



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
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**NIPSCO AND THE NATURE CONSERVANCY PARTNER
TO PLANT A BILLION TREES**

Reforestation Effort Will Remove 10 Million Tons of CO2 from Atmosphere

MERRILLVILLE, Ind. – Northern Indiana Public Service Company and its parent company NiSource Inc. today announced a new environmental initiative with The Nature Conservancy.

For every customer who enrolls in the NIPSCO's free Direct e-Bill paperless billing service between January 1, 2010, and April 1, 2010, the company will contribute \$10 to The Nature Conservancy to help rebuild the endangered Atlantic Forest in Brazil through the organization's Plant a Billion Trees program.

At a dollar per tree, the contribution is equivalent to helping plant 10 trees on behalf of each customer who signs up. A check will be presented to the Indiana chapter of The Nature Conservancy on or before the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, April 22, 2010.

NIPSCO's free electronic billing service is a convenient way customers can manage their account and help the environment at the same time. Instead of getting a paper bill in the mail, customers receive an e-mail notification that their utility bill is available to view on NIPSCO.com the same day it's rendered. Customers can pay their bill on-line at no charge and perform other business on their account, such as signing up for the Budget Payment Plan. The e-mail notification also includes a link to electronic versions of monthly bill inserts, customer newsletters and other important account information.

NIPSCO's partnership with The Nature Conservancy provides customers with a unique opportunity to act locally to help address the global environmental issue. According to a recent survey, the average household receives approximately 19 bills and statements and makes approximately seven paper payments per month. Collectively, the production and transportation of those paper bills, statements and payments consume nine million trees, 755 million pounds of paper and 512 million gallons of gasoline.

The Nature Conservancy's reforestation effort to Plant a Billion Trees will restore more than 2.5 million acres of land and remove 10 million tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere every year. That's like taking two million cars off the road. Only seven percent of the Atlantic Forest's original area – which was the size of the U.S. eastern

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seaboard from Maine to South Carolina – survives. The Atlantic Forest helps regulate the atmosphere and stabilize global climate, including the communities NIPSCO serves.

Learn more about The Nature Conservancy's Plant a Billion Trees campaign at Nature.org.

Visit NIPSCO.com and select "Manage Your Account" to sign up for free paperless Direct e-Bill services.

NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the 10 energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With over 712,000 natural gas customers and 457,000 electric customers across the northern third of Indiana, NIPSCO is the largest natural gas distribution company, and the second largest electric distribution company, in the state. NiSource distribution companies serve 3.8 million natural gas and electric customers primarily in seven states. More information about NIPSCO is available at www.nipsco.com.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. The Conservancy and its more than 1 million members have protected nearly 120 million acres worldwide. Visit The Nature Conservancy on the Web at www.nature.org.

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