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DEC 23 2024

INDIANA STATE
ETHICS COMMISSION

ETHICS DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
CONFLICTS OF INTEREST – DECISIONS AND VOTING
 State Form 56880 (R / 10-15)
 OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
 IC 4-2-6-9

In accordance with IC 4-2-6-9, you must file your disclosure with the State Ethics Commission no later than seven (7) days after the conduct that gives rise to the conflict. You must also include a copy of the notification provided to your agency appointing authority and ethics officer when filing this disclosure. This disclosure will be posted on the Inspector General's website.

Name (last) Smith	Name (first) Rick	Name (middle)
Name of office or agency Indiana Underground Plant Protection Advisory Committee		Job title Member
Address of office (number and street) 1433 Holey Moley Way		City Greenwood
		ZIP code 46142
Office telephone number (219) 252-4057	Office e-mail address (required) ricksmith@nlsources.com	

Describe the conflict of interest:

I am a member of the Underground Plant Protection Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee). By statute, I am appointed by the Governor and, therefore, I am considered a "state appointee" for purposes of Ind. Code section 4-2-6-9.

The Advisory Committee recommends penalties for excavation damage cases under Ind. Code chapter 8-1-26.

Pursuant to a formal advisory opinion of the Indiana State Ethics Commission, my participation in recommending a penalty constitutes a "decision or vote" for purposes of the conflict of interest statute.

The majority of excavation damage cases have an operator and an excavator as parties to the case. I work for Northern Indiana Public Service Co., LLC (NIPSCO), a gas operator and sometimes an excavator. Therefore, a conflict of interest would arise if I were to participate in a "decision or vote" in a case in which NIPSCO is a named party.

Describe the screen established by your ethics officer: *(Attach additional pages as needed.)*

Whenever NIPSCO is a named party to a case, I will abstain from the penalty recommendation pursuant to the Advisory Committee's Bylaws.

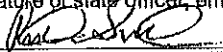
I will not comment on the case and I will abstain from the discussion and recommendation.

My abstention will be recorded on the Case Recommendation Form.

AFFIRMATION

Your signature below affirms that your disclosures on this form are true, complete, and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. In addition to this form, you have attached a copy of your written disclosure to your agency appointing authority and ethics officer.

Signature of state officer, employee or special state appointee



Date signed (month, day, year)

11/11/24

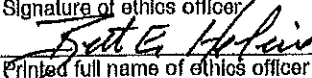
Printed full name of state officer, employee or special state appointee

Rick Smith

FOR ETHICS OFFICER USE ONLY

Your signature below affirms that you have reviewed this disclosure form and that it is true, complete, and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. You also attest that your agency has implemented the screen described above.

Signature of ethics officer



Date signed (month, day, year)

12/23/2024

Printed full name of ethics officer

Beth E. Helline

STATE of INDIANA

INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
101 WEST WASHINGTON STREET, SUITE 1500 EAST
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46204-3419



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Office: (317) 232-2701
Facsimile: (317) 232-6758

Via email

December 23, 2024

The Honorable Eric J. Holcomb
200 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Dear Governor Holcomb:

The Underground Plant Protection Advisory Committee (UPPAC) provides penalty recommendations to the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) regarding findings of violations of the Indiana 811 Law, Indiana Code chapter 8-1-26. UPPAC members are Governor appointees who are required by statute to be representatives of various stakeholders in this process, including utility and excavation companies who are often parties in excavation damages cases. In compliance with Indiana Code § 4-2-6-9, UPPAC members who are employees of a party in a case have abstained from the discussion and voting on penalty recommendations that could involve their employer. On June 9, 2016, the Indiana State Ethics Commission issued a formal advisory opinion (attached) stating that UPPAC members in this situation need to submit a conflict of interest disclosure statement on at least an annual basis, indicating the possible conflict regarding their employer and the screening process in place that requires UPPAC members to abstain from the discussion and vote on any penalty recommendation involving their employer.

In your role as the appointing authority for UPPAC, and in my role as the Ethics Officer for UPPAC, please consider this letter your official notification from UPPAC current members Angie DeKemper, Bruce Dickie, Rick Smith, Scott Sontag, Blaine Walters, and Ben Warren, as required by Indiana Code § 4-2-6-9, of these possible conflicts of interest, with the attached disclosure statements, which include the ongoing screening process of abstaining from any discussion or vote regarding penalty recommendations involving their employers.

Please have your staff contact me if you have any questions or if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth E. Heline".

Beth E. Heline, General Counsel
Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission

enclosures (7)
cc: Michael Nossett