



## Avista Executive Receives Entrepreneurial Spirit Award

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U.S. Small Business Administration Recognizes Scott Morris for Leadership

SPOKANE, Wash., Nov. 24 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Scott Morris, president of Avista Utilities and senior vice president of Avista Corp. (NYSE: AVA), was one of seven individuals recognized recently by the U.S. Small Business Administration with the agency's first Entrepreneurial Spirit Award. The award was given in conjunction with the SBA's 50th anniversary celebration and was presented by Conrad Lee, Region X Administrator.

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/19990629/AVALOGO> )

Morris was selected from the top 100 business owners from the Western U.S. and was nominated for the award by Ted Schinzel, acting branch manager, Spokane Branch Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

"The SBA Entrepreneurial Spirit Award celebrates the remarkable vision of business owners who choose to build vibrant partnerships that create jobs and a more promising future for America," Schinzel said. "That certainly describes Scott Morris and Avista."

Under Morris' leadership, Avista Utilities, an operating division of Avista Corp., was named the 19th best large company to work for in Oregon, according to an annual list compiled by Oregon Business magazine in March 2003, the third time the company was named in the past six years. Washington CEO magazine also recognized Avista in 2003 with a 3rd best ranking in the category for large companies.

Morris was also recognized for his support of local economies through the financial support from Avista Utilities and the loaning of executives who have worked on behalf of the Spokane Area Economic Development Council and the chambers of commerce for the cities of Spokane, Deer Park and Sandpoint, among others.

In addition, Avista Utilities was recognized for its ongoing public awareness campaign designed to help business and individuals reduce energy costs, and for offering free energy audits to help small businesses more accurately estimate energy costs in their business plans prior to financing or leasing property.

"This program reduces costly miscalculations that can be fatal for small businesses, particularly during tough economic times," Schinzel said.

Actively involved in the community, Morris is current board chairman of the Spokane Regional Chamber of Commerce, board member for the Northwest Gas Association and Providence Services of Eastern Washington and a member of Gonzaga University board of regents. He also serves as the director of the Washington Roundtable and chairs the Washington State Economic Development Commission, an appointment by Governor Gary Locke.

Morris also serves on the board of directors for the Avista Foundation, which was established in 2002 to provide grants to strengthen communities and enhance the quality of life for people in the areas served by Avista Utilities.

Other recipients of the SBA Entrepreneurial Spirit Award were Orlando Ayala, senior vice president of small and mid-market solution and partner group, Redmond, Wash.; Gertrude Boyle, chair of the board, Columbia Sportswear, Portland, Ore.; Jerry Yang, chief Yahoo, and David Filo, chief Yahoo, Yahoo, Inc., San Jose, Calif.; Mary Pugh, Pugh Capital Management, Seattle, Wash.; Linda Alvarado, president of Alvarado Construction and partner in the Colorado Rockies baseball team, Colo.; and Junki Yoshida, CEO of Yoshida Group, Portland, Ore.

Avista Corp. is an energy company involved in the production, transmission and distribution of energy as well as other energy-related businesses. Avista Utilities is a company operating division that provides electric and natural gas service to customers in four western states. Avista's non-regulated subsidiaries include Avista Advantage and Avista Energy. Avista Corp.'s stock is traded under the ticker symbol "AVA" and its Internet address is [www.avistacorp.com](http://www.avistacorp.com).

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