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Staff provided by the  
Department of  
Administration

## **Comment meeting set for April 4 in Monticello**

*State Environmental Quality Board releases draft scope of study on spent nuclear fuel installation at Monticello nuclear generating plant*

For Immediate Release  
March 17, 2005

Contact: John Wachtler  
Environmental Quality Board  
651-296-2096

(ST. PAUL) – The Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) has prepared a draft scoping decision for an environmental impact statement (EIS) for a proposed dry cask storage facility for spent nuclear fuel at Xcel Energy's Monticello generating plant.

The draft scoping decision identifies issues and analyses to be completed for the EIS. It is preliminary and subject to revision. The purpose of the EIS scoping process is, in part, to help focus the EIS on the most significant issues and alternatives that are relevant to the proposed project.

### **Comments**

Formal comments on the proposed scope of the Monticello EIS are due to EQB by Wednesday, April 13, 2005. The EQB staff will then revise the proposed EIS scope based on comments. The EIS scoping decision will then likely come before the EQB at its regularly scheduled meeting in May 2005. Comments on the draft EIS scope should be sent by e-mail or U.S. mail to:

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658 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, MN 55155  
e-mail: [john.wachter@state.mn.us](mailto:john.wachter@state.mn.us)

### **Open house/ EIS scoping meeting is April 4 in Monticello**

A public open house/scoping meeting will be held **Monday, April 4, 2005** beginning at 2 p.m. and continuing until approximately 9 p.m. at the Monticello Community Center, Mississippi Room, 505 Walnut St., Monticello, Minn. The meeting will be an open house format in which members of the public can stop by when it is convenient to review information about the

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proposed project, learn more about the state review processes and comment on the draft scope of the planned EIS. In addition, the meeting will include a presentation at 7:00 p.m., by Xcel Energy and the EQB staff, followed by an open public comment opportunity.

**The project**

Xcel Energy plans to apply to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) in March 2005 for a 20-year license renewal that would allow operation of its Monticello Nuclear Generating Plant until 2030. Xcel Energy states it needs to expand the spent fuel storage capacity at the plant in order to operate past 2010. On Jan. 18, 2005, Xcel Energy applied to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) for a certificate of need for an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation (ISFSI). The proposed ISFSI would be approximately 200 feet by 460 feet and store spent nuclear fuel in up to 30 dry storage canisters in concrete vaults within the plant boundary. The EQB must prepare an EIS before the PUC can issue a certificate of need for the ISFSI (Minn. Stat. §116C.83, subd. 6(b)). The federal license review for the generating plant will also require a separate EIS by the NRC.

**Draft EIS scope availability**

Public review copies of the draft scoping decision document and scoping EAW have been placed at the following locations: Monticello Public Library, 200 West 6th St., Monticello; Big Lake Public Library, 160 Lake St. S., Big Lake; Becker Public Library; 11500 Sherburne Ave., Becker; the DNR Library, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul; the Minneapolis Public Library, Technology and Science, 250 Marquette Ave., Minneapolis. The scoping document, a discussion forum and other information are also available online at <http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=9901>. Copies of the draft scoping document can be obtained by calling Andrea at the EQB at 651/296-2571.

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