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**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
UTILITIES COMMISSION  
RALEIGH**

**NEWS RELEASE**

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For More Information, Contact: William R. Gilmore (919) 733-9563

**NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION AND GAS UTILITIES  
TO MEET ABOUT HIGH WHOLESALE GAS PRICES**

Wholesale natural gas prices this summer are at historically high levels. Indications are that prices will remain high this fall and winter. North Carolina natural gas *Local Distribution Companies (LDCs)* purchase natural gas at wholesale for delivery to their retail customers. Under North Carolina law, LDCs regulated by the North Carolina Utilities Commission are allowed to pass prudently-incurred wholesale natural gas costs through to their customers. Earlier this year, the Commission met with North Carolina's three major LDCs to discuss increases in wholesale natural gas costs. With the winter heating season approaching, several LDCs have asked to meet with the Commission to provide an update on the high wholesale natural gas prices and their effect on North Carolina retail customers.

A briefing has been scheduled for August 11, 2003. The purpose of this briefing is to gather information on the reason that wholesale costs are at historic highs, to gauge the *potential impact of the high gas prices on the LDCs' customers*, and to educate and alert consumers. A representative of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has been invited to give a national perspective on these issues.

This meeting will be open to the public; however, it will not be for the purpose of receiving public comments. The meeting will be held on Monday, August 11, 2003, at 1:30 p.m., in the Commission Hearing Room, Room 2115, the Dobbs Building, 430 North Salisbury Street, Raleigh.