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**Forum on Electric and Gas Standards Organization Set
For Aug. 14–15 at DOE Headquarters; GISB to Facilitate**

WASHINGTON—The Gas Industry Standards Board (GISB) will facilitate an industry-wide forum Aug. 14–15 on the organization of a new standards organization to develop wholesale and retail standards for natural gas and electricity.

The meeting will be held at the Department of Energy's Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Ave., S.W., from 1 to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 14, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 15. Robert Kripowicz, acting assistant secretary for fossil energy, will make introductory remarks on Aug. 14.

Representatives of companies and trade associations in the gas and electric industries, as well as interested individuals, are invited to attend, but registration is required. To register, e-mail the GISB office at gisb@aol.com by Aug. 9. That is also the deadline for sending written comments to GISB.

DOE also provided meeting space last year for three days of initial industry meetings on a standards organization for natural gas and electricity.

The meetings are an outgrowth of a request by the Coalition for Uniform Business Rules (CUBR) in September 1999 that GISB develop gas and electric retail standards. GISB's work to date has focused on the development of wholesale natural gas standards for electronic commerce.

Since then, a task force of GISB's Board of Directors has conducted extensive talks with representatives of all sectors of the gas and electricity industry and developed two proposed organizational models, known as "strawmen," for a combined electric and gas standards organization. The latest draft can be found on GISB's website, www.gisb.org.

GISB Board of Directors Chairman William Boswell, assistant secretary of Dominion, said, “We have made excellent progress in our discussions with a wide range of industry participants. I believe there is strong support for a single organization that would set standards for retail and wholesale electricity and natural gas transactions. We’re very appreciative of DOE’s assistance in convening an industry-wide forum that should play a major role in moving this process toward a conclusion.”

The agenda for the forum includes a report on current activities; a review of industry comments; a discussion of governance and scope; and a discussion of reliability and market interfaces in standards-setting.

GISB was established in September 1994 as an independent and voluntary North American organization to develop and promote the use of business practices and related electronic communications standards designed to promote more competitive, efficient and reliable gas service. The organization has over 150 corporate members, a board of directors, an executive committee, an advisory committee and many other working committees and task forces.

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