

July 31, 2013

Burl W. Haar
Executive Secretary
Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
121 7th Place East, Suite 350
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2147

RE: **Comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources**
Docket No. E015/M-13-254

Dear Dr. Haar:

Attached are the comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources (Department) in the following matter:

Minnesota Power's 2013 Safety, Reliability and Service Quality Standards Report.

The report was filed on April 1, 2013 by:

Lori Hoyum
Policy Manager
Minnesota Power
30 West Superior Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802-2093

The Department recommends that the Commission **accept Minnesota Power's filing and set appropriate reliability goals for 2013**. The Department is available to answer any questions that the Commission may have on this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ ANGELA BYRNE
Financial Analyst
651-539-1820

AB/ja
Attachment



BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

COMMENTS OF THE
MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
DIVISION OF ENERGY RESOURCES

DOCKET NO. E015/M-13-254

I. INTRODUCTION

Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7826 (effective January 28, 2003) were developed as a means for the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) to establish safety, reliability and service quality standards for utilities “engaged in the retail distribution of electric service to the public” and to monitor their performance as measured against those standards. There are three main annual reporting requirements set forth in the rule. These are:

- (1) the annual safety report (Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0400),
- (2) the annual reliability report (Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0500, subp. 1 and 7826.0600, subp. 1), and
- (3) the annual service quality report (Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1300).

In addition to the rule requirements, the Commission’s December 20, 2012 Order in Docket No. E015/M-12-308 directed Minnesota Power (MP or the Company) to:

- a. . . . include in its next filing a description of the policies, procedures and actions that it has implemented and plans to implement to assure reliability, including information demonstrating proactive management of the system as a whole, increased reliability, and active contingency planning.
- b. . . . include in its next filing a summary table that allows the reader to more easily assess the overall reliability of the system and identify the main factors that affect reliability.

On April 1, 2013, MP filed a petition (2013 Annual Report) to comply with the Commission's December 20, 2012 Order and the requirements of Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7826.

The Department notes that the Commission's June 5, 2009 Order in Docket No. E999/CI-08-948 (08-948 docket) contains the following order point:

Beginning on April 1, 2010 and annually thereafter, utilities shall file reports on past, current, and planned smart grid projects, with a description of those projects, including: total costs, cost effectiveness, improved reliability, security, system performance, and societal benefit, with their electric service quality reports.

On May 4, 2010, the Commission issued a "Notice Seeking Comments" in the 08-948 docket requesting comments on issues relating to that docket, including the annual reports filed in compliance with its June 5, 2009 Order. Therefore, the Department concluded that the 08-948 docket was the appropriate forum for comments on the utilities' annual smart grid project reports and did not address those reports in our comments relating to the utilities' 2010 Safety, Reliability, and Service Quality Reports. On March 4, 2011, the Commission issued its "Notice Clarifying Information Sought in Smart Grid Reports" in the 08-948 docket. The Commission directed rate-regulated utilities to file their smart grid reports in both their annual Safety, Reliability, and Service Quality Report and in the 08-948 docket. No request for comments has been issued to date on the 2012 smart grid reports; therefore, the Department will include a summary of MP's smart grid report as filed in its 2012 Annual Report.

II. SUMMARY OF REPORT AND DEPARTMENT ANALYSIS

The Department reviewed MP's 2013 Annual Report to assess compliance with Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7826 and the Commission's December 20, 2012 Order. Information from past annual reports was used to facilitate the identification of issues and trends regarding MP's performance.

A. ANNUAL SAFETY REPORT

The Annual Safety Report consists of two parts:

1. a summary of all reports filed with the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Division of the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (OSHD) during the calendar year; and
2. a description of all incidents during the calendar year in which an injury requiring medical attention or property damage resulting in compensation occurred as a result of downed wires or other electrical system failures and all remedial action taken as a result of any injuries or property damage described.

The following tables are a compilation of MP's summaries of the reports the Company filed with OSHA and OSHD for the previous 10 years.

Table 1: Number of Cases

	Number of Deaths	Number of Cases with Days Away from Work	Number of Cases with Job Transfer or Restriction	Other Recordable Cases
2003	0	18	6	27
2004	0	14	10	33
2005	0	16	11	37
2006	0	17	3	22
2007	0	14	5	19
2008	0	16	6	14
2009	0	5	8	17
2010	1	6	8	19
2011	0	3	10	14
2012	0	4	10	8

According to press reports, the fatality in 2010 was due to electrocution. The OSHA investigation found no hazards at the location that may have contributed to the death. No citations were issued to MP in the matter.

Table 2: Number of Days

	Days of Job Transfer or Restriction	Days Away from Work
2003	324	386
2004	348	489
2005	340	768
2006	500	412
2007	758	122
2008	778	374
2009	215	56
2010	641	139
2011	353	43
2012	598	105

Table 3: Injury & Illness Types

	Injuries	Skin Disorders	Respiratory Conditions	Poisonings	All Other Illnesses
2002	51	0	0	0	4
2003	46	0	0	0	5
2004	51	0	0	0	6
2005	57	0	0	0	7
2006	37	0	0	0	5
2007	37	0	0	0	1
2008	31	2	1	0	2
2009	27	3	0	0	0
2010	32	1	1	0	0
2011	26	1	0	0	0
2012	22	0	0	0	0

MP stated that there were no incidents in 2012 in which injuries requiring medical attention occurred as a result of downed wires or other electrical system failures.

The following table summarizes MP's current and past reporting on incidents in which property damage resulting in compensation occurred as a result of downed wires or other electrical system failures.

Table 4: Property Damage Claims

	Number of Claims	Amount Paid
2003	36	\$33,306.40
2004	49	\$45,864.04
2005	32	\$36,382.12
2006	33	\$64,018.18
2007	30	\$29,824.88
2008	45	\$45,526.73
2009	35	\$46,626.53
2010	22	\$50,634.22
2011	28	\$26,883.41
2012	17	\$12,796.63

The Department notes that, prior to 2007, voltage fluctuations accounted for at least half of the dollar amounts that MP paid to its customers in damage claims. In recent years, damage due to work procedures and damage due to equipment failure have replaced voltage fluctuation as the categories resulting in the highest levels of damage reimbursement.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of Minnesota rules, part 7826.0400.

B. ANNUAL RELIABILITY REPORT

Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0500 requires each utility to file an annual report that includes the following information:

1. reliability performance,
2. storm-normalization method,
3. action plan for remedying any failure to comply with reliability goals,
4. bulk power supply interruption,
5. major service interruptions,
6. circuit interruption data (identify worst-performing circuit),
7. known instances in which nominal voltages did not meet American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards,
8. work center staffing levels, and
9. any other relevant information.

1. Reliability Performance

MP considers its entire service area as a single work center. In Docket No. E015/M-12-308, the Commission set the Company's reliability goals for 2012 as follows:¹

SAIDI (average number of minutes a customer was without power) = 97.69

SAIFI (average number of times a customer was without power) = 1.02

CAIDI (average minutes per outage for customers who lose power) = 95.40

MP reported the following reliability performance for 2012:

SAIDI = 89.75

SAIFI = 0.93

CAIDI = 95.48

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0500, subp. 1A, B, and C. The Department notes that MP met its SAIDI and SAIFI goals, and essentially met its CAIDI goal. The Department notes that MP's CAIDI performance of 95.48 is not significantly higher than its goal of 95.40.

2. Storm-Normalization Method

MP stated that the IEEE 2.5 beta method was used to exclude major events from calculations of reliability indices in 2012. The Company noted that using this method, two major events, each

¹ For ease of reference, the Department attaches to these comments Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7826. Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0200 defines SAIDI, SAIFI and CAIDI. The Department also notes that the three indices are related: CAIDI * SAIFI = SAIDI.

spanning two days, were excluded from the data used to calculate SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIDI in 2012.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0500, subp. 1D.

3. *Action Plan to Improve Reliability*

MP met its SAIDI and SAIFI goals in 2012, and essentially met its CAIDI goal. No specific action plan is deemed necessary at this time.

4. *Bulk Power Supply Interruptions*

MP reported that there were eight events resulting in an interruption of a bulk power supply facility in 2012. MP's descriptions of the outages include the corrective actions taken to minimize outages and restore service.

Four of the eleven interruptions occurred on the 23 Line. MP stated, "In order to resolve interruptions, Distribution Engineering has developed a plan to effectively rebuild this line." MP included a brief overview of these plans, which included replacing large sections of the line by 2015. The Department appreciates the effort put into developing this plan and looks forward to future reporting on improvements to the 23 Line.

5. *Major Service Interruptions*

MP stated that there were 27 reports filed under Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0700 in 2012. The Company provided copies of the reports and a summary table. The longest outage lasted 600 minutes (10 hours) due to a lightning strike that caused a feeder to lock out.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota rules, part 7826.0500, subp. 1G.

6. *Worst Performing Circuit*

Rather than identifying just one circuit, MP identified its four worst performing feeders – two urban and two rural. For each feeder, the Company detailed the causes of the poor performance and the actions planned or completed to improve the performance of these circuits.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota rules, part 7826.0500, subp. 1H.

7. *Compliance with ANSI Voltage Standards*

MP reported two instances in 2012 in which nominal electric service voltages did not meet the standards of ANSI voltage range B. This number is fairly consistent with the number of instances each year since 2003.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0500, subp. 1I.

8. *Work Center Staffing Levels*

MP reported that there were 107 full-time equivalent field employee positions responsible for responding to trouble and for the operation and maintenance of distribution lines in 2012. The number of employee positions reported by MP in the past has ranged from 105 to 108.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7825.0500, subp. 1J.

9. *Other Information*

MP noted that it had no additional information to report at this time.

C. *PROPOSED RELIABILITY STANDARDS FOR 2013*

MP proposed the following reliability goals for 2013:

SAIDI = 90.60
SAIFI = 0.99
CAIDI = 91.52

These goals reflect an average of MP's previous five years of actual performance. The Department notes that these proposed goals reflect an improved level of reliability when compared with previous goals. The Department recommends that the Commission approve MP's proposed 2013 goals.

D. *ANNUAL SERVICE QUALITY REPORT*

Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1300 requires each utility to file the following information:

1. Meter Reading Performance (7826.1400),
2. Involuntary Disconnection (7826.1500),
3. Service Extension Response Time (7826.1600),
4. Call Center Response Time (7826.1700),
5. Emergency Medical Accounts (7826.1800),
6. Customer Deposits (7826.1900), and

7. Customer Complaints (7826.2000).

1. *Meter Reading Performance*

The following information is required for reporting on monthly meter reading performance by customer class:

- A. the number and percentage of customer meters read by utility personnel;
- B. the number and percentage of customer meters self-read by customers;
- C. the number and percentage of customer meters that have not been read by utility personnel for periods of 6 to 12 months and for periods of longer than 12 months;
- D. data on monthly meter reading staffing levels, by work center or geographical area.

MP reported that, on an annual average, approximately 91.03 percent of its meters are read monthly, almost all of which are read by the Company. Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0900, subp. 1 requires that at least 90 percent of all meters during the months of April through November and at least 80 percent of all meters during the months of December through March are read monthly. MP's information reflects that this standard has been met. MP reported maintaining an average of 8.92 full time equivalent monthly meter reading staff in 2012. The following table summarizes the number of service points not read in one year or more according to MP's past nine annual reports.

Table 5: Meters Not Read

	Company Read		Customer Read	
	12 months	+12 months	12 months	+12 months
2003	2	19	0	48
2004	7	16	6	12
2005	3	40	6	36
2006	17	5	10	2
2007	2	33	0	2
2008	1	8	0	0
2009	1	32	0	1
2010	0	0	0	1
2011	0	3	1	3
2012	7	3	1	3

In 2012, MP was relatively successful in ensuring that each meter was read at least once.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1400 and the Company's achievement of the standard set in Minnesota Rules, part 7826.0900, subp. 1.

2. *Involuntary Disconnections*

The following information is required for reporting on involuntary disconnection of service by customer class and calendar month:

- A. the number of customers who received disconnection notices;
- B. the number of customers who sought cold weather rule (CWR) protection under Chapter 7820 and the number of customers who were granted cold weather rule protection;
- C. the total number of customers whose service was disconnected involuntarily and the number of these customers restored to service within 24 hours; and
- D. the number of disconnected customers restored to service by entering into a payment plan.

The following table summarizes residential customer disconnection statistics reported by MP in its annual reports.

Table 6: Residential Customer Involuntary Disconnection Information

	Received Disconnect Notice	Sought CWR Protection	% Granted	Disconnected Involuntarily	Restored within 24 Hours	Restored by Entering Payment Plan
2003	14,888	231	97%	2,010	944	120
2004	23,430	355	99%	2,042	976	41
2005	24,181	461	85%	2,279	1,288	64
2006	25,745	703	81%	2,315	1,219	83
2007	29,223	920	94%	3,038	1,501	171
2008	33,889	1,746	100%	3,293	1,774	204
2009	33,129	1,429	100%	3,229	1,723	311
2010	35,526	1,698	100%	2,853	1,481	297
2011	37,647	3,465	99%	3,009	1,804	331
2012	37,837	3,227	99.8%	3,518	1,828	569

MP also reported information on commercial and industrial involuntary disconnections. The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1500.

3. *Service Extension Requests*

The following information is required for reporting on service extension request response times by customer class and calendar month:

- A. the number of customers requesting service to a location not previously served by the utility and the intervals between the date service was installed

and the later of the in-service date requested by the customer or the date the premises were ready for service; and

- B. the number of customers requesting service to a location previously served by the utility, but not served at the time of the request, and the intervals between the date service was installed and the later of the in-service date requested by the customer or the date the premises were ready for service.

For 2012, MP reported that 653 customers requested service to a location not previously served. Approximately 73 percent of these requests were connected by the date requested. For those that were not, the most common reason was “customer site not ready” followed by “workload” and “bad date info.”²

For locations that previously had service, MP reported that 2,034 residential, 474 commercial and 18 industrial customers requested service in 2012. Approximately 95 percent of these requests were connected by the date requested.

The Department acknowledges that MP provided the information required by Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1600.

4. *Call Center Response Time*

The annual service quality report must include a detailed report on monthly call center response times, including calls to the business office and calls regarding service interruptions. Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1200 requires utilities to answer 80 percent of calls made to the business office during regular business hours and 80 percent of all outage calls within 20 seconds.

MP reported that 176,874 calls were made during business hours (7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) to the Company’s Interactive Voice Response (IVR) unit.³ The Company reported that, on an annual average, 86 percent of all calls received during business hours were answered within 20 seconds.

MP reported that 12,103 calls were received after business hours. MP’s report does not distinguish between calls to the business office and calls regarding service interruptions because, although the Company can determine the number of calls by call category (e.g. service interruption), MP is unable to track response times to individual call categories. Combining all calls, made before and after business hours, shows that an annual average of 84 percent of all calls made to MP in 2012 were answered within 20 seconds. The Department concludes that MP complied with the call response time standard set forth in Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1200 in 2012.

² MP measures service extension request response times as the interval between the date service was installed and the requested service date even in cases where the requested service date cannot be met due to a delay caused by the customer.

³ All calls to Minnesota Power are routed through its IVR unit.

The Department acknowledges that MP has fulfilled the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1700.

5. *Emergency Medical Accounts*

The reporting on emergency medical accounts must include the number of customers who requested emergency medical account status under Minnesota Statutes, section 216B.098, subd. 5, the number whose applications were granted, and the number whose applications were denied, including the reasons for each denial.

MP reported that in 2012, 172 customers requested emergency medical account status. All requests were granted.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1800.

6. *Customer Deposits*

The reporting on customer deposits must include the number of customers who were required to make a deposit as a condition of receiving service.

MP reported monthly information showing that 315 residential customers and 1 commercial customer were required to make a deposit as a condition of receiving service in 2012. This is the highest number of deposits required in one year since 2002.

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, part 7826.1900.

7. *Customer Complaints*

The reporting on customer complaints must include the following information by customer class and calendar month:

- A. the number of complaints received;
- B. the number and percentage of complaints alleging billing errors, inaccurate metering, wrongful disconnection, high bills, inadequate service, and the number involving service extension intervals, service restoration intervals, and any other identifiable subject matter involved in five percent or more of customer complaints;
- C. the number and percentage of complaints resolved upon initial inquiry, within ten days, and longer than ten days;

- D. the number and percentage of all complaints resolved by taking any of the following actions: (1) taking the action the customer requested; (2) taking an action the customer and the utility agree is an acceptable compromise; (3) providing the customer with information that demonstrates that the situation complained of is not reasonably within the control of the utility; or (4) refusing to take the action the customer requested; and
- E. the number of complaints forwarded to the utility by the Commission's consumer Affairs Office for further investigation and action.

MP reported monthly information showing that a total of 780 residential and 81 commercial customer complaints were received in 2012. The most frequent category of complaint was "high bill complaint." MP reported that 82.8 percent of the residential complaints were resolved upon initial inquiry. The Company also reported that 57 percent of resolved complaints were done so by explaining that the situation complained of was not reasonably within the control of Minnesota Power. Table 7 shows the number of complaints forwarded to the Company by the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office over the past several years.

Table 7: Complaints Forwarded by the CAO

	# of Complaints
2005	18
2006	10
2007	8
2008	10
2009	4
2010	15
2011	10
2012	9

The Department acknowledges MP's fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota rules, part 7826.2000.

E. COMPLIANCE WITH DECEMBER 20, 2012 ORDER

- 1. Include a description of the policies, procedures and actions implemented to assure reliability; demonstrate pro-active management of the system, increased reliability and active contingency planning.*

In its report, MP provided a narrative summarizing the Company's existing and planned efforts geared towards improving system reliability. MP summarized the planning process used to prioritize operating and maintenance expenditures, and the Company's vegetation management and pole line inspection programs. MP also discussed improved customer and meter communication, as well as the North American Electric Reliability Corporation's (NERC) role in

discovering, identifying, and providing information that is critical to ensuring the reliability of the bulk power system in North America.

2. *Incorporate a summary that allows the reader to more easily assess the overall reliability of the system and to identify main factors that affect reliability.*

MP provided several graphs showing various aspects of reliability and customer service performance. For example, MP included two pie charts depicting the percent each outage cause contributed to SAIDI and SAIFI. Also of particular interest are the several charts comparing expenditures with reliability performance over the past 5 years.

F. SMART GRID REPORT

MP provided a summary of its 2013 Smart Grid Report filed under Docket No. E999/CI-08-948.⁴ The Company noted that it is continuing the process of implementing its Smart Grid Advance Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Pilot Project, which is partially funded through the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). During 2012, MP installed approximately 4,000 additional AMI meters (for a total of 14,000 meters installed), which now make up approximately 10 percent of MP's overall meter population. Further, MP is participating in the MISO Synchrophasor Project. MP has installed three Phasor Measurement Units (PMUs) and one Phasor Data Concentrator (PDC), which are operational and providing high speed measurement information to MISO and critical locations throughout the transmission system. MP also summarized several other initiatives, relating to transmission investments, outage management, and voltage monitoring, that continued through 2012.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Department recommends that the Commission accept Minnesota Power's filing in fulfillment of the requirements of Minnesota Rules, Chapter 7826 and the Commission's December 20, 2012 Order.

Additionally, the Department recommends that the Commission set the Company's reliability standards for 2013 as proposed by the Company.

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⁴ This report was provided in its entirety as Attachment A in the 2013 Annual Report.

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7826.0100 APPLICABILITY.
7826.0200 DEFINITIONS.

SAFETY

7826.0300 SAFETY STANDARDS.
7826.0400 ANNUAL SAFETY REPORT.

RELIABILITY

7826.0500 RELIABILITY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.
7826.0600 RELIABILITY STANDARDS.
7826.0700 REPORTING MAJOR SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS.

SERVICE

7826.0800 CUSTOMER NOTICE OF PLANNED SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS.
7826.0900 METER READING FREQUENCY; CUSTOMER ACCOMMODATION.
7826.1000 REPLACING MALFUNCTIONING METERS.
7826.1100 KEEPING SERVICE CALLS.
7826.1200 CALL CENTER RESPONSE TIME.
7826.1300 ANNUAL SERVICE QUALITY REPORT FILING.

REPORTING

7826.1400 REPORTING METER-READING PERFORMANCE.
7826.1500 REPORTING INVOLUNTARY DISCONNECTIONS.
7826.1600 REPORTING SERVICE EXTENSION REQUEST RESPONSE TIMES.
7826.1700 REPORTING CALL CENTER RESPONSE TIMES.
7826.1800 REPORTING EMERGENCY MEDICAL ACCOUNT STATUS.
7826.1900 REPORTING CUSTOMER DEPOSITS.
7826.2000 REPORTING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS.

CHAPTER 7826

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

ELECTRIC UTILITY STANDARDS

7826.0100 APPLICABILITY.

This chapter applies to all persons, corporations, or other legal entities engaged in the retail distribution of electric service to the public, with the following exceptions:

- A. cooperative electric associations;
- B. municipal utilities;
- C. persons distributing electricity only to tenants or cooperative or condominium owners in buildings owned, leased, or operated by those persons;
- D. persons distributing electricity only to occupants of a manufactured home or trailer park owned, leased, or operated by those persons; and
- E. persons distributing electricity to fewer than 25 persons.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: 27 SR 1174

Posted: February 13, 2003

7826.0200 DEFINITIONS.

Subpart 1. **Scope.** The terms used in this chapter have the meanings given them in this part.

Subp. 2. **Bulk power supply facility.** "Bulk power supply facility" means the interconnected system that encompasses the electric generation resource, transmission lines, transmission substations, and associated equipment that, upon a total, simultaneous, and sustained interruption, disrupts service to all distribution feeders exiting that substation when those distribution feeders do not have service restoration interconnections with alternate sources.

Subp. 3. **Cold weather rule.** "Cold weather rule" means the set of protections against disconnection during the heating season set forth in Minnesota Statutes, sections 216B.096 and 216B.097.

Subp. 4. **Customer average interruption duration index or CAIDI.** "Customer average interruption duration index" or "CAIDI" means the average customer-minutes of interruption per customer interruption. It approximates the average length of time required to complete service restoration. It is determined by dividing the annual sum of all customer-minutes of interruption durations by the annual number of customer interruptions, using storm-normalized data.

Subp. 5. **Customer complaint.** "Customer complaint" means any call center communication by a utility customer in which the customer states a grievance related to the utility's provision of service to that customer.

Subp. 6. **Interruption.** "Interruption" means an interruption of service to a customer with a duration greater than five minutes.

Subp. 7. **Major service interruption.** "Major service interruption" means an interruption of service at the feeder level or above and affecting 500 or more customers for one or more hours.

Subp. 8. **Resolved.** "Resolved," used in regard to customer complaints, means that the utility has examined the complainant's claims, conducted any necessary investigation, and done one of the following:

- A. taken the action the customer requests;
- B. taken an action the customer and the utility agree is an acceptable compromise;
- C. provided the customer with information that demonstrates that the situation complained of is not reasonably within the control of the utility; or
- D. refused to take the action the customer requested and communicated that refusal to the customer.

Subp. 9. **Storm-normalized data.** "Storm-normalized data" means data that has been adjusted to neutralize the effects of outages due to major storms.

Subp. 10. **System average interruption duration index or SAIDI.** "System average interruption duration index" or "SAIDI" means the average customer-minutes of interruption per customer. It is determined by dividing the annual sum of customer-minutes of interruption by the average number of customers served during the year, using storm-normalized data.

Subp. 11. **System average interruption frequency index or SAIFI.** "System average interruption frequency index" or "SAIFI" means the average number of interruptions per customer per year. It is determined by dividing the total annual number of customer interruptions by the average number of customers served during the year, using storm-normalized data.

Subp. 12. **Utility.** "Utility" means any person, corporation, or other legal entity engaged in the retail distribution of electric service to the public, with the following exceptions:

- A. cooperative electric associations;
- B. municipal utilities;
- C. persons distributing electricity only to tenants or cooperative or condominium owners in buildings owned, leased, or operated by those persons;
- D. persons distributing electricity only to occupants of a manufactured home or trailer park owned, leased, or operated by those persons; and
- E. persons distributing electricity to fewer than 25 persons.

Subp. 13. **Work center.** "Work center" means a portion of a utility's assigned service area that it treats as an administrative subdivision for purposes of maintaining and repairing its distribution system.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174; L 2009 c 110 s 37*

Posted: *June 2, 2009*

SAFETY

7826.0300 SAFETY STANDARDS.

Subpart 1. **National Electrical Safety Code.** When constructing new facilities or reinvesting capital in existing facilities, utilities shall comply with the requirements stated at the time the work is done in the then most recently published edition of the National Electrical Safety Code, as published by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. and approved by the American National Standards Institute. This code is incorporated by reference, is not subject to frequent change, and is conveniently available to the public through the statewide interlibrary loan system.

Subp. 2. **Standards and recommended practices of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. and the American National Standards Institute.** Utilities are encouraged to follow the recommended practices of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc. and the American National Standards Institute on electricity metering and standard voltage ratings for electric power systems and equipment. Utility compliance with these recommended practices creates a rebuttable presumption that a practice is reasonable.

Subp. 3. **Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules.** When constructing, installing, refurbishing, or maintaining facilities, utilities shall comply with all regulations promulgated by the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration and by the Occupational Safety and Health Division of the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: 27 SR 1174

Posted: February 13, 2003

7826.0400 ANNUAL SAFETY REPORT.

On or before April 1 of each year, each utility shall file a report on its safety performance during the last calendar year. This report shall include at least the following information:

A. summaries of all reports filed with the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the Occupational Safety and Health Division of the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry during the calendar year; and

B. a description of all incidents during the calendar year in which an injury requiring medical attention or property damage resulting in compensation occurred as a result of downed wires or other electrical system failures and all remedial action taken as a result of any injuries or property damage described.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: 27 SR 1174

Posted: February 13, 2003

RELIABILITY

7826.0500 RELIABILITY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.

Subpart 1. **Annual reporting requirements.** On or before April 1 of each year, each utility shall file a report on its reliability performance during the last calendar year. This report shall include at least the following information:

A. the utility's SAIDI for the calendar year, by work center and for its assigned service area as a whole;

B. the utility's SAIFI for the calendar year, by work center and for its assigned service area as a whole;

C. the utility's CAIDI for the calendar year, by work center and for its assigned service area as a whole;

D. an explanation of how the utility normalizes its reliability data to account for major storms;

E. an action plan for remedying any failure to comply with the reliability standards set forth in part 7826.0600 or an explanation as to why noncompliance was unavoidable under the circumstances;

F. to the extent feasible, a report on each interruption of a bulk power supply facility during the calendar year, including the reasons for interruption, duration of interruption, and any remedial steps that have been taken or will be taken to prevent future interruption;

G. a copy of each report filed under part 7826.0700;

H. to the extent technically feasible, circuit interruption data, including identifying the worst performing circuit in each work center, stating the criteria the utility used to identify the worst performing circuit, stating the circuit's SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIDI, explaining the reasons that the circuit's performance is in last place, and describing any operational changes the utility has made, is considering, or intends to make to improve its performance;

I. data on all known instances in which nominal electric service voltages on the utility's side of the meter did not meet the standards of the American National Standards Institute for nominal system voltages greater or less than voltage range B;

J. data on staffing levels at each work center, including the number of full-time equivalent positions held by field employees responsible for responding to trouble and for the operation and maintenance of distribution lines; and

K. any other information the utility considers relevant in evaluating its reliability performance over the calendar year.

Subp. 2. **Initial reporting requirements.** By March 30, 2003, each utility shall file its SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIDI for each of the past five calendar years, by work center and for its assigned service area as a whole. If this information is not available, the utility shall file an explanation of how it has been tracking reliability for the past five years, together with reliability data for that period of time. If the utility has implemented a new reliability tracking system that makes comparisons between historical data and current data unreliable, the utility shall explain this situation in its filing.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.0600 RELIABILITY STANDARDS.

Subpart 1. **Annually proposed individual reliability standards.** On or before April 1 of each year, each utility shall file proposed reliability performance standards in the form of proposed numerical values for the SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIDI for each of its work centers. These filings shall be treated as "miscellaneous tariff filings" under the commission's rules of practice and procedure, part 7829.0100, subpart 11.

Subp. 2. **Annually set, utility-specific, reliability standards.** The commission shall set reliability performance standards annually for each utility in the form of numerical values for the SAIDI, SAIFI, and CAIDI for each of its work centers. These standards remain in effect until the commission takes final action on a filing proposing new standards or changes them in another proceeding.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.0700 REPORTING MAJOR SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS.

Subpart 1. **Contemporaneous reporting.** A utility shall promptly inform the commission's Consumer Affairs Office of any major service interruption. At that time, the utility shall provide the following information, to the extent known:

- A. the location and cause of the interruption;
- B. the number of customers affected;
- C. the expected duration of the interruption; and
- D. the utility's best estimate of when service will be restored, by geographical area.

Subp. 2. **Written report.** Within 30 days, a utility shall file a written report on any major service interruption in which ten percent or more of its Minnesota customers were out of service for 24 hours or more. This report must include at least a description of:

- A. the steps the utility took to restore service; and
- B. any operational changes the utility has made, is considering, or intends to make, to prevent similar interruptions in the future or to restore service more quickly in the future.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

SERVICE

7826.0800 CUSTOMER NOTICE OF PLANNED SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS.

Utilities shall give customers the most effective actual notice possible of any planned service interruption expected to last longer than 20 minutes. For any planned interruption expected to exceed four hours, the utility shall provide, if feasible, mailed notice one week in advance and notice by telephone or door-to-door household visits 12 to 72 hours before the interruption. Planned service interruptions must be scheduled at times to minimize the inconvenience to customers. When planned service interruptions exceeding four hours are canceled, utilities shall notify, if feasible, the customers who received notice that service would be interrupted.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.0900 METER READING FREQUENCY; CUSTOMER ACCOMMODATION.

Subpart 1. **Meter reading performance standard.** Utilities shall attempt to read all meters on a monthly basis unless otherwise authorized by the commission. Utilities are assumed to be in compliance with this standard if they read at least 90 percent of all meters during the months of April through November and at least 80 percent of all meters during the months of December through March. Utilities shall contact any customer whose bill has been estimated for two consecutive months and attempt to schedule a meter reading.

Subp. 2. **Evening and weekend meter reading.** Utilities shall read meters during the evening or on Saturday or Sunday for customers whose meters are inaccessible and whose work or other schedule makes meter reading during regular business hours a hardship. When a utility contacts a customer on an individual basis to schedule a meter reading, the utility shall inform the customer of the available alternatives that the utility provides, such as the customer's option to provide a self-read. If alternative arrangements are not acceptable to the customer, the utility shall inform the customer that the utility provides evening and weekend meter reading for customers whose work schedule or other schedule makes meter reading during regular business hours a hardship.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1000 REPLACING MALFUNCTIONING METERS.

Utilities shall replace a malfunctioning meter within ten calendar days of receiving a report from a customer questioning its accuracy or within ten calendar days of learning in some other way that it may be inaccurate.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1100 KEEPING SERVICE CALLS.

Utilities shall keep service call appointments and shall provide as much notice as possible when an appointment cannot be kept. A service call appointment is kept if the worker arrives within a four-hour period set by the utility and clearly communicated to the customer.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1200 CALL CENTER RESPONSE TIME.

Subpart 1. **Calls to business office.** On an annual basis, utilities shall answer 80 percent of calls made to the business office during regular business hours within 20 seconds. "Answer" means that an operator or representative is ready to render assistance or accept the information to handle the call. Acknowledging that the customer is waiting on the line and will be served in turn is not an answer. If the utility uses an automated call-processing system, the 20-second period begins when the customer has selected a menu option to speak to a live operator or representative. Utilities using automatic call-processing systems must provide that option, and they must not delay connecting the caller to a live operator or representative for purposes of playing promotional announcements.

Subp. 2. **Calls regarding service interruptions.** On an annual basis, utilities shall answer 80 percent of calls directed to the telephone number for reporting service interruptions within 20 seconds. "Answer"

may mean connecting the caller to a recording providing, to the extent practicable, at least the following information:

- A. the number of customers affected by the interruption;
- B. the cause of the interruption;
- C. the location of the interruption; and
- D. the utility's best estimate of when service will be restored, by geographical area.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1300 ANNUAL SERVICE QUALITY REPORT FILING.

On or before April 1 of each year, each utility shall file a report on its service quality performance during the last calendar year. These filings must be treated as "miscellaneous tariff filings" under the commission's rules of practice and procedure, part 7829.0100, subpart 11. This report must include at least the information set forth in parts 7826.1400 to 7826.2000.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

REPORTING

7826.1400 REPORTING METER-READING PERFORMANCE.

The annual service quality report must include a detailed report on the utility's meter-reading performance, including, for each customer class and for each calendar month:

- A. the number and percentage of customer meters read by utility personnel;
- B. the number and percentage of customer meters self-read by customers;
- C. the number and percentage of customer meters that have not been read by utility personnel for periods of six to 12 months and for periods of longer than 12 months, and an explanation as to why they have not been read; and
- D. data on monthly meter-reading staffing levels, by work center or geographical area.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1500 REPORTING INVOLUNTARY DISCONNECTIONS.

The annual service quality report must include a detailed report on involuntary disconnections of service, including, for each customer class and each calendar month:

- A. the number of customers who received disconnection notices;
- B. the number of customers who sought cold weather rule protection under Minnesota Statutes, sections 216B.096 and 216B.097, and the number who were granted cold weather rule protection;
- C. the total number of customers whose service was disconnected involuntarily and the number of these customers restored to service within 24 hours; and
- D. the number of disconnected customers restored to service by entering into a payment plan.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174; L 2009 c 110 s 37*

Posted: *June 2, 2009.*

7826.1600 REPORTING SERVICE EXTENSION REQUEST RESPONSE TIMES.

The annual service quality report must include a report on service extension request response times, including, for each customer class and each calendar month:

- A. the number of customers requesting service to a location not previously served by the utility and the intervals between the date service was installed and the later of the in-service date requested by the customer or the date the premises were ready for service; and
- B. the number of customers requesting service to a location previously served by the utility, but not served at the time of the request, and the intervals between the date service was installed and the later of the in-service date requested by the customer or the date the premises were ready for service.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1700 REPORTING CALL CENTER RESPONSE TIMES.

The annual service quality report must include a detailed report on call center response times, including calls to the business office and calls regarding service interruptions. The report must include a month-by-month breakdown of this information.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1800 REPORTING EMERGENCY MEDICAL ACCOUNT STATUS.

The annual service quality report must include the number of customers who requested emergency medical account status under Minnesota Statutes, section 216B.098, subdivision 5, the number whose applications were granted, and the number whose applications were denied and the reasons for each denial.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.1900 REPORTING CUSTOMER DEPOSITS.

The annual service quality report must include the number of customers who were required to make a deposit as a condition of receiving service.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

7826.2000 REPORTING CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS.

The annual service quality report must include a detailed report on complaints by customer class and calendar month, including at least the following information:

- A. the number of complaints received;
- B. the number and percentage of complaints alleging billing errors, inaccurate metering, wrongful disconnection, high bills, inadequate service, and the number involving service-extension intervals, service-restoration intervals, and any other identifiable subject matter involved in five percent or more of customer complaints;
- C. the number and percentage of complaints resolved upon initial inquiry, within ten days, and longer than ten days;
- D. the number and percentage of all complaints resolved by taking any of the following actions:
 - (1) taking the action the customer requested;
 - (2) taking an action the customer and the utility agree is an acceptable compromise;
 - (3) providing the customer with information that demonstrates that the situation complained of is not reasonably within the control of the utility; or
 - (4) refusing to take the action the customer requested; and
- E. the number of complaints forwarded to the utility by the commission's Consumer Affairs Office for further investigation and action.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.81*

History: *27 SR 1174*

Posted: *February 13, 2003*

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Sharon Ferguson, hereby certify that I have this day, served copies of the following document on the attached list of persons by electronic filing, certified mail, e-mail, or by depositing a true and correct copy thereof properly enveloped with postage paid in the United States Mail at St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Minnesota Department of Commerce
Comments**

Docket No. E015/M-13-254

Dated this 31st day of **July, 2013**

/s/Sharon Ferguson

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