



The Commission met on **Thursday, November 7, 2024**, with Chair Sieben and Commissioners Means, Ham, Sullivan, and Tuma present.

The following matters were taken up by the Commission:

E-002/M-24-27

In the Matter of Northern States Power Co. d/b/a Xcel Energy – Electric’s 2023 Annual Safety, Reliability, and Service Quality Report

E-015/M-24-29

In the Matter of Minnesota Power’s 2023 Annual Safety, Reliability, and Service Quality Report

E-017/M-24-30

In the Matter of Otter Tail Power Co.’s 2023 Annual Safety, Reliability, and Service Quality Report

Commissioner Sullivan moved that the Commission:

1. Accept Xcel’s, Minnesota Power’s, and Otter Tail Power Company’s 2023 safety, reliability, and service quality reports.
2. Set Minnesota Power’s 2024 statewide Reliability Standard at the IEEE benchmarking second Quartile for medium utilities. Minnesota Power’s work center reliability standards are set at the IEEE benchmarking second quartile for small utilities.
3. Require Minnesota Power to file a supplement to its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report 30 days after IEEE publishes the 2023 benchmarking results, with an explanation for any standards the utility did not meet.
4. Set Otter Tail Power’s 2024 statewide Reliability Standard at the IEEE benchmarking second Quartile for medium utilities. Otter Tail’s work center reliability standards are set at the IEEE benchmarking second quartile for medium utilities.
5. Require Otter Tail Power to file a supplement to its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report 30 days after IEEE publishes the 2023 benchmarking results, with an explanation for any standards the utility did not meet.
6. Set Xcel’s 2024 statewide Reliability Standard at the IEEE benchmarking second Quartile for large utilities. Xcel’s Southeast and Northwest work center reliability standards are set at the IEEE benchmarking second quartile for medium utilities. Xcel’s Metro East and

Metro West work center reliability center standards are set at the IEEE benchmarking second quartile for large utilities.

7. Require Xcel to file a supplement to its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report 30 days after IEEE publishes the 2024 benchmarking results, with an explanation for any standards the utility did not meet.
8. Require Minnesota Power and Otter Tail Power to include a discussion on alternative approaches to reliability standard setting in their 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality reports.
9. Require Minnesota Power and Otter Tail Power to include a discussion on the IEEE reporting sample size and data exclusion challenges from this year.
10. Require Minnesota Power and Otter Tail Power to include a discussion of using the EIA 861 data to benchmark utility reliability performance.
11. Require Otter Tail Power to include in its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report performance data for 2024 from both its Interruption Monitoring System (IMS) and their Outage Management System (OMS), if available.
12. Require Minnesota Power to include a discussion on the impact of its new OMS on reporting metrics and a comparison of data from its existing OMS system and its new OMS data, as available, in its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report.
13. Accept Xcel's compliance report on metrics regarding its Emergency Medical Account as ordered in Docket No. E-002/M-22-233.
14. Require Xcel to include an analysis and summary data based on the data points below for 2024 with its next safety, reliability, and service quality report due April 1, 2025 report to better determine if there are areas for improvement in shortening service timelines.
 - Type of new service request (based on Request Type such as Service, Extension, Relocate/Lower Facilities, etc. and Value Characteristic such as Commercial Retail, Other Building, etc.)
 - Date of new service request
 - Requested new in-service date
 - Date of meter installation
 - Date of service connection
15. Require Xcel to report service extension timelines by work center in future safety, reliability, and service quality reports.
16. Grant Xcel's request for a temporary extension of the variance to Minn. Rule 7820.2500 regarding AMI disconnection as approved in the Commission's March 22, 2023, order in Docket No. E-002/M-22-233.

17. Extend the variance until the Commission issues a decision on the variance request as presented in the 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report.
18. Apply the extended variance retroactively to be effective starting from the expiration of the previous variance on April 22, 2024.
19. Increase the existing threshold of final contact for disconnection by requiring Xcel to use two methods of electronic communication, including either text message or email in addition to voicemail where the Company has received customer consent to do so.
20. Approve Xcel's proposal to identify customers throughout its service territory that have not received LIHEAP assistance and are carrying past due balances and approve the Company's proposal to perform targeted outreach to the identified customers.
21. Require Xcel to perform additional outreach throughout its service territory with the goal of increasing participation in affordability programs that reduce bad debt.
22. Require Xcel to publish its disconnection and payment agreement policies and practices on its website. Subject to technical feasibility, Xcel shall make the edits discussed in ECC/CUB's September 12, 2024 comments to its payment agreement webpage.
23. Require Xcel to make a filing in the instant docket and Docket E,G-999/PR-24-02 detailing its current disconnection policies and practices, and require Xcel to submit additional filings in Docket E,G-999/PR-24-02 when there are changes to those policies and practices within 20 days of the Order.
24. Require Xcel to propose a plan, in its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report due April 1, 2025, to restore power for involuntarily disconnected customers with AMI during a heat advisory or excessive heat warning, issued by the National Weather Service and to inform the Commission's consumer affairs office and customers of its plans to restore power for involuntarily disconnected customers with AMI during extreme heat events.
25. Require Xcel to conduct additional outreach and provide customers with information about how to request medical protections if they are particularly vulnerable to poor air quality.
26. Require Xcel to reduce its down payment requirements and modify its disconnection and payment agreement practices to include consideration of individual household financial circumstances. Xcel must offer the down payment percentage amounts as shown in the table above but may offer lower down payment plans as warranted by consideration of individual household circumstances.
27. Require Xcel to detail in its annual safety, reliability, and service quality report the average down-payment amount received from customers—both as a percentage of arrears and as a total dollar value—during CWR and non-CWR months. Xcel shall also

explain how it has implemented the statutorily required consideration of both financial and extenuating circumstances during CWR and non-CWR months.

28. Require Xcel to not send disconnection notices until a customer's balance reaches \$180 past due.
29. Prohibit Xcel from disconnecting customers with a past due balance below \$300.
30. Require Xcel to wait at least 10 days after sending a disconnection notice before disconnecting a customer.
31. Require Xcel to evaluate implementing the following policies and to file the evaluation by April 1, 2025 in its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report.
 - a. Setting the reconnection fee at \$0. The evaluation shall include an estimate of the costs of waiving reconnection fees and how the Company would propose to recover those costs.
 - b. A proposal to increase the number of customers receiving pre-weatherization, weatherization, and energy efficiency improvements, including deep retrofits to create greater energy savings, in areas within the Company's service territory with high energy burden. The proposal should include year over year targets designed to increase the number of people receiving energy efficiency measures.
 - c. A more robust hot-weather rule to prevent disconnections in months with the highest cooling energy burden.
 - d. Creating an off-season LIHEAP program to help income-qualified residents clear their arrears by self-attesting to their income level.
32. Require Xcel to propose a plan, as part of its with its 2024 safety, reliability, and service quality report due on April 1, 2025, to restore power for involuntarily disconnected customers with AMI when high air quality index alerts have been issued.
33. Require Xcel to file in supplemental direct testimony to its rate case filed November 1, 2024 in Docket E002/GR-24-320 a program similar to its offering in Colorado where interest payments and fees from late bill payments are donated to low-income customer assistance programs or the elimination of late fees and interest.
34. Require Xcel to provide a discussion in its next safety, reliability, and service quality report on how it manages disconnections due to a landlord's failure to pay, consistent with the requirements in Minn. R. 7820.1400.
35. Require Xcel to inform affected personnel of racial disparities in electric service.

36. Require Xcel to file a compliance report with its annual safety, reliability, and service quality filing on which employees received the training and what information was provided.
37. Where not otherwise noted, Xcel must file any necessary revised tariff changes within 30 days of the date of this order.
38. Require Xcel to perform additional analysis as outlined in decision options below prior to developing a proposal for targeted undergrounding or enhanced vegetation management.
39. Require Xcel to add the following data to its interactive service quality map by census block group by April 1, 2025:
 - Municipal Boundaries
 - Premise counts by census block group
 - Percentage of underground electric assets
 - Percent of electric premises disconnected for 24 hours or more
 - Average age of arrears for disconnected premises
 - Per premises energy costs
40. Require Xcel to add to its interactive service quality map the average age of homes by Census Block Group by April 1, 2025.
41. Require Xcel to add to its interactive service quality map the average amount of arrears for disconnected premises by April 1, 2025.
42. Delegate authority to the Executive Secretary to work with Xcel and stakeholders to develop a proposal for what affordability and associated service quality data is reported in safety, reliability, and service quality report and what data continues to be reported in other dockets.
43. Require Xcel to conduct a study similar to the TRC Service Quality and Demographics Analysis on a three-year cycle with the next report due on April 1, 2027, with its safety, reliability, and service quality report. Xcel must use five years of data for future analyses.
44. Require Xcel to develop its data collected on causes of CELI-12 outages to inform which causes predominantly affect CBGs currently showing increased CELI-12. Xcel must then analyze whether the primary causes emerging in census block groups with increased CELI-12 are caused by overhead assets.
45. Require Xcel to provide an analysis of distribution equipment vintages in the affected CELI-12 communities and analyze whether upgrading this equipment would be cost effective.

46. Require Xcel to hire an independent third-party evaluator with expertise in evaluating racial disparities to conduct a one-year study that will evaluate Xcel's practices and policies related to capital investment planning, outage restoration practices, and shutoff practices to better understand the causes of these discrepancies in shutoff rates and service reliability. Xcel must engage interested stakeholders to participate and collaborate with the independent third-party evaluator.

The motion passed 5-0.

E-002, E-111, E-017, E-015/CI-24-200

In the Matter of Impacts of the "Capacity" Definition in Minn. Stat. § 216B.164 and Associated Rules on Net-metering Eligibility for Rate-Regulated Utilities

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission delegate authority to the Executive Secretary to open a new rulemaking proceeding to clarify that "capacity," as defined in Minn. Stat. § 216B.164, subd. 2a (c), for purposes of eligibility for net-metering in Minn. Stat. § 216B.164, subd. 3(d), is determined by and measured at the qualifying facility's inverter or a power control system or supplemental device that controls production at the qualifying facility before the net-metered customer's load.

Chair Sieben left the meeting before this docket proceeded, delegating her role to Commissioner Sullivan.

The motion passed 4-0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION: February 19, 2025



Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary