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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**November 30, 2009**

### **City Manager's Statement**

(COLUMBIA, MO) -- Columbia City Manager Bill Watkins issued the following statement today, regarding the family of J. Kraig Kahler.

"I issue this statement on behalf of the City of Columbia with stunned sadness. The tragedy involving former Water and Light Director Kraig Kahler, his wife Karen, their children and her grandmother is almost beyond comprehension.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the survivors, the extended family and their colleagues and friends. As the family makes arrangements for services and other remembrances, we will act in accordance with their wishes.

"Many of us knew Kraig and Karen well. Karen and the children continued to live in Columbia. She worked at the Columbia Activities and Recreation Center, on a contract basis, as a personal trainer and fitness coach. Both of them were part of the City family.

"This loss affects all of us. Counseling is available through the City's Employee Assistance Program for those employees who wish to use the service, and I am available to any employee who needs additional help or information.

"We have clarified with the Kansas Attorney General's office that they prefer to be the source of any comments on the case that they are handling. Out of respect for the family, and to avoid jeopardizing any further legal proceedings, whether here or in Kansas, I decline further comment at this time.

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“To restate the conditions of Kraig’s employment with the City, I asked for and received his resignation last September. His difficult family issues, in my opinion, affected his focus on the Columbia Water and Light Department in a way that was not likely to change in the near future.”