



Terry Syms to Conclude 37-Year Avista Career

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Company's First Female Officer and Long-Time Corporate Secretary Served Under Five Avista Board Chairmen and Was Most Recently Vice President and Assistant to the Chairman

SPOKANE, Wash., Jan 22, 2004 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ -- Terry Syms, vice president and assistant to the chairman of the board for Avista Corp. (NYSE: AVA), is retiring after a 37-year career that included the distinction of being named the company's first female officer in 1983. Syms' retirement is effective February 1.

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

Syms served as corporate secretary from 1988 until 2003 where her responsibilities included matters relating to corporate governance, board of directors accountabilities and compliance and regulatory issues.

Gary G. Ely, Avista chairman of the board, president and chief executive officer said Syms' expansive knowledge, leadership, intuitiveness, common sense and caring heart are a combination that attracts people to her.

"Terry has been a trusted confidant to me, the company's board of directors and officers and a multitude of others," Ely said. "She is well-known for her open-door policy, and employees from throughout the company always sought her advice. We are going to miss her tremendously."

A Spokane native, Syms began her career in 1967 as a mailroom clerk at Avista, which was then known as Washington Water Power. She served in a number of positions, including manager of shareholder relations, and in 1983 was appointed assistant corporate secretary, becoming the first female officer in the nearly 100-year history of the company. In 1988, she was named corporate secretary and in 1998 named vice president and corporate secretary. Syms was named vice president and assistant to the chairman of the board in 2003. As a corporate officer, Syms' served five Avista board chairmen, including Wendell Satre, Paul Redmond and, most recently, Gary Ely.

Syms was also Avista's first female participant in the University of Idaho's Public Utilities executive Course and Spokane's YMCA's Women's Leadership Program.

"It has been an incredible career and an honor to work for such a wonderful company and with its board of directors and senior management," Syms said. "It has also been a privilege to work with our talented employees, who continually amaze me and others with their creativity, hard work and dedication."

In addition to her leadership roles within Avista, Syms has served as board member and president of the Western Securities and Transfer Association (WSTA), the Spokane chapter of the American Red Cross and the Avista Credit Union, in addition to serving on the board of the Spokane Symphony. She received the WSTA Regional Leadership Award and the Securities Transfer Association National Leadership Award for her "vision, values and inspiration."

Syms is succeeded as Avista's corporate secretary by Karen Feltes, who also serves as the company's vice president of human resources.

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 affiliates 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

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