

BEFORE THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Katie J. Sieben  
Valerie Means  
Matthew Schuerger  
Joseph K. Sullivan  
John A. Tuma

Chair  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner

In the Matter of a Commission Investigation  
into the Impact of Severe Weather in  
February 2021 on Impacted Minnesota  
Natural Gas Utilities and Customers

ISSUE DATE: August 30, 2021

DOCKET NO. G-999/CI-21-135

In the Matter of the Petition of CenterPoint  
Energy for Approval of a Recovery Process  
for Cost Impacts Due to February Extreme  
Gas Market Conditions

DOCKET NO. G-008/M-21-138

In the Matter of the Petition by Great Plains  
Natural Gas Co., a Division of Montana-  
Dakota Utilities Co., for Approval of Rule  
Variances to Recover High Natural Gas Costs  
from February 2021

DOCKET NO. G-004/M-21-235

In the Matter of the Petition of Northern  
States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy to  
Recover February 2021 Natural Gas Costs

DOCKET NO. G-002/CI-21-610

In the Matter of the Petition of Minnesota  
Energy Resources Corporation for Approval  
of a Recovery Process for Cost Impacts Due  
to February Extreme Gas Market Conditions

DOCKET NO. G-011/CI-21-611

ORDER GRANTING VARIANCES  
AND AUTHORIZING MODIFIED  
COST RECOVERY SUBJECT TO  
PRUDENCE REVIEW, AND NOTICE  
OF AND ORDER FOR HEARING

**PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

In February 2021, cold weather across much of the United States led to increased demand for natural gas and, in some areas, supply disruptions. An extreme rise in natural gas spot market prices ensued. Minnesota's regulated gas utilities maintained continuous service to customers during this period, but some incurred unprecedented levels of under-recovered costs purchasing gas on the spot market. Such costs ordinarily are billed to ratepayers through the annual automatic adjustment over the next 12-month period beginning on September 1. However, the extreme circumstances in this case prompted the Commission to initiate an investigation.

On February 23, 2021, the Commission heard comments from regulated natural gas utilities;<sup>1</sup> the Department of Commerce, Division of Energy Resources (the Department); and the Office of the Attorney General—Residential Utilities Division (OAG) at a special planning meeting.

On March 2, 2021, the Commission issued an order opening an investigation into impacts of the event and directing impacted rate-regulated natural gas utilities<sup>2</sup> to make filings.<sup>3</sup>

On March 10, 2021, the Commission issued a notice of comment period requiring initial filings from regulated gas utilities and requesting stakeholder comments regarding reliability planning and purchasing strategies, impacts of extreme events, utilities' responses to the February 2021 event, customer impacts, mitigation, recommended regulatory action, and related issues.

On March 16, 2021, in Docket No. G-008/M-21-138, CenterPoint filed a petition for variances from automatic-adjustment rules to allow modified recovery of an estimated \$500 million in February 2021 gas costs through a fixed surcharge over an extended two-year period.

On March 30, 2021, in Docket No. G-004/M-21-235, Great Plains petitioned for rule variances to allow modified recovery of \$11 million in February 2021 gas costs over a 28-month period.

On April 9, 2021, CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains made initial filings in Docket No. G-999/CI-21-135 pursuant to Commission notices and the March 2, 2021 order.

On May 10, 2021, the Department filed comments recommending modified recovery of February 2021 costs, requesting further information on the impacted utilities' actions, and recommending disallowance of certain costs as imprudently incurred. The Department also recommended a broader ongoing investigation into potential policy changes to minimize future impacts.

Also on May 10, 2021, Energy CENTS Coalition (ECC) and Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota (CUB) filed joint comments addressing the impacted utilities' recovery proposals and recommending low-income exemptions, a prudence investigation, and a separate investigation of strategies to better navigate future extreme weather or economic events.

On May 19, 2021, the Commission issued a notice of comment period regarding the appropriate mechanism for impacted utilities to recover extraordinary natural gas costs and other issues.

On July 6, 2021, the impacted utilities filed joint and individual comments, OAG filed comments recommending disallowance of certain costs, and ECC and CUB filed joint comments.

---

<sup>1</sup> Minnesota's rate-regulated natural gas utilities are CenterPoint Energy Resources Corp. (CenterPoint); Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy (Xcel); Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (MERC); Great Plains Natural Gas Co. (Great Plains); and Greater Minnesota Gas, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> In this order, the impacted utilities (or Gas Utilities) are CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains.

<sup>3</sup> *In the Matter of a Commission Investigation into the Impact of Severe Weather in February 2021 on Impacted Minnesota Natural Gas Utilities and Customers*, Docket No. G-999/CI-21-135, Order Opening Investigation (March 2, 2021).

On July 19, 2021, the impacted utilities filed joint and individual reply comments opposing the disallowance recommendations and requesting a contested case. ECC and CUB, the Department, the Suburban Rate Authority, and the City of Minneapolis also filed reply comments.

On August 4 and 5, 2021, the Commission met to consider the matters.

## **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **I. Summary of Commission Action**

In this order, the Commission will find that CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains have not proven that they acted prudently before and during the February 2021 event to protect ratepayers from the risk of extreme gas price increases, and will refer issues of prudence to the Office of Administrative Hearings for contested-case proceedings.

Additionally, the Commission will (1) vary its rules to prevent the impacted utilities from recovering extraordinary costs of the February 2021 event through the annual automatic adjustment; (2) authorize the impacted utilities to recover extraordinary costs over a 27-month period beginning September 1, 2021, using volumetric, seasonally adjusted, stepped surcharge rates, pending prudence review; and (3) affirm that the Commission may disallow recovery or order the refund of any February-event costs found unjust or unreasonable based on the prudence review. In this recovery plan, the Commission will deny recovery of financing costs and require the impacted utilities to exempt certain customer groups from extraordinary-cost surcharges. Further, the Commission will order the impacted utilities to pursue offsets and sales-tax exemptions and will require various compliance filings.

Finally, the Commission will direct the Executive Secretary to convene a stakeholder group to examine whether prospective changes to natural gas supply planning are appropriate.

### **II. Prudence**

#### **A. Legal Standard**

Every rate made, demanded, or received by a public utility must be just and reasonable.<sup>4</sup> The burden to prove a rate is just and reasonable is on the utility seeking the change, and any doubt as to reasonableness will be resolved in favor of the consumer.<sup>5</sup> In incurring costs necessary to provide service, utilities are expected to act prudently to protect ratepayers from unreasonable risks. Utilities that fail to do so will not be allowed to recover the costs of those failures.

---

<sup>4</sup> Minn. Stat. § 216B.03.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*; Minn. Stat. § 216B.16, subd. 4.

## **B. Comments**

### **1. The Department**

In reviewing the impacted utilities' requests to recover natural gas costs from the February 2021 severe-weather and price-spike event, the Department indicated a need for further investigation regarding the reasonableness and prudence of impacted utilities' actions and costs.

However, the Department concluded that each impacted utility, to varying degrees, acted unreasonably in not fully deploying available storage gas, in light of the weather forecasts and observed increases in spot gas prices leading into President's Day weekend and the amount of storage that was available relative to the late timing in the heating season.

Because it concluded that the impacted utilities unreasonably failed to utilize available storage to protect ratepayer interests, the Department recommended that the Commission disallow recovery of the difference between the costs each utility actually incurred and costs it would have incurred had it deployed maximum available storage volumes. Applying this formula, the Department recommended the following disallowance amounts: \$47,831,374 for CenterPoint; \$20,464,474 for Xcel; \$21,219,372 for MERC; and \$673,248 for Great Plains.

### **2. OAG**

OAG argued that public weather data and internal emails and chat logs show that, leading into President's Day weekend, the utilities knew about the impending cold weather and its potential to disrupt natural gas supply, had observed price increases, and were aware of extreme market volatility likely to cause even higher prices through the holiday weekend. Based on this alleged knowledge, OAG argued that the impacted utilities acted imprudently in following their usual procurement strategies and purchasing daily spot priced gas at unreasonable levels.

OAG contended that the impacted utilities should have diversified their natural gas purchasing to better protect ratepayers from excessive pricing before and during the event. To reduce market-volatility risks, OAG argued, the utilities should have had more geographic diversity in their spot market procurement strategies so they could take advantage of lower prices at unaffected hubs during extreme market events. Additionally, OAG argued that the utilities should have pursued more fixed-price contracts to reduce reliance on index priced gas in the days and weeks leading to the weather event, when weather forecasts and other information predicted market volatility.

OAG also contended that impacted utilities imprudently failed to fully deploy mitigation measures such as storage, peaking resources, curtailment, and conservation messaging to customers, which could have reduced the amount of gas purchased during the price-spike event.

OAG analyzed the individual actions of each impacted utility and calculated gas costs they should have avoided through prudent actions before and during the event. Based on these calculations, OAG recommended that the Commission disallow recovery in the following amounts: \$290.7 million for CenterPoint; \$45.4 million for MERC; \$34.2 million for Xcel; and \$9.5 million for Great Plains.

OAG emphasized that the impacted utilities, which posted strong profits for shareholders in the first quarter of 2021, should not pass imprudent costs on to ratepayers who had no opportunity to

avoid the costs and who, in many cases, have been struggling to pay utility bills and to recover from pandemic-related hardships even without the added burden of extraordinary gas costs.

OAG did not oppose other parties' requests for further record development regarding prudence.

### **3. City of Minneapolis**

The City of Minneapolis agreed with OAG's analysis and recommendation that the Commission should disallow recovery of \$290.7 million in costs imprudently incurred by CenterPoint.

### **4. Suburban Rate Authority**

The Suburban Rate Authority argued that evidence of impacted utilities' imprudence before and during the February 2021 event requires further review and possible disallowance of cost recovery. It expressed particular concern about whether Xcel and CenterPoint appropriately used storage and peaking capacity, curtailment, and conservation messaging.

### **5. CUB and ECC**

CUB and ECC recommended further record development to evaluate the prudence of the impacted utilities' costs and actions during and surrounding the February 2021 event. They specifically questioned the impacted utilities' use of storage, peaking resources, curtailment, and financial hedging before and during the event, and their post-event efforts to pursue legal or regulatory actions to recover possible overpayments to gas suppliers and seek compensation for any improper price gouging or market manipulation.

### **6. Public Comments**

The Commission received more than 90 public comments. Most contended that the February 2021 gas costs are unreasonably high, that utilities incurred the costs imprudently, and that the utilities' shareholders—not ratepayers—should absorb the costs. Several commenters stated that utilities failed to notify them of price increases or encourage conservation before or during the event. Many commenters argued that utilities should be precluded from charging customers interest or should allow the option to pay upfront to avoid carrying charges. Some commenters stated that it will be difficult to pay a higher gas bill given their personal financial circumstances.

### **7. Impacted Utilities**

Each impacted utility argued that it acted reasonably and prudently and is entitled to recover all gas costs incurred. In response to the disallowance recommendations, the utilities argued that they have a right to further process to justify their claimed costs.

## **C. Commission Action**

Based on the current record and the arguments presented, the Commission concludes that the impacted utilities have not substantiated their claims that they acted prudently before and during the February 2021 event, and they have not met their burdens to prove that gas costs incurred during the event are just, reasonable, and recoverable from ratepayers.

Further process is necessary to develop a complete record upon which the Commission may evaluate the complex, multifaceted questions of prudence that will govern the recoverability of costs incurred by the impacted utilities during the February 2021 event. The Commission therefore will order further proceedings following the procedures and guidelines set forth below.

### **III. Procedure for Prudence Review**

#### **A. Establishment of Utility-Specific Dockets**

Some parties initially recommended investigating the calculation and prudence of each impacted utility's February 2021 costs and reviewing their recovery proposals in four separate, utility-specific dockets. However, by the time of the August 4 meeting, the parties generally concurred that it would be reasonable to proceed either with utility-specific dockets or with a joint docket.

The Commission finds it reasonable to investigate each impacted utility's request for recovery of costs from the February 2021 event in a separate docket and, therefore, has opened new dockets for investigations specific to Xcel (Docket No. G-002/CI-21-610) and MERC (Docket No. G-011/CI-21-611). The recovery requests of CenterPoint (Docket No. G-008/M-21-138) and Great Plains (Docket No. G-004/M-21-235) will proceed in their utility-specific dockets. The broader, prospective investigation discussed below will continue in Docket No. G-999/CI-21-135.

This approach will facilitate clarity and efficiency in navigating the complex, fact-specific investigations into each impacted utility's unique actions, while allowing flexibility to prioritize and focus on the various retrospective and prospective issues in these dockets as appropriate.

#### **B. Notice-and-Comment or Contested-Case Proceedings**

##### **1. Legal Standard**

The Commission will refer a matter to the Office of Administrative Hearings for contested-case proceedings if it finds that all significant issues have not been resolved to its satisfaction or if the proceeding involves contested material facts and there is a right to a hearing.<sup>6</sup>

##### **2. Comments**

The impacted utilities contended that a contested case is required under Minn. R. 7829.1000. First, they argued there are contested material facts regarding each utility's knowledge, opportunity, and actions underlying the disallowance recommendations. Second, they argued that Minn. R. 7825.2920, subp. 3, creates a right to a hearing before the Commission may fix, discontinue, or modify automatic purchased-gas adjustments. The utilities also argued that a contested case is appropriate to provide due process and ensure a complete factual record.

CUB and ECC requested a Commission notice-and-comment process rather than a contested case. They argued that it would be difficult for them to participate in a contested case with their limited resources, particularly because it would likely overlap with contested-case proceedings in rate cases multiple utilities plan to initiate this fall. The Suburban Rate Authority and the City of Minneapolis shared these concerns and supported a Commission notice-and-comment process.

---

<sup>6</sup> Minn. R. 7829.1000.

The Department and OAG initially supported CUB and ECC's request for a Commission notice-and-comment process to enable CUB and ECC to fully participate in the prudence review. At the August 4 Commission meeting, however, the Department and OAG agreed that they would not oppose referral to a contested case.

The utilities argued that stakeholders' resource concerns could be mitigated by holding a joint contested case focused narrowly on the contested fact issues material to the proposed disallowances. Additionally, in response to concerns about limited time and staffing, the utilities agreed to work with the other parties to coordinate the scheduling of this contested case and the anticipated upcoming rate cases to accommodate overlapping deadlines. Further, at the Commission meeting, the utilities agreed to explore the possibility of offering CUB and ECC voluntary material assistance that would allow their full participation in the contested case.

### **3. Commission Action**

#### **a. Referral to Contested Case**

As discussed above, the impacted utilities have not met their burdens to prove the prudence of their actions or to justify the costs they seek to recover. Multiple significant issues have not been resolved to the Commission's satisfaction. Therefore, referral to the Office of Administrative Hearings for a contested case is appropriate. Contested-case proceedings offer a thorough, efficient, and transparent method to develop a robust record and fully explore all relevant issues, helping the Commission to reach a sound decision. Although the recovery proposals will proceed in separate, utility-specific dockets, the Commission will request consolidated contested-case proceedings to avoid redundancy and to capture efficiencies as appropriate given the likelihood of overlapping facts, technical issues, and industry standards at issue in all four cases.

To allow the Commission time to fully consider the report and recommendations of the administrative law judge (ALJ) and reach a final decision before year two of recovery begins, the Commission respectfully requests that the ALJ provide a report by May 4, 2022.

#### **b. Issues to Be Addressed**

In the course of this case, the Commission expects the parties will thoroughly develop a full record addressing, at a minimum, the following issues:

- A. Did the individual Gas Utilities act prudently before, during, and after the February Event,<sup>7</sup> and are costs related to the February Event reasonable to recover from ratepayers?
- B. Should the Commission disallow recovery of any costs for each utility?
- C. If there are any disallowances for imprudent or unreasonable action, how should these costs be calculated?
- D. The specific prudence questions raised so far, including but not limited to:

---

<sup>7</sup> As discussed in further detail below, "the February Event" is February 13–17, 2021.

- i. When and to what extent did Gas Utilities become aware of the potential for extreme weather during the February Event, and did they respond prudently and reasonably?
- ii. Did the Gas Utilities have enough geographic diversity of gas supply and, if not, what was the potential financial impact?
- iii. Should the Gas Utilities have had additional fixed-price contracts and, if so, what was the potential financial impact?
- iv. Did the Gas Utilities maximize use of storage capacity and, if not, what was the potential financial impact?
- v. Did the Gas Utilities maximize use of peaking capacity and, if not, what was the potential financial impact? Has Xcel's maintenance and operation of its Wescott, Sibley, and Maplewood facilities resulted in financial impact?
- vi. Should the Gas Utilities have made more robust conservation efforts and, if so, what was the potential financial impact?
- vii. Did the gas utilities timely and appropriately pursue recovery through insurance, federal regulatory actions, market rules, contract enforcement, and other available legal actions such that they have not missed deadlines or become barred from possible recovery on behalf of ratepayers and, if not, what is the potential financial impact?
- viii. Are there any other issues or actions related to prudence and, if so, what is the potential financial impact?

- E. Is it possible to assign extraordinary costs to customers or customer classes based on their consumption during the February Event and, if so, would it be reasonable to do so?

The Commission will ask the ALJ to make findings specific to each individual utility.

This issue list is not exhaustive; rather, the Commission requests the development of any additional issues that may be relevant to the prudence of the impacted utilities' actions or costs relating to the February Event, whether previously raised or arising in the future.

### **c. Additional Considerations**

The Commission recognizes the consumer advocates' concerns that the complexity and cost of a contested case may impede their ability to participate fully in the ongoing prudence review, particularly considering the cumulative resource demands of simultaneous participation in anticipated rate cases. Consumer advocacy organizations serve a valuable role in representing the interests of ratepayers and particularly vulnerable Minnesotans. To help ensure these voices are represented as fully as feasible in these proceedings, the Commission encourages the impacted utilities to explore the possibility of a voluntary agreement to provide material assistance to enable CUB and ECC to participate fully in the contested case. Within 10 days, the impacted utilities shall make a compliance filing regarding these discussions and any resultant agreements.

To further reduce the cumulative burdens of overlapping participation in multiple contested cases, per the parties' agreement, the Commission will require the impacted utilities to work with the Department, OAG, and the other participants to initiate the prudence contested case in the fall of 2021 and coordinate its scheduling to accommodate the deadlines of other contested cases.



Expert testimony will be highly valuable to help the Commission analyze the substantial record and reach well-informed conclusions on the multiple complex issues necessary to determine the prudence of costs sought in these dockets. At the Commission meeting, the Department stated that it had not yet requested proposals for necessary experts due to staffing issues coming out of a pandemic-related hiring freeze. Given the importance of expert analysis in this investigation, the Commission requests that the Commissioner of Commerce seek authorization from the Commissioner of Management and Budget to incur costs for specialized technical and professional services and personnel to investigate the impacted utilities' requests for cost recovery, storage prudence, Xcel's operation and maintenance of peak shaving facilities, and all stakeholder proceedings related to these dockets.

#### **IV. Procedural Outline for Contested Case**

##### **A. Administrative Law Judge**

The ALJs assigned to this case are Jessica Palmer-Denig and Barbara Case. Their address is: Office of Administrative Hearings, 600 North Robert Street, St. Paul, Minnesota. Their mailing address is P.O. Box 64620, St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620. The ALJs can be reached through their legal assistant, Michelle Severson, at 651-361-7874 or [Michelle.Severson@state.mn.us](mailto:Michelle.Severson@state.mn.us).

##### **B. Hearing Procedure**

- *Controlling Statutes and Rules*

Hearings in this matter will be conducted in accordance with the Minnesota Administrative Procedure Act, Minn. Stat. §§ 14.57–14.62; the rules of the Office of Administrative Hearings, Minn. R. 1400.5100–1400.8400; and, to the extent that they are not superseded by those rules, the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, Minn. R. 7829.0100–7829.4000.

These rules and statutes can be accessed free of charge through the State of Minnesota's website at [www.revisor.mn.gov/pubs](http://www.revisor.mn.gov/pubs). Copies of these rules and statutes may also be purchased from the Print Communications Division of the Department of Administration, 660 Olive Street, St. Paul, Minnesota 55155; (651) 297-3000.

The Office of Administrative Hearings conducts contested-case proceedings in accordance with the Minnesota Rules of Professional Conduct and the Professionalism Aspirations adopted by the Minnesota State Bar Association.

- *Right to Counsel and to Present Evidence*

In these proceedings, parties may be represented by counsel, may appear on their own behalf, or may be represented by another person of their choice, unless otherwise prohibited as the unauthorized practice of law. They have the right to present evidence, conduct cross-examination, and make written and oral argument. Under Minn. R. 1400.7000, they may obtain subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents.

Parties should bring to the hearing all documents, records, and witnesses necessary to support their positions.

- *Discovery and Informal Disposition*

Any questions regarding discovery under Minn. R. 1400.6700–1400.6800 or informal disposition under Minn. R. 1400.5900 should be directed to Jorge Alonso at 651-201-2258 or Jorge.Alonso@state.mn.us, or Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2147.

- *Protecting Not-Public Data*

State agencies are required by law to keep some data not public. Parties must advise the ALJ if not-public data is offered into the record. They should take note that any not-public data admitted into evidence may become public unless a party objects and requests relief under Minn. Stat. § 14.60, subd. 2.

- *Accommodations for Disabilities; Interpreter Services*

At the request of any individual, this agency will make accommodations to ensure that the hearing in this case is accessible. The agency will appoint a qualified interpreter if necessary. Persons must promptly notify the ALJ if an interpreter is needed.

- *Scheduling Issues*

The times, dates, and places of public and evidentiary hearings in this matter will be set by order of the ALJ after consultation with the Commission and intervening parties.

- *Notice of Appearance*

Any party intending to appear at the hearing must file a notice of appearance (attached) with the ALJ within 20 days of the date of this Notice of and Order for Hearing.

- *Sanctions for Non-Compliance*

Failure to appear at a prehearing conference, a settlement conference, or the hearing, or failure to comply with any order of the ALJ, may result in facts or issues being resolved against the party who fails to appear or comply.

### **C. Parties and Intervention**

The current parties to this case are CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, Great Plains, the Department, and OAG. Other persons wishing to become formal parties shall promptly file petitions to intervene with the ALJ and serve copies of such petitions on all current parties and on the Commission.<sup>8</sup>

The Commission values the participation of all stakeholders, particularly in this matter of extraordinary consequence to Minnesotans. Accordingly, if any organizations that have filed comments in this proceeding request to intervene as parties in the contested case, the Commission respectfully requests that the ALJ grant those intervention requests.

---

<sup>8</sup> Minn. R. 1400.6200.

#### **D. Prehearing Conference**

A prehearing conference will be held on **Monday, September 13, at 11:00 a.m.**, via telephone, using the following call-in information: (888) 742-5095; conference code 396 255 8115#.

Persons participating in the prehearing conference should be prepared to discuss time frames, scheduling, discovery procedures, and similar issues. Potential parties are invited to attend the pre-hearing conference and to file their petitions to intervene as soon as possible.

#### **E. Ex Parte Communications**

Restrictions on ex parte communications with Commissioners and reporting requirements regarding such communications with Commission staff apply to this proceeding from the date of this order. Those restrictions and reporting requirements are set forth at Minn. R. 7845.7300–7845.7400, which all parties are urged to consult.

### **V. Defining the February Event and Extraordinary Costs**

#### **A. Comments**

In initial filings, CenterPoint defined the pricing event as February 12–22, 2021, but Xcel and MERC used February 13–17. The Department recommended using February 13–17 based on its analysis of daily pricing. The Department stated that prices immediately before and after those dates were higher than usual, but not so extraordinary as to require potentially varying the automatic adjustment rules for a longer purchasing period. At the August 4 meeting, all parties and participants agreed that the February Event should be defined as February 13–17, 2021.

To determine which costs are considered “extraordinary” and therefore may be appropriate for exclusion from automatic recovery, the Department analyzed the daily gas prices immediately before and after the February Event and concluded that amounts below \$20 per dekatherm (Dth) could reasonably be considered “normal” under-recovery appropriate for inclusion in the automatic adjustment mechanism. The Department recommended using the margin between \$20/Dth and the actual average daily price experienced by the utilities during the February Event as “extraordinary costs” to be recovered through an alternative mechanism. The Department’s recommendation was unopposed at the time of the Commission meeting.

Applying the Department’s definition of extraordinary costs to the February 13–17 period, the impacted utilities calculated the following revised extraordinary gas costs: \$408,755,953 for CenterPoint; \$178,978,695 for Xcel; \$64,975,882 for MERC; and \$8,827,249 for Great Plains.

#### **B. Commission Action**

The Commission agrees with the parties that February 13–17, 2021, reasonably represents the period when gas prices were elevated to such a degree as to potentially warrant an alternative recovery mechanism. Therefore, for purposes of these dockets, the Commission will define “the February Event” as February 13–17, 2021.

The Commission also agrees with the Department’s analysis of the line between ordinary and extraordinary daily gas prices and finds it reasonable to define extraordinary costs for purposes

of these dockets as the margin between \$20/Dth and the actual average daily price experienced by the utilities during the February Event.

The Commission will also accept the revised extraordinary-cost amounts that the impacted utilities calculated by applying this extraordinary-cost definition within the February Event dates. However, those amounts remain subject to prudence review, and the impacted utilities will be required to justify the reasonableness and prudence of any costs they seek to recover.

## **VI. Variances from Automatic-Adjustment Rules**

Under Minn. R. 7825.2390–7825.2920, rate-regulated utilities may adjust their rates between general rate cases to reflect fluctuations in certain energy costs paid by the utility. These adjustments are called automatic adjustments because they ordinarily take effect without prior Commission approval.<sup>9</sup>

Total annual gas costs are reviewed when utilities file their annual automatic adjustment (AAA) reports by September 1 each year. AAA reports include detailed information about all automatic adjustments made in the 12-month period from July 1 of the previous year to June 30 of the reporting year.<sup>10</sup> The reports show, by customer class, the difference between gas costs actually incurred and those collected from ratepayers, and include a proposed plan to reconcile (true-up) this difference by increasing or refunding rates over the next 12-month billing cycle.<sup>11</sup>

Given the magnitude of under-recovered costs reportedly incurred during the February 2021 event, impacted utilities and consumer advocates raised concerns that recovering these costs through the existing AAA true-up mechanism would cause dramatic rate increases and, thus, potentially severe financial impacts to customers. To reduce the likelihood of rate shock and to mitigate customer impacts, the impacted utilities proposed to track their extraordinary costs related to the February 2021 event separately and recover those costs over an extended period of 24 to 28 months, using a surcharge separate from the AAA true-up mechanism.

### **A. Variance Standard**

Under Minn. R. 7829.3200, subp. 1, the Commission will grant a variance from its rules when the following criteria are met: (1) enforcing the rule would impose an excessive burden upon the applicant or others affected by the rule, (2) granting the variance would not adversely affect the public interest, and (3) granting the variance would not conflict with standards imposed by law.

### **B. Comments**

The parties and participants expressed general consensus that the public interest requires varying Commission rules to prevent the automatic recovery of extraordinary February Event gas costs through the impacted utilities' AAA true-up mechanisms. The impacted utilities, the Department, OAG, CUB, ECC, the City of Minneapolis, and the Suburban Rate Authority agreed that recovery of extraordinary costs over a 12-month period would cause dramatic rate increases that would significantly impact ratepayers, particularly in the coming year as Minnesotans continue

---

<sup>9</sup> Minn. R. 7825.2500.

<sup>10</sup> Minn. R. 7825.2810; Minn. R. 7825.2910, subp. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Minn. R. 7825.2700, subp. 7; Minn. R. 7825.2810; Minn. R. 7825.2910, subp. 4.

to face hardships from the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar concerns about the impacts of severe bill increases were also noted in multiple public comments.

In addition to varying the 12-month recovery period, some parties and participants argued that variances are appropriate to adjust the month-to-month distribution of extraordinary costs over the course of the year. Recovery through the AAA true-up mechanism would result in even more extreme bill increases when gas usage is higher, thus impacting customers more severely in the winter months when they already have higher gas bills and rely more on gas for heating needs. Parties therefore argued that extraordinary costs should be removed from the AAA mechanism to allow for a smoother distribution of costs to reduce ratepayer impacts in the winter.

### **C. Commission Action**

The Commission finds that the Minn. R. 7829.3200 criteria are present to justify variances from Minn. R. 7825.2500; Minn. R. 7825.2700, subp. 7; Minn. R. 7825.2810; and Minn. R. 7825.2910, subp. 4, to prevent CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains from recovering extraordinary costs through the AAA true-up mechanism.

The Commission agrees with the parties and participants that enforcing the existing rules, thus allowing automatic recovery of extraordinary February Event costs within the 12-month period beginning on September 1, 2021, would impose an excessive burden on ratepayers through dramatic rate increases, compounding the challenges Minnesotans are already facing related to the COVID-19 pandemic and its far-reaching impacts. The public interest would be better served in this case by varying the automatic-adjustment rules to remove extraordinary February Event costs from the automatic adjustment mechanism so that any recovery of prudent extraordinary costs may occur through an alternative mechanism designed to mitigate immediate impacts to ratepayers. No party has identified any legal standard in conflict with these requested variances.

The Commission therefore will vary its rules to prevent CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains from recovering extraordinary costs through the automatic adjustment for 27 months.

Subject to prudence review, non-extraordinary February Event costs may be recovered through the automatic adjustment in the utilities' AAA true-up dockets as authorized by the Commission.

## **VII. Mechanism for Recovery of Extraordinary Costs**

### **A. Proposal and Comments**

The initial proposals and comments recommended extended recovery periods ranging from 24 to 28 months, instead of the automatic period of 12 months, with the goal of mitigating ratepayer impacts by reducing the size of each monthly surcharge. The Department noted that the benefit of reducing price increases should be weighed against the risk of intergenerational inequities from extending the out-of-period adjustment period. However, based on the magnitude of under-recovery and likely ratepayer impacts, all parties and participants at the August 4, 2021 meeting agreed that a 27-month period is appropriate for recovering extraordinary February Event costs.

CenterPoint initially proposed a fixed surcharge to level out bill impacts throughout the year, avoid severe bill increases in cold-weather months, and protect high-usage customers from

extremely high surcharges. Xcel and Great Plains separately proposed volumetric recovery,<sup>12</sup> recognizing that lower-usage customers likely consumed less gas during the February Event. Xcel and Great Plains also proposed to adjust the surcharge rates seasonally, applying higher rates in the summer and lower rates in the winter, to smooth rate impacts throughout the year and protect ratepayers from even larger bill increases in the winter, when gas consumption is higher.

Following consultation with stakeholders, the impacted utilities agreed on the following joint proposal for a 27-month volumetric surcharge with seasonally adjusted, stepped rates:

<b>Months</b>	<b>Rates in Effect</b>
Sept.–Oct. 2021	Year 1 Summer Rates (2.5 times Year 1 Winter Rates)
Nov. 2021–Apr. 2022	Year 1 Winter Rates
May–Oct. 2022	Year 1 Summer Rates (2.5 times Year 1 Winter Rates)
Nov. 2022	Year 1 Winter Rates
Dec. 2022–Apr. 2023	Year 2 Winter Rates (2 times Year 1 Winter Rates)
May–Oct. 2023	Year 2 Summer Rates (2 times Year 1 Summer Rates)
Nov. 2023	Year 2 Winter Rates (2 times Year 1 Winter Rates)

Additionally, the impacted utilities proposed a year-two implementation plan under which the impacted utilities, the Department, OAG, ECC, and CUB would confer in July 2022 regarding the costs recovered to date and impacts of the recovery structure. By September 1, 2022, the impacted utilities would submit filings with year-two recovery rates incorporating updated information regarding the Commission’s prudence review, cost recovery to date, rate mitigation and offsets, impacts of the recovery mechanism, and any proposed modifications.

All parties and participants at the August 4 meeting supported the utilities’ joint recovery plan.

## **B. Commission Action**

### **1. Recovery Mechanism for Extraordinary Costs**

The Commission finds the joint proposal for extraordinary-cost recovery reasonable and will authorize the impacted utilities to implement it pending prudence review. On September 1, 2021,<sup>13</sup> CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains may begin recovering extraordinary gas costs incurred during the February Event from all sales customer classes—with the exceptions discussed below—over a 27-month period. The recovery mechanism shall be a volumetric surcharge with seasonally adjusted, stepped rates, with lower rates in the first 15 months and higher rates in the last 12 months.

<sup>12</sup> Volumetric recovery would involve multiplying a surcharge rate by each customer’s gas usage, resulting in higher surcharge amounts for customers who consume higher volumes of gas.

<sup>13</sup> Xcel indicated that its billing software may not be able to implement its extraordinary-cost surcharge until October 2021. The Commission will allow Xcel to do so provided that it maintains a 27-month recovery distribution as approved herein to preserve the mitigating effect of extended recovery with respect to ratepayer impacts. Xcel is not authorized to condense recovery into a shorter time period.

Applying a volumetric rate will avoid the potential inequities of imposing disproportionate burdens on lower-usage customers and will avoid undermining the savings customers have achieved through energy-conservation investments, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 216B.03.

A volumetric natural gas surcharge is likely to be most burdensome in the winter, when heating load causes higher gas bills. To mitigate winter ratepayer impacts, the Commission will approve seasonal adjustments to apply lower rates in the winter and higher rates in the summer.

Applying a lower surcharge in the initial 15-month step of recovery will help to keep the added financial burden lower in the near term, as Minnesotans continue to recover from impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the Commission anticipates that the prudence review will be completed within the initial 15-month step while lower surcharge rates are in effect, which should afford ratepayers protection against paying the higher year-two rates unless and until the utilities prove those costs are just and reasonable.<sup>14</sup>

The Commission will also adopt the year-two implementation plan outlined on page 7 of the utilities' joint July 6, 2021 filing (except to the extent it references possible finance charges, for the reasons discussed below). In the interest of transparency and clarity, it is reasonable to require the impacted utilities to confer with stakeholders, incorporate updated information into year-two rates, and submit a filing with the updates and any proposed modifications after the extraordinary-cost recovery mechanism has been implemented for a number of months and before recovery year two commences with higher surcharge rates.

Although the prudence and recoverability of February Event costs remain in dispute, the Commission finds reasonable the parties' proposal to begin recovery on September 1, 2021, extended over a 27-month period, pending prudence review. This approach strikes a reasonable balance between the utilities' right to recover costs of service and the goal to protect customers from unreasonable or inequitable rate increases. However, the approval of this recovery plan implies no judgment on the merits of whether the costs were prudently incurred, an issue that will be examined carefully through the contested-case proceedings described above.

The Commission appreciates the parties' and participants' extensive work and cooperation to reach agreement on a recovery plan that fully recognizes and preserves the Commission's authority to disallow future recovery and order refunds of costs already recovered from ratepayers to the extent that further review reveals imprudence.

## **2. Bills, Tariff Language, and Compliance and Tracking Filings**

CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains must show the monthly extraordinary-cost surcharge as a separate line item on customer bills. Utilities may also provide a bill onsert or insert explaining the surcharge to customers. By August 10, 2021, each impacted utility shall file the proposed bill language and a sample bill for approval by the Commission's Executive Secretary.

---

<sup>14</sup> The Commission emphasizes, however, that any and all February Event costs found to be imprudent, unjust, or unreasonable will be subject to disallowance or, to the extent they have already been recovered from ratepayers, ordered refunded. The fact that a cost has been collected from ratepayers shall not affect the Commission's authority to find it imprudent and order the utility to refund that amount to ratepayers.

By August 16, 2021, in their respective utility-specific recovery-request dockets, each impacted utility shall file tariff language and rates for the extraordinary cost surcharge mechanism for approval by the Executive Secretary.

Beginning on October 1, 2021, the impacted utilities in their respective dockets shall submit quarterly compliance and tracking filings for the extraordinary-cost surcharge mechanism.

## **VIII. Customer Exemptions**

### **A. Comments**

CUB and ECC recommended exempting certain vulnerable customers from extraordinary-cost surcharges related to the February Event. First, they recommended exempting all customers who currently or previously received assistance through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) during the heating seasons of 2019–2020 or 2020–2021. Additionally, they recommended exempting customers with gas bills that are 61 to 120 days past due to protect customers struggling to pay their utility bills who may not qualify for income-based assistance.

CUB and ECC acknowledged that any exemptions would require non-exempt customers to absorb some additional cost burden. To identify exemption parameters that appropriately balance the goals of protecting the most vulnerable customers without unduly impacting others, CUB and ECC analyzed the impact of their proposed exemptions on CenterPoint’s customers. The analysis showed that the exemptions would increase the surcharge for very low-use customers (18 therms per month) by \$3.57 total over the two-year recovery period, and for very high-use customers (130 therms per month) by \$26.53. CUB and ECC argued that these minor impacts felt by non-exempt customers would not outweigh the benefits of exempting the most vulnerable customers.

CenterPoint, Xcel, and MERC proposed to expand CUB and ECC’s low-income exemption to also include residential customers who currently or previously received LIHEAP assistance at any time during the 2021–22 or 2022–23 heating seasons.<sup>15</sup> CenterPoint, Xcel, and MERC also supported exempting customers with bills more than 60 days and fewer than 120 days past due. Additionally, recognizing that the groups of customers falling within these exemptions would vary over time, CenterPoint, Xcel, and MERC proposed a schedule to recalibrate their lists of exempt customers once every six months.

At the August 4 Commission meeting, all parties and participants supported these proposed exemptions and the utilities’ plan for periodically updating the group of exempt customers.

### **B. Commission Action**

The Commission appreciates the collaborative efforts to reduce the impacts of this extreme event on the most vulnerable Minnesotans while considering the interests of all ratepayers. The exemption proposal brought forth by CUB and ECC, as refined by CenterPoint, Xcel, and MERC, will provide necessary relief for low-income customers and those struggling to pay significantly past-due bills. Therefore, the Commission finds the proposed exemptions from

---

<sup>15</sup> Great Plains initially indicated it could not facilitate low-income exemptions with its existing billing system, but it revised its position and supported the exemptions at the August 4 Commission meeting.



extraordinary-cost surcharges reasonable and will require CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains to implement them, as specified in the ordering paragraphs below.

The Commission recognizes that non-exempt ratepayers will absorb some additional costs to allow these exemptions. However, the Commission is persuaded by CUB and ECC's rate-impact analysis and agrees that the impact on each non-exempt customer will be minor compared to the likely harm of imposing the surcharge on the customers least able to afford it.

By August 16, 2021, in its utility-specific recovery docket, each impacted utility shall file tariff language on these exemptions for approval by the Executive Secretary.

Additionally, beginning on October 1, 2021, the utilities in their respective dockets shall submit quarterly compliance and tracking filings regarding the approved exemptions.

## **IX. Financing Costs and Bad Debt**

### **A. Comments**

#### **1. CenterPoint**

CenterPoint initially sought to charge ratepayers a carrying charge or interest equal to its after-tax rate of return of 8.72% throughout the extended recovery period for extraordinary costs. CenterPoint later reduced this request to a 0.7% financing charge based on the actual cost of debt it secured to finance February Event costs. CenterPoint argued that recovery of this financing cost is necessary to ensure the financial health of the utility and that disallowing it would lead to higher costs of debt in the future, which in turn would lead to higher rates for customers.

Alternatively, if the Commission does not approve financing-cost recovery through the surcharge at this time, CenterPoint requested deferred accounting to track its financing costs from March 2021 through the recovery period for possible recovery in a future rate case. CenterPoint argued that deferred accounting would be appropriate because the financing costs are necessary to the provision of utility services to customers and are significant, unforeseen, and unusual due to the extraordinary size of February Event gas costs.

CenterPoint also requested authorization to track and defer to a regulatory asset any incremental bad-debt expense associated with the event, for possible recovery in a future proceeding.

#### **2. Opposition to CenterPoint's Proposal**

The Department recommended that the Commission deny recovery or deferred accounting of financing costs because gas costs are a pass-through for which a utility is not entitled a rate of return. The Department rejected CenterPoint's argument that recovery of financing costs is necessary to the utility's financial health, arguing that this claim is factually unsupported and is contrary to CenterPoint's statements to investors that the February Event posed no significant financial risk to the company. Further, the Department stated that there was no justification to charge ratepayers interest for costs the ratepayers did not cause and had no way to mitigate.

CUB and ECC argued that CenterPoint had not demonstrated a need to recover financing costs and that allowing such recovery would unfairly impose significant burdens on ratepayers.

OAG opposed allowing impacted utilities to collect carrying charges, financing costs, or other forms of interest on costs associated with the February Event, arguing that doing so would unjustly allow the utilities or their creditors to profit from the February Event at the expense of ratepayers who had no opportunity to mitigate the impacts of the event.

Additionally, OAG opposed allowing utilities to track and defer incremental bad-debt expense stemming from the price spike because utilities already recover bad-debt expenses in their base rates, there has been no showing that any bad-debt expenses utilities may incur as a result of the February Event meet the high standard for deferred accounting, and it may not be practically possible to distinguish bad debt attributable to the February Event from other bad debt.

## **B. Commission Action**

The Commission agrees with the analyses of the Department, CUB and ECC, and OAG, and will therefore deny CenterPoint's requests for recovery or deferred accounting of financing costs and bad-debt expense associated with the February Event. CenterPoint has not demonstrated sufficient justification to impose these additional, unusual burdens on ratepayers.

## **X. Ongoing Mitigation Efforts**

### **A. Comments**

CUB and ECC recommended that the Commission require the impacted utilities to pursue any contractual or legal remedies with suppliers and participate in regulatory investigations that could result in reimbursement of some of the February Event costs, and require ongoing reporting on such efforts. CUB and ECC expressed concern that, absent an order requiring the utilities to pursue offsets from other sources, the utilities' interest in pursuing remedies may diminish if and when they are allowed to begin recovering February Event costs from ratepayers.

The Department and OAG also supported requiring impacted utilities to make all reasonable efforts to pursue offsets and file periodic progress reports. No one opposed these proposals.

At the Commission meeting, the impacted utilities generally indicated that they were evaluating possible offset opportunities but—other than a dispute between CenterPoint and a supplier over whether small volumes of gas were undelivered during the February Event—none of the utilities had identified any viable claims to offset February Event costs. The impacted utilities stated that they will monitor any relevant investigations by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other regulatory agencies and consider whether intervention is appropriate. However, at the time of the meeting, the impacted utilities had not commenced or joined any litigation and were not aware of any findings of improper conduct that may lead to recoupment of February Event costs.

### **B. Commission Action**

The Commission agrees with CUB and ECC and finds it reasonable and in the public interest to require the impacted utilities to make all reasonable efforts to mitigate the costs they seek to recover from ratepayers related to the February Event. Therefore, the Commission will require the impacted utilities to make such efforts, which may include litigation, negotiation, or any other offset possibilities. For accountability and transparency, the Commission will require the impacted utilities to file quarterly reports on their progress with these efforts.

If a utility obtains an offset of any amount of February Event costs outside of the 27-month recovery period, the utility within 30 days must file a proposal to refund the offset to ratepayers.

## **XI. Sales-Tax Exemptions**

In public comments, John Purdy recommended that any gas-cost surcharge be timed to take advantage of the seasonal sales-tax exemption on residential heating fuels available from November through April under Minn. Stat. § 297A.67, subd. 15. The Commission appreciates Mr. Purdy's contribution and agrees that it would be reasonable to seek a sales-tax exemption for gas costs incurred during the February Event.

The Commission will require the impacted utilities to pursue from the Minnesota Department of Revenue or, if necessary, the Legislature, a sales tax exemption for all February Event costs, and refund any difference to ratepayers as soon as practicable. The utilities shall file an update on these efforts within 30 days and, if necessary, before April 15, 2022. At the August 4 meeting, CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains stated that they do not object to this requirement.

## **XII. Prospective Investigation**

Acknowledging the significant impacts of the February Event on Minnesotans and the observed and anticipated increase in frequency of extreme weather events, all parties and participants in these dockets supported convening a broader, prospective inquiry into issues such as gas utility supply planning, practices to mitigate risks of market volatility, and regulatory oversight, and whether any changes may be appropriate to prevent or reduce impacts of future extreme weather and market events on Minnesota's ratepayers and regulated natural gas utilities.

The Executive Secretary will convene a stakeholder group beginning no later than August 2022 to examine these prospective issues. To make these efforts as comprehensive and productive as possible, the stakeholder group should coordinate this inquiry with work on the Natural Gas Innovation Act to the extent appropriate, as coordinated by the Executive Secretary. The stakeholder group should include Minnesota's rate-regulated natural gas utilities and other interested parties, including but not limited to the Department, OAG, CUB, and ECC.

The Commission will delegate authority to the Executive Secretary to establish timelines, comment periods, and procedures for the prospective inquiry as appropriate. The Executive Secretary will also determine whether the group should be facilitated by a third-party expert and, if so, select the expert.

As an initial step toward the prospective changes mentioned above, the Commission finds it reasonable to require each impacted utility to develop a plan for communicating with customers about future price spikes. Throughout these proceedings, multiple public commenters expressed frustration with the lack of communication from utilities during and preceding the February Event to alert customers to potential price increases or encourage conservation. Commenters asserted that proactive communication from utilities would have enabled customers to make informed decisions to reduce their gas consumption and mitigate bill impacts.

To address this issue in case of future price spikes, the Commission will require the impacted utilities, by November 1, 2021, to file communication plans for approval. The plans should include multiple means of customer outreach, including phone calls, text messages, emails, and

social media. The Commission will delegate authority to the Executive Secretary to review and approve communication plans.

## **ORDER**

1. The Commission finds that the Gas Utilities have not proven that they acted prudently before and during the February Event to protect ratepayers from the risk of extreme price increases, and that further process is required. The Commission reaffirms that the Gas Utilities have the burden to prove that they acted prudently and produce evidence that justifies cost recovery, that other parties are not required to prove imprudence, that all doubts about whether the utilities have met their burden must be resolved in favor of ratepayers, that utilities are expected to act prudently and reasonably to protect ratepayers from risks, and that utilities that fail to do so should not recover the costs of those failures.
2. The February Event dates for all utilities are defined to be February 13–17, 2021.
3. February Event extraordinary costs are defined as the margin between \$20/dekatherm and the actual average price experienced by the utilities.
4. Subject to prudence review, the Commission accepts the revised extraordinary costs for CenterPoint Energy Resources Corp. (\$408,755,953); Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy (\$178,978,695); Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (\$64,975,882); and Great Plains Natural Gas Co. (\$8,827,249).
5. Subject to prudence review, CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains may recover non-extraordinary costs through the automatic adjustment in the annual true-up filing dockets for each utility beginning on September 1, 2021, as authorized by the Commission.
6. The Commission hereby varies Minn. R. 7825.2500; Minn. R. 7825.2700, subp. 7; Minn. R. 7825.2810; and Minn. R. 7825.2910, subp. 4, to prevent CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains from recovering extraordinary costs through the automatic adjustment for a period of 27 months.
7. The Gas Utilities are authorized to recover February Event extraordinary costs starting on September 1, 2021, through a surcharge mechanism as established herein. If a utility starts after that date, it still must maintain the rate-mitigation distribution of the payments at 15 months for the first payment cycle and 12 months for the second payment cycle.
8. The Gas Utilities are authorized to recover February Event extraordinary costs from all sales customer classes, with the exception of low-income customers as defined in this order, over a 27-month period.
9. The Gas Utilities are authorized to recover February event extraordinary costs using a volumetric charge with seasonally adjusted and stepped surcharge rates, with lower rates applied over the first 15 months and higher rates in the last 12 months.
10. CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains must show the monthly surcharges for these extraordinary costs as a separate line item on customer bills. The Commission delegates

authority to the Executive Secretary to approve the bill language for a bill onsert or insert, which explains the surcharge. CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains shall file the proposed bill language and a sample bill by August 10, 2021.

11. The Commission adopts the Gas Utilities' year-two implementation plan as outlined in page 7 of their joint July 6 filing, except for the recommendation regarding possible finance charges.
12. CenterPoint, Xcel, MERC, and Great Plains must exempt low-income residential customers who receive or previously received Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program assistance during 2019–2020, 2020–2021, 2021–2022, or 2022–2023, as well as those residential customers who are 60 to 120 days in arrears on their natural gas bills, from the extraordinary cost surcharge established in this order. The Gas Utilities are authorized to recalibrate the customers covered by this exemption once every six months—exempting any new customers who have received LIHEAP or who fall within the category of being greater than 60 days and less than 120 days in arrears on a going-forward basis and removing customers who are no longer greater than 60 days and less than 120 days in arrears. The Gas Utilities will set exempted customers based on arrears and current or previous LIHEAP status as of June 30, 2021. These exemptions will be adjusted effective March 1, 2022, based on arrears and new LIHEAP enrollments as of January 31, 2022; September 1, 2022, based on arrears and new LIHEAP enrollments as of July 31, 2022; and March 1, 2023, based on arrears and new LIHEAP enrollments as of January 31, 2023.
13. The Gas Utilities shall make all reasonable efforts to pursue recovery or offsets related to the February Event and to make quarterly compliance filings beginning on September 1, 2021, to report progress on any litigation, negotiations, or other offset possibilities.
14. The Gas Utilities shall file refund proposals within 30 days of any offsets that were not included in the 27-month recovery period.
15. The Gas Utilities shall pursue a sales tax exemption from the Minnesota Department of Revenue or, if necessary, the Legislature, for all February Event costs, and refund any difference as soon as practicable. The Gas Utilities shall provide a status update in a compliance filing within 30 days of this order and, if necessary, before April 15, 2022.
16. Recovery of any financing costs is denied.
17. The Gas utilities are not authorized to track and defer to a regulatory asset any incremental bad debt expense associated with the February Event.
18. CenterPoint (in Docket No. G-008/M-21-138), Xcel (in Docket No. G-002/CI-20-610), MERC (in Docket No. G-011/CI-21-611), and Great Plains (in Docket No. G-004/M-21-235) shall submit compliance filings including tariff language and rates for the extraordinary cost surcharge mechanism and low-income exemptions approved in this order by August 16, 2021. The Commission delegates authority to the Executive Secretary to approve the compliance filings.

19. CenterPoint (in Docket No G-008/M-21-138), Xcel (in Docket No. G-002/CI-21-610), MERC (in Docket No. G-011/CI-21-611), and Great Plains (in Docket No. G-004/M-21-235) shall submit quarterly compliance and tracking filings beginning on October 1, 2021, for the extraordinary cost surcharge mechanism and low-income exemptions approved in this order.
20. The Commission finds that additional prudence review is necessary and that all costs related to the February Event recovered through the automatic adjustments or any surcharge are subject to refund.
21. The prudence of Gas Utilities and the February Event costs should be evaluated in a contested case hearing. The Commission will refer the specific docket for each utility to the Office of Administrative Hearings for a joint contested case hearing. The Commission requests that the ALJ provide specific findings for each utility individually.
22. The Commission requests that the assigned ALJ grant intervention requests for organizations that filed comments in this proceeding.
23. The Commission requests development of the following issues in the contested case:
  - A. Did the individual Gas Utilities act prudently before, during, and after the February Event, and are costs related to the February Event reasonable to recover from ratepayers?
  - B. Should the Commission disallow recovery of any costs for each utility?
  - C. If there are any disallowances for imprudent or unreasonable action, how should these costs be calculated?
  - D. The specific prudence questions raised so far, including but not limited to:
    - i. When and to what extent did Gas Utilities become aware of the potential for extreme weather during the February Event, and did they respond prudently and reasonably?
    - ii. Did the Gas Utilities have enough geographic diversity of gas supply and, if not, what was the potential financial impact?
    - iii. Should the Gas Utilities have had additional fixed-price contracts and, if so, what was the potential financial impact?
    - iv. Did the Gas Utilities maximize use of storage capacity and, if not, what was the potential financial impact?
    - v. Did the Gas Utilities maximize use of peaking capacity and, if not, what was the potential financial impact? Has Xcel's maintenance and operation of its Wescott, Sibley, and Maplewood facilities resulted in financial impact?
    - vi. Should the Gas Utilities have made more robust conservation efforts and, if so, what was the potential financial impact?
    - vii. Did the Gas Utilities timely and appropriately pursue recovery through insurance, federal regulatory actions, market rules, contract enforcement, and other available legal actions such that they have not missed deadlines

- or become barred from possible recovery on behalf of ratepayers and, if not, what is the potential financial impact?
- viii. Are there any other issues or actions related to prudence and, if so, what is the potential financial impact?
- E. Is it possible to assign extraordinary costs to customers or customer classes based on their consumption during the February Event and, if so, would it be reasonable to do so?
24. The Commission requests the ALJ's report at least 120 days before September 1, 2022.
  25. By November 1, 2021, the Gas Utilities shall file for approval communication plans for future price spikes. The plan should include multiple means of customer outreach, including phone calls, text messages, emails, and social media. The Commission delegates authority to the Executive Secretary to review and approve communication plans.
  26. The Executive Secretary will convene a stakeholder group beginning no later than August 2022 to examine whether prospective changes are appropriate for natural gas supply planning, and coordinate the stakeholder group's relationship to work on the Natural Gas Innovation Act. The stakeholder group shall include the rate regulated gas utilities and other interested parties, including, at a minimum, the Department of Commerce Division of Energy Resources, the Office of the Attorney General, the Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota, and Energy CENTS Coalition. The Commission delegates authority to the Executive Secretary to establish timelines, comment periods, and procedures as appropriate, including determining whether the group should be facilitated by a third-party expert and, if so, the selection of the outside expert.
  27. The Commission requests the Commissioner of the Minnesota Commerce Department to seek authorization from the Commissioner of Management and Budget to incur costs for specialized technical and professional services and personnel to investigate the impacted natural gas utilities' request for cost recovery, Xcel's operation and maintenance of peak shaving facilities, storage prudence, and all stakeholder proceedings related to Docket Nos. G-999/CI-21-135, G-004/M-21-235, and G-008/M-21-138 (or any related docket(s) opened by the Commission) pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 216B.62, subd. 8.
  28. CenterPoint shall provide testimony in its next rate case about call center performance, staffing levels in and outside of Minnesota, budgets, and costs for the last three years and specifically during the February 2021 natural gas pricing event. The Commission requests that the Department, OAG, and other parties evaluate whether that performance was reasonable and, if not, what steps should be taken.
  29. The Gas Utilities shall work with the Department, OAG, and the other intervenors to (1) initiate the contested case in the fall of 2021, and (2) coordinate the scheduling of the contested case proceeding to accommodate the deadlines of other contested cases.
  30. Within 10 days, the joint utilities shall make a compliance filing informing the Commission of negotiations and agreements on material assistance that would allow CUB and ECC to participate fully in the prudence review contested case.

31. This order shall become effective immediately.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION



Will Seuffert  
Executive Secretary



This document can be made available in alternative formats (e.g., large print or audio) by calling 651.296.0406 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us) for assistance.



STATE OF MINNESOTA  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS

In the Matter of the Petitions for Recovery of  
Certain Gas Costs

**NOTICE OF APPEARANCE**

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that:**

1. The party/agency named below (Party/Agency) will appear at the prehearing conference and all subsequent proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

2. By providing its email address below, the Party/Agency acknowledges that it has read and agrees to the terms of the Office of Administrative Hearings' e-Filing policy and chooses to opt into receiving electronic notice from the Office of Administrative Hearings in this matter. **Note: Provision of an email address DOES NOT constitute consent to electronic service from any opposing party or agency in this proceeding.**<sup>1</sup>

3. The Party/Agency agrees to use best efforts to provide the Office of Administrative Hearings with the email address(es) for opposing parties and their legal counsel.

**Party's/Agency's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Party's/Agency's Attorney:** \_\_\_\_\_

Firm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Respondent's/Opposing Party's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Party/Agency or Attorney**

<sup>1</sup> In order to opt in to electronic notice, this form must be emailed to [OAH.efiling.support@state.mn.us](mailto:OAH.efiling.support@state.mn.us). If the party does not wish to opt in to electronic notice, this form may be filed with the Office of Administrative Hearings via facsimile, U.S. Mail, or personal service. See Minn. Stat. § 14.58, Minn. R. 1400.5550, subps. 2-5.

## **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I, Chrishna Beard, hereby certify that I have this day, served a true and correct copy of the following document to all persons at the addresses indicated below or on the attached list by electronic filing, electronic mail, courier, interoffice mail or by depositing the same enveloped with postage paid in the United States mail at St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Minnesota Public Utilities Commission**

**ORDER GRANTING VARIANCES AND AUTHORIZING MODIFIED COST  
RECOVERY SUBJECT TO PRUDENCE REVIEW, AND NOTICE OF AND  
ORDER FOR HEARING**

Docket Number **G-999/CI-21-135, G-008/M-21-138, G-004/M-21-235, G-002/CI-21-  
610, G-011/CI-21-611**

Dated this 30th day of August, 2021

/s/ Chrishna Beard

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
James J.	Bertrand	james.bertrand@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Brenda A.	Bjorklund	brenda.bjorklund@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Generic Notice	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	445 Minnesota Street Suite 1400  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Brian	Edstrom	briane@cubminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota St Ste W1360 Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 280  Saint Paul, MN 551012198	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Edward	Garvey	garveyed@aol.com	Residence	32 Lawton St  Saint Paul, MN 55102	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Robert	Harding	robert.harding@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	Suite 350 121 7th Place East  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Kim	Havey	kim.havey@minneapolismn.gov	City of Minneapolis	350 South 5th Street, Suite 315M Minneapolis, MN 55415	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Travis	Jacobson	travis.jacobson@mdu.com	Great Plains Natural Gas Company	400 N 4th St  Bismarck, ND 58501	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Erica	Larson	erica.larson@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Avenue P.O. Box 59038 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55459-0038	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Amber	Lee	Amber.Lee@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Annie	Levenson Falk	annief@cupminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota Street, Suite W1360  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Pam	Marshall	pam@energycents.org	Energy CENTS Coalition	823 7th St E  St. Paul, MN 55106	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Brian	Meloy	brian.meloy@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
David	Moeller	dmoeller@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 W Superior St  Duluth, MN 558022093	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Andrew	Moratzka	andrew.moratzka@stoel.com	Stoel Rives LLP	33 South Sixth St Ste 4200  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Samantha	Norris	samanthanorris@alliantenergy.com	Interstate Power and Light Company	200 1st Street SE PO Box 351  Cedar Rapids, IA 524060351	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Lisa	Peterson	lisa.r.peterson@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy	414 Nicollet Mall FL 7  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012131	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Will	Seuffert	Will.Seuffert@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	121 7th PI E Ste 350  Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Peggy	Sorum	peggy.sorum@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Richard	Stasik	richard.stasik@wecenergygroup.com	Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (HOLDING)	231 West Michigan St - P321  Milwaukee, WI 53203	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
James M	Strommen	jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com	Kennedy & Graven, Chartered	150 S 5th St Ste 700  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List
Eric	Swanson	eswanson@winthrop.com	Winthrop & Weinstine	225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-135_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
James J.	Bertrand	james.bertrand@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Brenda A.	Bjorklund	brenda.bjorklund@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Barbara	Case	barbara.case@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	600 N. Robert St.  St. Paul, Mn. 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Generic Notice	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	445 Minnesota Street Suite 1400  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Brian	Edstrom	briane@cubminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota St Ste W1360 Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 280  Saint Paul, MN 551012198	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Edward	Garvey	garveyed@aol.com	Residence	32 Lawton St  Saint Paul, MN 55102	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Robert	Harding	robert.harding@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	Suite 350 121 7th Place East  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Kim	Havey	kim.havey@minneapolismn.gov	City of Minneapolis	350 South 5th Street, Suite 315M Minneapolis, MN 55415	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Travis	Jacobson	travis.jacobson@mdu.com	Great Plains Natural Gas Company	400 N 4th St  Bismarck, ND 58501	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Erica	Larson	erica.larson@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Avenue P.O. Box 59038 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55459-0038	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Amber	Lee	Amber.Lee@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Annie	Levenson Falk	annief@cupminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota Street, Suite W1360  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Pam	Marshall	pam@energycents.org	Energy CENTS Coalition	823 7th St E  St. Paul, MN 55106	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
David	Moeller	dmoeller@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 W Superior St  Duluth, MN 558022093	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Andrew	Moratzka	andrew.moratzka@stoel.com	Stoel Rives LLP	33 South Sixth St Ste 4200  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Samantha	Norris	samanthanorris@alliantenergy.com	Interstate Power and Light Company	200 1st Street SE PO Box 351  Cedar Rapids, IA 524060351	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Jessica	Palmer Denig	jessica.palmer-Denig@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	600 Robert St N PO Box 64620 St. Paul, MN 55164	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138
Lisa	Peterson	lisa.r.peterson@xcelenergy.com	Xcel Energy	414 Nicollet Mall FL 7  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21- 138

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012131	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21-138
Will	Seuffert	Will.Seuffert@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	121 7th Pl E Ste 350  Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21-138
Peggy	Sorum	peggy.sorum@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21-138
Richard	Stasik	richard.stasik@wecenergygroup.com	Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (HOLDING)	231 West Michigan St - P321  Milwaukee, WI 53203	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21-138
James M	Strommen	jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com	Kennedy & Graven, Chartered	150 S 5th St Ste 700  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21-138
Eric	Swanson	eswanson@winthrop.com	Winthrop & Weinstine	225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-138_Official Service List G008-M-21-138



[illegible]

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Richard	Stasik	richard.stasik@wecenergygroup.com	Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (HOLDING)	231 West Michigan St - P321  Milwaukee, WI 53203	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-235_Official

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
James J.	Bertrand	james.bertrand@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Brenda A.	Bjorklund	brenda.bjorklund@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Barbara	Case	barbara.case@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	600 N. Robert St.  St. Paul, Mn. 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Generic Notice	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	445 Minnesota Street Suite 1400  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Brian	Edstrom	briane@cubminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota St Ste W1360 Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 280  Saint Paul, MN 551012198	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Edward	Garvey	garveyed@aol.com	Residence	32 Lawton St  Saint Paul, MN 55102	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Robert	Harding	robert.harding@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	Suite 350 121 7th Place East  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Kim	Havey	kim.havey@minneapolismn.gov	City of Minneapolis	350 South 5th Street, Suite 315M Minneapolis, MN 55415	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Travis	Jacobson	travis.jacobson@mdu.com	Great Plains Natural Gas Company	400 N 4th St  Bismarck, ND 58501	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Erica	Larson	erica.larson@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Avenue P.O. Box 59038 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55459-0038	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Amber	Lee	Amber.Lee@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Annie	Levenson Falk	annief@cupminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota Street, Suite W1360  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Pam	Marshall	pam@energycents.org	Energy CENTS Coalition	823 7th St E  St. Paul, MN 55106	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Brian	Meloy	brian.meloy@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
David	Moeller	dmoeller@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 W Superior St  Duluth, MN 558022093	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Andrew	Moratzka	andrew.moratzka@stoel.com	Stoel Rives LLP	33 South Sixth St Ste 4200  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Samantha	Norris	samanthanorris@alliantenergy.com	Interstate Power and Light Company	200 1st Street SE PO Box 351  Cedar Rapids, IA 524060351	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Jessica	Palmer Denig	jessica.palmer-Denig@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	600 Robert St N PO Box 64620 St. Paul, MN 55164	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Lisa	Peterson	<a href="mailto:lisa.r.peterson@xcelenergy.com">lisa.r.peterson@xcelenergy.com</a>	Xcel Energy	414 Nicollet Mall FL 7  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	<a href="mailto:residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us">residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us</a>	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012131	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Will	Seuffert	<a href="mailto:Will.Seuffert@state.mn.us">Will.Seuffert@state.mn.us</a>	Public Utilities Commission	121 7th PI E Ste 350  Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Peggy	Sorum	<a href="mailto:peggy.sorum@centerpointenergy.com">peggy.sorum@centerpointenergy.com</a>	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Richard	Stasik	<a href="mailto:richard.stasik@wecenergygroup.com">richard.stasik@wecenergygroup.com</a>	Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (HOLDING)	231 West Michigan St - P321  Milwaukee, WI 53203	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
James M	Strommen	<a href="mailto:jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com">jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com</a>	Kennedy & Graven, Chartered	150 S 5th St Ste 700  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List
Eric	Swanson	<a href="mailto:eswanson@winthrop.com">eswanson@winthrop.com</a>	Winthrop & Weinstine	225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-610_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
James J.	Bertrand	james.bertrand@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Brenda A.	Bjorklund	brenda.bjorklund@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Barbara	Case	barbara.case@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	600 N. Robert St.  St. Paul, Mn. 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Generic Notice	Commerce Attorneys	commerce.attorneys@ag.state.mn.us	Office of the Attorney General-DOC	445 Minnesota Street Suite 1400  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Brian	Edstrom	briane@cubminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota St Ste W1360 Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Sharon	Ferguson	sharon.ferguson@state.mn.us	Department of Commerce	85 7th Place E Ste 280  Saint Paul, MN 551012198	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Edward	Garvey	garveyed@aol.com	Residence	32 Lawton St  Saint Paul, MN 55102	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Robert	Harding	robert.harding@state.mn.us	Public Utilities Commission	Suite 350 121 7th Place East  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Kim	Havey	kim.havey@minneapolismn.gov	City of Minneapolis	350 South 5th Street, Suite 315M Minneapolis, MN 55415	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Travis	Jacobson	travis.jacobson@mdu.com	Great Plains Natural Gas Company	400 N 4th St  Bismarck, ND 58501	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Erica	Larson	erica.larson@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Avenue P.O. Box 59038 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55459-0038	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Amber	Lee	Amber.Lee@centerpointenergy.com	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Annie	Levenson Falk	annief@cupminnesota.org	Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota	332 Minnesota Street, Suite W1360  St. Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Pam	Marshall	pam@energycents.org	Energy CENTS Coalition	823 7th St E  St. Paul, MN 55106	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Brian	Meloy	brian.meloy@stinson.com	STINSON LLP	50 S 6th St Ste 2600  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
David	Moeller	dmoeller@allete.com	Minnesota Power	30 W Superior St  Duluth, MN 558022093	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Andrew	Moratzka	andrew.moratzka@stoel.com	Stoel Rives LLP	33 South Sixth St Ste 4200  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Samantha	Norris	samanthanorris@alliantenergy.com	Interstate Power and Light Company	200 1st Street SE PO Box 351  Cedar Rapids, IA 524060351	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Jessica	Palmer Denig	jessica.palmer-Denig@state.mn.us	Office of Administrative Hearings	600 Robert St N PO Box 64620 St. Paul, MN 55164	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List

First Name	Last Name	Email	Company Name	Address	Delivery Method	View Trade Secret	Service List Name
Lisa	Peterson	<a href="mailto:lisa.r.peterson@xcelenergy.com">lisa.r.peterson@xcelenergy.com</a>	Xcel Energy	414 Nicollet Mall FL 7  Minneapolis, MN 55401	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Generic Notice	Residential Utilities Division	<a href="mailto:residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us">residential.utilities@ag.state.mn.us</a>	Office of the Attorney General-RUD	1400 BRM Tower 445 Minnesota St St. Paul, MN 551012131	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Will	Seuffert	<a href="mailto:Will.Seuffert@state.mn.us">Will.Seuffert@state.mn.us</a>	Public Utilities Commission	121 7th PI E Ste 350  Saint Paul, MN 55101	Electronic Service	Yes	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Peggy	Sorum	<a href="mailto:peggy.sorum@centerpointenergy.com">peggy.sorum@centerpointenergy.com</a>	CenterPoint Energy	505 Nicollet Mall  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Richard	Stasik	<a href="mailto:richard.stasik@wecenergygroup.com">richard.stasik@wecenergygroup.com</a>	Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (HOLDING)	231 West Michigan St - P321  Milwaukee, WI 53203	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
James M	Strommen	<a href="mailto:jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com">jstrommen@kennedy-graven.com</a>	Kennedy & Graven, Chartered	150 S 5th St Ste 700  Minneapolis, MN 55402	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List
Eric	Swanson	<a href="mailto:eswanson@winthrop.com">eswanson@winthrop.com</a>	Winthrop & Weinstine	225 S 6th St Ste 3500 Capella Tower Minneapolis, MN 554024629	Electronic Service	No	OFF_SL_21-611_Official Service List