



414 Nicollet Mall
Minneapolis, MN 55401

June 9, 2014

—Via Electronic Filing—

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

RE: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION – STATUS UPDATE
PLANNED OUTAGE CUSTOMER NOTICE
DOCKET NO. E,G002/CI-14-56

Dear Dr. Haar:

Northern States Power Company, doing business as Xcel Energy, submits to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission this status update on the actions we are taking to ensure we meet our obligation to provide timely notice to each impacted customer in advance of taking a planned outage.

Background

On February 6, 2014 the Company submitted its response to the Commission's January 24, 2014 NOTICE REQUIRING INFORMATION regarding our compliance with the Rules and Tariff provisions regarding customer notification of planned outages, and the steps we took with regard to the December 2013 planned outages to Laurel Estates at 5610 Laurel Avenue, Golden Valley, Minnesota.

Our response provided the information the Commission requested, observed that we had not met the Rule and Tariff obligations, and apologized for the inconvenience caused to our customers. We additionally conveyed the immediate actions we had taken to ensure that all employees with planned outage customer responsibilities are aware of their need to comply with the notice requirements, and outlined the 60-90-120 day actions we would be taking to further ensure we meet our obligation to provide timeline notice to each customer in advance of taking a planned outage, that included:

- Development of internal policies and guidance to our employees;
- Review of the information systems involved in executing planned outages; and

- Bringing all of this together and training our existing employees, so that they have the tools they need to comply with the notice requirements of our Tariffs and the Rules.

The Department submitted comments on February 20, 2014 recommending that the Commission require the Company file status updates on its process improvements every 60 days, concluding with a final report when new practices and procedures are fully in place and training of current employees is complete. Although the Commission had not yet taken further action in this Docket, on April 9, 2014, we submitted a status update to inform parties of the actions we had been taking to improve our processes. We submit this second status update to discuss further actions we have taken toward our 60-90-120 day plan.

STATUS UPDATE

A. Summary of 60-Day Status Update

We worked through the various aspects of the planned outage and associated customer notice processes in a concurrent fashion, incorporating our findings from the review of our information systems and with the ultimate training materials in mind, as we developed our processes.

In addition to conducting meetings where we reviewed and discussed the planned outage customer notice provisions of our tariff and Rule requirements with all employees involved in the Planned Outage process, we:

- Identified and reviewed the processes that surround planned outage scheduling;
- Reviewed and are updating the existing customer communication forms, including our written customer communication materials and call scripts;
- Assessed the information system implications associated with the data elements needed to provide proper notice to customers;
- Developed specific procedures for responsible individuals to execute system and personal customer notice, as appropriate; and
- Drafted the Planned Outage customer notice policies and procedures, which:
 - Clarify our requirements and the associated individual roles and responsibilities;
 - Specify requirements and processes associated with the length of the planned outage;
 - Identify appropriate customer communication channels;
 - Address weather conditions affecting scheduling; and
 - Provide the customer communication expectations with regard to the cancellation or rescheduling of a planned outage.

We additionally drafted the scope of work for the third party consultant that we will be engaging to assist with a further review of our planned outage customer notice policies and procedures.

B. Current Status Update

In our initial Status Update, we noted that we expected we would seek and engage the third party consultant, refine our processes and procedures, finalize the training and ongoing employee reference materials, and conduct the live training sessions across Minnesota over the next 60 days. In this section, we discuss our actions during the 60-120 day period, which include updates in the area of process, training, and engagement of a third-party consultant.

1. Processes and Procedures Finalized

Most significantly, we completed work on our processes and procedures that support proper notice to customers of planned outage events. These procedures:

- Clarify the responsibilities of all employees involved in the Planned Outage process, from the Regional Operations Vice President to field employees;
- Define “customer” as it relates to planned outage communication expectations; and
- Detail the process for a planned outage that is expected to take less than 20 minutes; 20 minutes to 4 hours; more than 4 hours; and a cancellation and reschedule of a planned outage;
- Outline the outbound letter and outbound call campaigns for the various expected outage lengths;
- Specify the process for door-to-door/in-person door hangers for outages lasting less than 20 minutes;
- Define the weather conditions that call for cancellation of a planned outage event; and
- Detail the steps to take when the expected duration of an outage or a postponement/cancellation/schedule change is necessary for planned outages.

Finally, our processes include an internal self-audit of the proper application of the policies and procedures that we will also use to assess and adjust our training and written reference/job aid materials on an ongoing basis.

2. *Employee Training and Ongoing Reference Materials*

We have completed six live training sessions across our Minnesota service area for employees that have a primary role in communicating with customers as part of the Planned Outage process. In total, we have trained approximately 130 employees in our Twin Cities Metro, Southeast, Northwest, Fargo and Sioux Falls regions. We are currently scheduling make-up sessions for the employees that were unable to attend the initial training sessions, which we expect to complete June 17, 2014. By June 20, 2014, we also expect to conduct an overview/awareness version of the training for employees in roles that are related, but are not directly responsible for customer notification as part of the process

a. Employee Training

Each of the live training sessions have lasted approximately 1.5 hours, and were conducted using a PowerPoint presentation that provides:

- The definition of Tariff 6.4 – Customer Notice of Planned Service Interruptions;
- A message from Stephen Foss, Regional Vice President of Distribution Operations, regarding the importance of customer communication for planned interruptions;
- Roles and responsibilities of the employees that are directly involved in the planned outage process (Supervisor I; Supervisor I, Vegetation Management; and Designers)
- Discussion and job aids conveying the communication processes and notice requirements based on the expected length of outage;
- Instructions on how to obtain a report of premises (and customers) that are expected to be impacted by the outage;
- The steps and requirements involved with the automated outbound letter and call Campaigns, and provision of the template letters and scripts; and
- The process to cancel or reschedule a planned outage.

b. Ongoing Job Aid/Reference Materials

Employees attending the training are provided handouts of the following materials, and are also instructed where to access the most current policies, procedures, and customer communication tools on our internal intranet site:

- Power Point presentation
- Premise/Customer Report Generator Tool
- Call process/outbound call campaign scripts

- Letter process/Letter templates

Also, we are developing an on-line training program that will be required for employees new to the planned outage process. The online training program will also include a refresher module that will be required for employees currently involved in the process.

3. *Third Party Consultant*

We issued a Request for Proposal in early May, seeking proposals from qualified contractors to aid us in reviewing the policies, procedures, training and customer communication materials we have developed, and to provide us insights into industry best practices with regard to planned outage communications. We have selected the top bidder, and are currently in the contracting phase of the engagement, so cannot publicly share the successful bidder's identity until we have an executed agreement and have informed the other bidders.

Over the next 60 days, we will conduct our make-up training sessions, but our efforts will be primarily focused on working with the third-party consultant.

We have electronically filed this document with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, and copies have been served on the parties on the attached service list. Please contact Jody Londo at jody.l.londo@xcelenergy.com or (612) 330-5601 or me at christopher.b.clark@xcelenergy.com or (612) 215-4593 if you have any questions regarding this filing.

Sincerely,

/s/

CHRISTOPHER B. CLARK
REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT
RATES AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

Enclosures
c: Service List

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Theresa M. Sarafolean, hereby certify that I have this day served copies of the foregoing document on the attached list of persons.

by depositing a true and correct copy thereof, properly enveloped with postage paid in the United States mail at Minneapolis, Minnesota;

by email; or

by electronic filing.

MPUC Docket No.: E,G000/CI-14-056
CUSTOMER NOTICE OF PLANNED SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS

Dated this 9th day of June 2014.

/s/

Theresa M. Sarafolean

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