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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MPSC schedules 3 public hearings to help finalize guidelines for integrated resource plans required under state energy laws

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) today scheduled three public hearings to develop parameters of integrated resource plans (IRP) required of rate-regulated utilities under the state's new energy laws.

Utilities will use the IRPs to identify and evaluate options for meeting electricity needs. Some of the key inputs to be considered in an IRP are demand response, energy waste reduction, environmental requirements, planning reserve margins, and modeling scenarios to test the plans. The IRPs are an important component of new energy laws that are expected to increase affordability, improve reliability and protect the environment.

In today's order, the MPSC asked its Staff to submit a draft plan on which the MPSC will seek public comment (Case No. U-18418). The MPSC staff, along with the Michigan Agency for Energy (MAE) and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), has held 11 meetings with stakeholders to develop a draft plan, which the MPSC has asked to be filed in the docket by Aug. 31.

The hearing schedule:

- 1-5 p.m. Sept. 6 at Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia. MPSC Commissioner Rachael Eubanks will be in attendance.
- 1-5 p.m. Sept. 13 at L.V. Eberhard Center, 301 West Fulton, Room 210, Grand Rapids. MPSC Chairman Sally Talberg will attend.
- Noon to 4 p.m. Sept. 19 at Northern Michigan University, University Center-Huron, Erie Room, 1401 Presque Isle, Marquette. MPSC Commissioner Norm Saari will be present.

Written comments can be mailed to the MPSC, P.O. Box 30221, Lansing, MI 48909.

Other Commission action

PURPA avoided costs: The deadline was extended to submit testimony and exhibits in two cases that will establish updated avoided costs for qualified utilities under the Public Utility Regulatory Policy Act. Parties in the Consumers Energy Co. (Consumers) proceeding (Case No. U-18090) were given until Aug. 11 to file and those participating in the DTE Electric (DTE) proceeding (Case No. U-18091) have until Aug. 15 to respond.

Rate case filing requirements: Under the new energy law, the deadline for rate cases to be completed is shortened from 12 months to 10 months. It also removes the ability of utilities to self-implement new rates after six months if a final order has not been issued by the MPSC. Additionally, providers are required to give notice to the MPSC prior to filing a rate case and small natural gas utilities can request partial and immediate rate relief as part of a rate case. The filing requirements also apply to steam utilities. Today's order (Case No. U-18238) updates existing filing requirements to account for these, and related, changes and a final version [will be posted by Aug. 11](#).

Energy optimization plans: Surcharges were set for energy waste reduction plans for Michigan Gas Utilities Corp. (MGUC) and Consumers Energy Co. In a settlement agreement (Case No. U-18339), MGUC residential customers will see a decrease of 16 cents per 10 Mcf on their monthly bills beginning in August. Residential customers of Consumers who use 10 Mcf of natural gas a month will see an increase of 15 cents on their monthly bills beginning in August (Case No. U-17771).

LIEAF funding set: Utilities will begin collecting 93 cents per month per meter to fund the Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF). Utility customers will see the surcharge starting with their September bills (Case No. U-17377). LIEAF provides energy assistance and self-sufficiency services to low-income households in Michigan in conjunction with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The LIEAF surcharge partially funds the Michigan Energy Assistance Program, which is administered by the MAE.

Gas line testing: Consumers Energy was ordered to provide more information on its request to lengthen the time between residential copper gas line leak surveys. Consumers (Case Nos. U-12103 and U-18410) wants to test lines every five years instead of every three. In its ruling, the Commission cited Consumers evidence that leak rates jumped between 2004 and 2014 compared to coated and wrapped steel service lines.

Consumers power purchase agreement: Consumers Energy will be allowed to enter into a power purchase agreement (PPA) with STS Hydropower, Ltd., the new operator of the Ada Hydro Plant on the Thornapple River in Ada Township (Case No. U-18425). Consumers had an earlier PPA with the plant's former owner, Thornapple Association, Inc. The new PPA will not change customer rates set under the previous agreement.

National Choice Energy application: An application was approved for National Choice Energy LLC (NCE) to be licensed as an alternative energy supplier in Michigan (Case No. 18359). NCE is based in Miramar, Fla., and has set up an office in Kalamazoo. It wants to serve gas customers in DTE Gas Co.'s and Consumers Energy Co.'s service territories.

Telephone license, Lifeline requests: MCC Telephony of the Midwest LLC was granted a license to provide basic local service in areas served by AT&T Michigan, Frontier North Inc. and Frontier Midstates Inc. The Commission said in Case No. U-18365 that telecommunications competition benefits Michigan's citizens and the MCC Telephony license expands competition. Also, Assist Wireless Inc. will be allowed to provide Lifeline services in Michigan (Case No. U-

18348) after the MPSC approved its application to be designated an eligible telecommunications carrier.

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