

NOTICE OF COMMENT PERIOD

Issued: May 10, 2019

In the Matter of Minnesota Power's Petition for Approval of a Rider for Customer Affordability of Residential Electricity

PUC Docket Number(s): E-015/M-11-409

Comment Period: Initial comment period closes July 1, 2019 at 4:30pm
Reply comment period closes July 15, 2019 at 4:30pm

Comments received after the close of the comment period may or may not be considered by the Commission.

Issue: Should the Commission accept Minnesota Power's (MP's) seventh annual report on its Customer Affordability of Residential Electricity (CARE) Program, approve MP's request to make modifications to its CARE Program as developed through collaborative stakeholder engagement process and approve MP's proposal to recover administrative costs through the surcharge?

Topic(s) Open for Comment:

- Should the Commission accept MP's seventh annual report on its CARE Program?
- Should the Commission approve the proposed modification to the affordability discount of a flat \$15 per month discount for LIHEAP-eligible customers who are seniors, disabled, and legacy CARE participants?
- Should the Commission allow the proposed discount on household electric bills for LIHEAP-eligible customers within 3 percent of household income, be applied as a percentage discount on monthly bills?
- Should the Commission authorize MP to use auto enrollment for the flat \$15 per month discount component of the program and an annual application process for the affordability discount component, on a first-come, first-served basis?
- Should the Commission authorize MP to administer the CARE program with enrollment limited to the amount of program funding?
- Should the Commission authorize MP to change the grace period deadlines for LIHEAP eligibility determination for CARE from May 31 to May 1?
- Should the Commission allow MP to recover administrative costs?
- Should MP be allowed to continue to administer the CARE Program internally?
- Are there any other issues or concerns related to this matter?

Background:

Minnesota Power has offered its discount rate program called the Customer Affordability of Residential Electricity (CARE) Program to its residential customers since November 1, 2011. Those who qualify under the federally funded LIHEAP Program are eligible for CARE. The CARE Program provides a discount to the Company's standard residential tiered rates and includes an Arrearage Forgiveness component.

On May 1, 2019, Minnesota Power submitted its seventh annual report on its CARE Program which provides a comprehensive view of MP's affordability programs and services. Minnesota Power has worked in collaboration with the Commission's Consumer Affairs Office, met with Energy CENTS Coalition, and other nonprofit organizations within Minnesota Power's service territory, to discuss potential improvements to the CARE Program, coordination with LIHEAP, and how best to enhance public outreach. Recommendations identified as program enhancements through a collaborative stakeholder engagement process are included as part of this Seventh Annual Report for the CARE Program, which is administered internally by Minnesota Power.

Filing Requirements: Utilities, telecommunications carriers, official parties, and state agencies are **required** to file documents using the Commission's electronic filing system (eFiling). All parties, participants and interested persons are encouraged to use eFiling: mn.gov/puc, select *eFiling*, and follow the prompts.

Submit Public Comments: Visit mn.gov/puc, select *Speak Up!* to find this docket, and add your comments to the discussion or email your comments to consumer.puc@state.mn.us.

Full Case Record: See all documents filed in this docket via the Commission's website at mn.gov/puc, select *Search eDockets*, enter the year (11) and the docket number (409), select *Search*.

Subscribe to receive email notification when new documents are filed in this docket at mn.gov/puc, select *Subscribe*, or click [HERE](#) and follow the prompts.

Questions about this docket or Commission process and procedure? Contact Commission staff, Godwin Ubani, at godwin.ubani@state.mn.us or 651-201-2191 or Ann Schwieger, at ann.schwieger@state.mn.us or 651-201-2238.

Change your mailing preferences: Email docketing.puc@state.mn.us or call Leesa Norton at 651-201-2246.

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