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BlueRock to broker energy

Former NiMo executive's company sells natural gas, electricity to small business.

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By Tim Knauss
Staff writer

A local veteran of the energy industry is leading a new company that sells energy to small businesses.

BlueRock Energy Inc. recently opened for business at 100 Elwood Davis Road, Salina. The company sells electricity and natural gas to customers in the territories of National Grid, New York State Electric & Gas and Rochester Gas & Electric.

Company President Philip Van Horne has spent more than 25 years in the energy industry, including working as president and chief operating officer of Niagara Mohawk Energy Marketing, an unregulated subsidiary of the former Niagara Mohawk Power Corp.

Van Horne left that job after Niagara Mohawk sold the business to Select Energy in December 2001 and has worked as an independent consultant and marketer since then.

Van Horne established BlueRock with partners Angelo Chambrone, the former manager of market planning for Select Energy, and Thomas Gebhard, of Boston, a former executive at companies including Tractebel Power, Citizens Power and Edison Mission Energy.

"BlueRock may be new, but we are not newcomers to the energy supply dynamics of New York state," Van Horne said.

All told, eight people work at BlueRock. The company plans to hire about 10 more within a year, Van Horne said.

The company's focus is selling electricity to small commercial or industrial customers, a broad category that includes pizza shops, auto dealers, small office buildings, strip malls and other businesses.

BlueRock also sells natural gas. Van Horne said he can provide the best savings "in the vicinity of 5 percent" on electricity.

The savings come from a combination of efficient commodity buying, sales tax avoidance on utility delivery charges and a bill credit that utility customers receive when they buy their electric supply from an alternative supplier, he said.

Van Horne also is president of New York Energy, an energy marketing company that represents ConEdison Solutions in Upstate markets. ConEdison focuses on large commercial and industrial customers, Van Horne said, so New York Energy and BlueRock Energy don't compete for the same customers.

BlueRock is one of more than two dozen energy marketers competing for customers in Upstate New York. The company's Web site is www.bluerockenergy.com

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