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**News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Liberty Utilities Completes Acquisition of The Empire District Electric Company**

**Joplin, Missouri** – January 1, 2017 – Liberty Utilities announced the completion of the acquisition and merger of The Empire District Electric Company (Empire). Based in Joplin, Missouri, Empire is an investor-owned, regulated utility providing electric, natural gas (through its wholly owned subsidiary, The Empire District Gas Company) and water service, with approximately 218,000 customers in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas. A subsidiary of the Company also provides fiber optic services.

“We have been working together with Empire to meet all state and federal requirements over the last several months and we’re looking forward to delivering high-quality service to all of our new electric, water and natural gas customers for decades to come,” said David Pasieka, President of Liberty Utilities.

The companies have been working together in the months leading up to the closing of the transaction to ensure a seamless transition. Customers will continue to contact or visit Empire at the same office locations, website and telephone number as they have in the past.

Customers will notice a refreshed Empire logo on the company’s website, and it will be introduced onto customers’ bills, company vehicles, employee uniforms, office buildings and printed materials over the coming months.

Customers can be assured that the local team who serve them today will continue to serve them in the future. Operational decisions about safe and reliable service, infrastructure improvement, customer care, and more will continue to be local decisions, made by the same managers and employees who have served the community well for so many years. Liberty Utilities is committed to providing best-in-class customer care delivered at the local level and we will continue to be an active participant in the community. We look forward to being a good neighbor that remains focused on safety and reliability, corporate responsibility, and job creation.



*The refreshed Empire District logo pays respect to the company’s proud history, while welcoming it into the Liberty Utilities family.*



Our Company has been honored to serve our customers for over 100 years,” said Bradley Beecher, President and CEO of The Empire District Electric Company. “We have no doubt that Liberty Utilities, as an experienced utility that prides itself on community-oriented values, local management and customer service, commitment to safety, and a focus on corporate responsibility, will head a utility system that continues to make decisions in the best interest of our customers in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas,” said Mr. Beecher.

Final state and federal regulatory approvals needed to complete the transaction were granted recently. The sale to Liberty Utilities was originally announced in February 2016.

#### **About Liberty Utilities**

Liberty Utilities Co. owns and operates regulated water, wastewater, natural gas and electric transmission and distribution utilities in 13 states, delivering responsive and reliable essential services to approximately 800,000 customers across the United States. With a local approach to management, service and support, we deliver efficient, dependable services to meet the needs of our customers. Liberty Utilities provides a superior customer experience through walk-in customer centers, locally focused conservation and energy efficiency initiatives, and programs for businesses and residential customers. We measure our performance in terms of service reliability, an enjoyable customer experience, and an unwavering dedication to public and workplace safety. Liberty Utilities currently operates in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, Oklahoma and Texas. For more information, please visit [www.LibertyUtilities.com](http://www.LibertyUtilities.com).

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