

STATE OF IOWA  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
UTILITIES BOARD

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IN RE:  ELECTRONIC FILING	DOCKET NO. NOI-05-1
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**ORDER INITIATING INQUIRY**

(Issued February 23, 2005)

The Utilities Board (Board) is initiating this inquiry to consider the issues surrounding the adoption of an electronic filing (e-filing) system. This inquiry is identified as Docket No. NOI-05-1. In October 2004, Board staff began formally researching the issues and challenges associated with developing and implementing an e-filing system. Internal discussions have focused on questions of Web-based access, file management procedures, electronic filing alternatives, software and hardware requirements, speed of development, the role of paper, costs, and support staff functions. Board staff continues to gather information on these issues.

Board staff also conducted an internal survey regarding e-filing and is researching the status of e-filing at regulatory agencies in other states. Preliminary findings suggest that Iowa is not alone in considering the advantages of e-filing, but that the progress of other states toward that goal varies widely.

It is time to bring outside stakeholders into the discussion. The Board will, therefore, open this formal inquiry, seeking comments from interested parties. As a first step, the Board will solicit information from outside stakeholders using a survey

to be posted on the Board's Web site at [www.state.ia.us/iub](http://www.state.ia.us/iub). The Board recognizes that some outside stakeholders may work in jurisdictions where e-filing is already in place and anticipates that their comments will reflect the experience they have had with e-filing.

The Board will send letters to stakeholders, including the Consumer Advocate Division of the Department of Justice, major utilities, and utility associations, notifying them of the availability of this order and the survey form on the Board's Web site. The list of stakeholders includes utility associations, major rate-regulated utilities, and others who regularly appear before the Board, with some limited effort to avoid duplication. The Board anticipates that the associations will notify their members and that attorneys will notify their interested clients about this proceeding. The letter will include information about the survey and will ask that survey responses be returned to the inquiry manager by e-mail. Any interested party wishing to participate in this inquiry, whether contacted by letter or not, may complete the survey.

Board staff will compile and analyze survey responses, continue to research other e-filing systems, and make a recommendation to the Board regarding the next steps in this process. Possible next steps include gathering more information through written questions following up on survey responses, technical conferences or workshops, or other steps that may be suggested by stakeholders. Once the Board has considered the information gathered, it will determine how to proceed and will notify stakeholders of further action at an appropriate time.

The Board will appoint Margaret Munson as the inquiry manager for this proceeding. Questions about the inquiry should be directed to Margaret Munson at (515) 281-7716 or by email at [margaret.munson@iub.state.ia.us](mailto:margaret.munson@iub.state.ia.us).

**IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:**

1. An inquiry, identified as Docket No. NOI-05-1, is initiated to consider the development and implementation of an electronic filing system.
2. The Board will send identified stakeholders a letter containing information about how to participate in this inquiry. Stakeholders receiving the notice by letter are encouraged to share the information with any other interested persons, including, but not limited to, their association members and clients. The survey form may be downloaded from the Board's Web site [www.state.ia.us/iub](http://www.state.ia.us/iub).
3. The Board will post on its Web site, [www.state.ia.us/iub](http://www.state.ia.us/iub), information about how to participate in this inquiry, as well as the survey form soliciting comments on electronic filing. Any interested party wishing to participate in this inquiry shall complete and return the survey by e-mail, if possible, to the inquiry manager ([margaret.munson@iub.state.ia.us](mailto:margaret.munson@iub.state.ia.us)) and should include as the subject of the e-mail: Docket No. NOI-05-1. Completed surveys may also be printed and mailed to the inquiry manager: Margaret Munson, Inquiry Manager NOI-05-1, Iowa Utilities Board, 350 Maple Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0069. Survey responses should be returned within 14 days of the date of this order.

4. Any interested party who is unable to access or download the information or survey from the Web site should contact the inquiry manager by e-mail ([margaret.munson@iub.state.ia.us](mailto:margaret.munson@iub.state.ia.us)) or by telephone at (515) 281-7716 or the Board's Records and Information Center at (515) 281-5563.

**UTILITIES BOARD**

/s/ Diane Munns

/s/ Mark O. Lambert

ATTEST:

/s/ Judi K. Cooper  
Executive Secretary

/s/ Elliott Smith

Dated at Des Moines, Iowa, this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of February, 2005.