

SERVICE DATE
Sep 01, 2016

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

Investigation into Improving Access to the Statewide Energy Efficiency
and Renewable Resource Programs in Rural Wisconsin that are
Underserved by Broadband Service Providers

5-FE-102

NOTICE OF INVESTIGATION

THIS IS AN INVESTIGATION into improving access to the statewide energy efficiency and renewable resource programs in rural areas of the state that are underserved by broadband service providers, to consider the development of programs designed to improve energy efficiency and facilitate access to and participation in markets for energy efficiency products, to achieve higher levels of energy efficiency, and to promote rural economic development in these areas, through greater deployment of broadband. The Commission opens this docket by its authority under Wis. Stat. ch. 196. The Commission intends to conduct this investigation without a hearing.

Wisconsin Stat. § 196.374(5m)(b) requires that the Commission “ensure that customers throughout the state have an equivalent opportunity to receive the benefits of” statewide energy efficiency and renewable resource programs. Wisconsin Stat. § 196.374(2)(a)2.c. requires that the statewide programs include “[i]nitiatives and market strategies that address the needs of individuals or businesses facing the most significant barriers to creation of or participation in markets for energy efficient products that the individual or business manufactures or sells or energy efficiency services that the individual or business provides.” Wisconsin Stat. § 196.374(3)(b) requires that the Commission give “priority to programs that moderate the growth in electric and natural gas demand and usage, facilitate markets and assist market providers to achieve higher levels of energy efficiency, promote energy reliability and adequacy, avoid adverse environmental impacts from the use of energy, and promote rural economic development.”

A preliminary review of data regarding program benefits and customer participation in the statewide program indicates that that utility customers in rural Wisconsin do not participate in the Focus programs at as high a rate and receive fewer program benefits than customers in urban areas. Additionally, this review suggests that many of these areas are served by fewer than two broadband service providers, which may limit access to energy efficiency markets and the statewide program.

The Commission intends to investigate and may issue orders addressing the following issues:

1. How greater access to broadband can improve the opportunity and ability of rural electric customers to participate in statewide energy efficiency and renewable resource programs;
2. The design of programs that can facilitate broadband deployment and increase access to and adoption of energy efficiency products and services; and
3. How such programs could be funded and at what levels through the use of previously unallocated funds, funds previously allocated to specific programs through Commission orders in the Quadrennial Planning II, docket 5-FE-101, that remain unspent, and/or excess reserve funds.

DOCUMENTS. All documents in this docket are filed on the Commission’s Electronic Regulatory Filing (ERF) system. To view these documents: (1) go to the Commission’s web site at <http://psc.wi.gov>, (2) enter “5-FE-102” in the box labeled “Link Directly to a Case,” and (3) select “GO.”

INTERVENTION. Any person desiring to become a party shall file a request for party status, known as a request to intervene, under Wis. Stat. § 227.44(2m) and Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 2.21 no later than 14 days from the date of service of this notice using the ERF system.

To file such a request, go to the Commission’s web site at <http://psc.wi.gov>, click on the “ERF - Electronic Regulatory Filing” graphic on the side menu bar. On the next page, click on “Need Help?” for instructions on how to upload a document.

A person desiring to become a party who lacks access to the Internet shall make a request to intervene by U.S. mail addressed to:

Docket 5-FE-102 Intervention Request
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
P.O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-7854

At the time of filing, the person making the request to intervene shall serve a copy of the request on existing parties. An existing party may respond to the request within 5 days of service. A party wishing to request intervenor compensation should do so as soon as practicable.

WISCONSIN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT. This is a Type III action under Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 4.10(3). The Commission will review the potential environmental

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effects of the project. Type III actions normally do not require the preparation of an environmental impact statement under Wis. Stat. § 1.11 or an environmental assessment.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT. The Commission does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the provision of programs, services, or employment. Any person with a disability who needs accommodations to participate in this docket or who needs to obtain this document in a different format should contact the docket coordinator listed below. Any hearing location is accessible to people in wheelchairs. The Public Service Commission Building is accessible to people in wheelchairs through the Whitney Way first floor (lobby) entrance. Parking for people with disabilities is available on the south side of the building.

CONTACT. Please direct questions about this docket or requests for additional accommodations for the disabled to the Commission's docket coordinator, Jolene Sheil, at (608) 266-7375 or Jolene.Sheil@wisconsin.gov.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, this 1st day of September, 2016.

By the Commission:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandra J. Paske". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sandra J. Paske
Secretary to the Commission

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