is under investigation.

## Kidnapped man lands up to 14 years in prison

GILLETTE (WNE) — A Gillette man who pleaded guilty to the second-degree sexual abuse of a minor received has been sentenced to 10 to 14 years in prison.

Zackery Minard, 22, was found in bed with a 14-year-old girl by the girl's mother, who called her boyfriend, Timothy James Ott.

Ott, 30, and a friend beat up Minard, put him in a car trunk and drove him out of town, eventually abandoning him on a country road. The temperature outside was about 35 degrees.

According to Minard, Ott told him to walk back to town and think about what he had done, according to court documents.

A sheriff's deputy found Minard, who appeared to have been beaten up, after a passerby reported seeing a man looking disheveled and without shoes in the country east of Gillette. An ambulance took Minard to the hospital where he was treated for a broken nose.

Ott pleaded guilty in April to kidnapping and felony meth possession, with the kidnapping charge changed to clarify that he had voluntarily released Minard, according to court documents.

Prosecutors have agreed in a plea deal to recommend nine to 10 years for the kidnapping charge. Ott's sentencing is July 19.

While talking to police, Ott was remorseful and said he had been impulsive and taken things too far, according to court documents.

The meth charge came after police were called Dec. 11 to Second Chance Ministries, where Ott had been staying. While workers cleared out his belongings, they found paraphernalia with trace amounts of meth, according to court documents.

## Public notices

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act and the Wyoming Public Service Commission's (Commission) Rules, the Commission hereby gives notice of the Application of Rocky Mountain Power (RMP or the Company) for authority to update tariff Schedule 37, the Standard Rates for Avoided Cost Purchases of Power from Qualifying Facilities (Schedule 37), as more fully described below.

1. RMP is a division of PacifiCorp, an Oregon corporation, engaged in the business of supplying electric utility service to customers throughout its six-state service territory, including Wyoming. RMP is a public utility subject to the Commission's jurisdiction. Wyo. Stat. §§ 37-1-101(a)(vi)(C) and 37-2-112.

2. On June 25, 2024, RMP filed its Application, requesting authority to update tariff Schedule 37, to revise the costs of power purchased from qualifying cogeneration and small power production facilities (QFs) under the Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act (PURPA).

3. Schedule 37 rates were last approved by the Commission in Docket No. 20000-545-ET-18. The proposed avoided cost rates are based on RMP's most recent official forward price curve and the 2023 IRP Update, and result in a proposed avoided cost rate of \$47.12 per MWh, an increase of \$9.15 per MWh for base load QFs. Proposed avoided costs rates for wind, fixed solar, and tracking solar QFs are \$20.32 per MWh, \$37.60 per MWh, and \$37.54 per MWh, respectively. The Application

states the higher avoided costs are primarily due to higher power prices the first few years. The addition of renewable resources to the 2023 IRP Update is projected to help suppress power prices and avoided energy costs.

4. This is not a complete description of the Application. The complete Application is available at the Commission's offices or online at <https://dms.wyo.gov/external/publicusers.aspx> (Enter Record No. 17614), or RMP's website at [www.pacifiCorp.com](http://www.pacifiCorp.com).

5. Anyone desiring to file a statement, intervention petition, protest, or request for a hearing must do so in writing, on or before August 12, 2024. Public comments should be submitted to [wpsc\\_comments@wyo.gov](mailto:wpsc_comments@wyo.gov). Any intervention request filed with the Commission shall set forth the grounds of the proposed intervention or request for hearing as well as the position and the interest of the petitioner in this proceeding. Please be sure to mention Docket No. 20000-668-ET-24 in all correspondence with the Commission.

6. If you wish to participate in this matter and you require reasonable accommodation for a disability, please contact the Commission at (307) 777-7427, or 2515 Warren Avenue, Suite 300, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002. Communications impaired persons may contact the Commission through Wyoming Relay by dialing 711.

Dated: July 11, 2024.

Pub. July 18 & 25, 2024 No. 1676

### NOTICE AND ORDER SETTING PUBLIC HEARING

1. Pursuant to the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act and the Wyoming Public Service Commission's (Commission) Rules, notice is hereby given that a public hearing is scheduled regarding Rocky Mountain Power's (RMP or the Company) request for Deferred Accounting Order to record a regulatory asset associated with incremental costs related to third-party liability in excess of \$10 million dollars. **The public hearing is set to commence on Monday, August 12, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., in the Commission's hearing room located at 2515 Warren Avenue, Suite 300, in Cheyenne, Wyoming.**

2. RMP is a division of PacifiCorp, an Oregon corporation, engaged in the business of supplying electric utility service to customers throughout its six-state service territory, including Wyoming. RMP is a public utility, subject to the Commission's jurisdiction. WYO. STAT. §§ 37-1-101(a)(vi)(C) and 37-2-112.

3. On December 18, 2023, RMP filed its Application requesting the Commission issue a Deferred Accounting Order to record and defer a regulatory asset associated with incremental costs from increased premiums for third-party liability insurance, specifically wildfires. The deferral is for possible future recovery of costs.

4. A complete description of RMP's Application and its supporting testimony and exhibits may be viewed at the Commission's office during business hours or

online at: <https://dms.wyo.gov/external/publicusers.aspx> (enter Record No. 17470).

5. Wyoming Industrial Energy Consumers (WIEC) petitioned to intervene in this matter, which the Commission granted by Order issued on December 21, 2023. Wyoming Office of Consumer Advocate is also a party under the provisions of Wyoming Statute §37-2-402(a).

6. All interested persons are encouraged to attend the public hearing which will be conducted in accordance with the Wyoming Administrative Procedure Act, Wyoming Public Service Commission Rules. All interested persons may appear and be heard, in person, by video or telephone conference, or through counsel appearing in person or by video or telephone conference.

**Attend Zoom Meeting and actively participate at:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9933449233>  
**Or by Dialing:** 1-669-900-9128 or 1-253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 993 344 9233

7. If you wish to attend the hearing and you require reasonable accommodation for a disability, please contact the Commission at (307) 777-7427 (Voice or TTY) in Cheyenne during regular business hours or write them at 2515 Warren Avenue, Suite 300, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002, to make arrangements. Communications impaired persons may also contact the Commission by accessing Wyoming Relay (TTY) by dialing 711. Please mention Docket No. 20000-654-EA-23 in all correspondence with the Commission.

Pub. July 18 & 25, 2024

No. 1678

## INSURANCE

## WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS?



Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) are third party companies that function as intermediaries between insurance providers and pharmaceutical manufacturers. PBMs create formularies, negotiate rebates with manufacturers, process claims, create pharmacy networks, review drug utilization and occasionally manage mail-order specialty pharmacies.

**Background:** When insurance companies began offering prescription drugs as a health plan benefit in the 1960s, PBMs were created to help insurers contain drug spending. Originally, PBMs decided which drugs were offered in formularies and

administered drug claims. In the late 1980s, PBMs filled the need for a way to keep rapidly rising drug prices in check. Without the PBMs there wasn't a middle man to hold the pharmaceutical industry accountable to consistent pricing standards and there was little to prevent exorbitant overpricing by manufacturers or to guarantee reliable prices from region to region. PBMs provided that stability and eased the billing process for payers by creating vast networks of pharmacies.

**PBMs Today:** According to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, today, there are 66 PBM companies serving more than

270 million Americans. The three largest, Express Scripts, CVS Caremark and OptumRX control approximately 89% of the market. PBMs work in conjunction with drug manufacturers, wholesalers, pharmacies and health insurance providers but play no direct role in the physical distribution of prescription drugs, only handling negotiations and payments within the supply chain. When a new drug is available, the manufacturer negotiates with wholesalers who then sell and distribute the drugs to pharmacies. PBMs negotiate agreements with drug manufacturers on behalf of insurers and are paid rebates by drug manufacturers. Pharmacy Services Administrative Organizations (PSAOs) negotiate reimbursements with PBMs on behalf of pharmacies. PBMs then pay pharmacies on behalf of health insurance providers for drugs dispensed to patients. PSAOs represent and offer services to independent pharmacies and PBMs represent health insurers.

**National Attention:** Concerns have been raised by state and federal government regarding transparency to consumers and PBMs rebates and reimbursements. In 2018, the Patient Right to Know Drug Prices Act, S.2554 and the Know the Lowest Price Act, S.2553 were passed to promote transparency towards patients. Prior to those acts, PBMs had provisions in contracts that prevented pharmacists from telling patients when the cash price of a drug was less than the insurance copay price.

**PBMs and Wyoming:** In 2016, the

Wyoming legislature passed law that addressed Pharmacy Benefit Managers. The law can be found at Wyo. Stat. Ann. §26-52-101 et seq. The initial laws established a licensing requirement, direction regarding audits by PBMs on pharmacies and MAC (Maximum Allowable Cost) pricing. In 2023, the legislature passed additional law regarding transparency and in 2024 passed legislation regarding prompt payment of claims. (The 2024 law goes into effect July 1, 2024).

The Department of Insurance was granted authority to review complaints from pharmacies regarding possible lack of compliance with the laws. A pharmacist who believes a PBM has not been compliant with the laws can file a complaint on the DOI website. The complaint form is found on the Department of Insurance website at <https://doi.wyo.gov/home> under the header of Consumers/Consumer Assistance/File a Complaint. When a complaint is filed it is assigned to the Pharmacy Benefit Program Manager for investigation. This position was appropriated for the department by the legislature in 2023. Since 2019, the department has investigated seventeen complaints.

The Department of Insurance will continue to work with PBMs and pharmacists to enforce Wyoming's laws regarding PBMs. If you are a pharmacist and have questions regarding the law in Wyoming or need assistance filing a complaint, please reach out to our office at 307-777-7401.

This public service announcement is presented and paid for by the insurance companies licensed to do business in Wyoming in cooperation with the Wyoming Insurance Department. For more information on the state's insurance companies, including financial information, visit the Insurance Department website's "Company Financial Information" section.



Wyoming Department of Insurance  
<http://doi.wyo.gov> • 1 (800) 438-5768