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## **MPSC approves Consumers' voluntary green pricing program, delays DTE's rollout**

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) today authorized Consumers Energy to move forward with two voluntary green pricing (VGP) programs, but withheld approval of a similar proposal from DTE Electric Co. to give the utility time to provide more information about program costs.

The Commission approved Consumers' Solar Gardens program for residential customers ([Case No. U-18351](#)). In the same case, the MPSC conditionally approved the Large Customer-Renewable Energy Program (LC-REP) Option A and Option B but asked the utility to clarify language in the program tariff such as eligibility requirements.

DTE will be allowed to continue operating its MIGreenPower pilot program until questions are resolved with the full-scale program ([Case No. U-18352](#)).

Green pricing programs allow a residential, commercial or industrial customer to voluntarily specify that a certain amount of electricity they buy from a utility is to be generated using renewable energy sources.

The green pricing program is part of the state's new energy laws. Section 61 of PA 342 of 2016 requires all electric utilities in Michigan, whether rate-regulated, municipally owned, cooperatives, or alternative electric suppliers, to offer customers the opportunity to participate in green pricing. Programs by regulated electric utilities such as Consumers and DTE Electric must be approved by the MPSC.

"With the new green pricing programs approved by the MPSC, customers in Michigan have additional options to purchase electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind and solar," said Sally Talberg, chairman of the MPSC. "The Commission is committed to working with all stakeholders to make sure that resources are available to meet the needs of the growing interest in renewable energy by customers of all sizes. We believe there is significant interest in the potential for utilities to partner with local communities and renewable energy developers to meet this customer demand."

Consumers' Solar Gardens program receives its green power from four megawatts (MWs) of community solar at Grand Valley State and Western Michigan universities. The program is open to all of Consumers' residential and commercial full-service customers. The Large Customer-Renewable Energy Program has an allocation of 155,000 MW hours for customer usage.

Consumers will be allowed to continue its current Green Generation program, which has approximately 20,000 subscribers, but was ordered to close the program to new customers within 60 days as it launches Solar Gardens.

In turning down DTE's MIGreenPower as a green pricing program under Section 61, the MPSC said the utility must work with Commission staff to review the plan's costs, particularly those for marketing and administration. DTE also must develop a second green pricing program for larger customers to provide additional options.

The Commission said it will seek comments from stakeholders to examine opportunities for third-party projects to meet anticipated green pricing program customer demand.

Voluntary green pricing programs for Alpena Power Co., Indiana Michigan Power Co., Northern States Power Co., Upper Peninsula Power Co. (UPPCo), Upper Michigan Energy Resources Co. (UMERC), and Wisconsin Electric Power Co. were approved earlier by the Commission.

For an issue brief about green pricing programs, click [here](#). For information about green pricing programs offered by regulated utilities in Michigan, [click here](#).

### **Other rulings today**

**Internet protocol 911 cost categories clarified:** The Commission adopted reimbursement cost categories related to the deployment of internet protocol-based 911 phone service under the Emergency 9-1-1 Service Enabling Act ([Case No. U-20146](#)). The Act was amended to ensure adequate funding for IP-based 911 service providers to deploy the advanced technology, but it does not specify which transport, routing, or delivery costs are covered, or whether they are recurring. The MPSC today approved 12 cost categories and instructed service providers to submit to the Commission categorized costs and to indicate whether they are recurring.

**Telecommunications rules advanced for approval:** The Commission approved sending two sets of rules governing phone service providers to the Legislative Service Bureau and the Office of Regulatory Reinvention for formal approvals. They are the Unbundled Network Element and Local Interconnection Services rules ([Case No. U-20160](#)), which outline how incumbent local exchange carriers provide unbundled network elements and local interconnection services to other providers, and the Basic Local Exchange Service Customer Migration rules ([Case No. U-20161](#)), which govern transferring phone customers from one provider to another.

To look up cases from today's meeting, access the eDockets filing system [here](#).

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