



Environmental Quality Board

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By e-mail and U.S. Mail

October 18, 2004

Pamela Jo Rasmussen
Permitting Analyst
Xcel Energy, Inc. – NSP
P.O. Box 8
1414 W. Hamilton Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54702-0008

RE: Docket MEQB No. 03-73-TR-Xcel

Dear Ms. Rasmussen:

Below are information request numbers eight (8) and nine (9) regarding the Split Rock to Lakefield Junction 345 kV and Chanarambie to Nobles County 115 kV transmission line project.

You may respond by e-mail, but please also provide a response in writing by November 8, 2004 if possible so the information can be included in the draft environmental impact statement for the project. Please indicate the above cited docket number, the corresponding request number and the respondent's name and title in your response. If your response contains Trade Secret data, please include a public copy. If you have any questions or problems providing the requested information, please contact me at 651-296-2096.

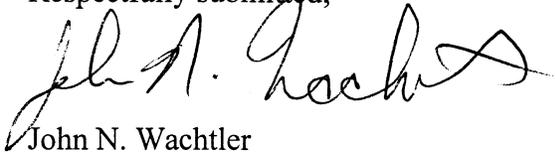
Request No. 8

Xcel Energy states in the application that the transmission lines will be built in accordance with the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) requirements. During scoping meetings, however, some landowners and residents along potential routes expressed concern about how close transmission lines might be to their homes, and requested more detailed information about the minimum safety setbacks required for residences, farm buildings, trees, and other buildings. Please provide the minimum NESC or other applicable requirements (such as NERC) for the transmission lines that will be constructed for this project. In other words, please identify the minimum safety requirements in relation to structures and trees, and a summary of the basis for these requirements.

Request No. 9

Please provide an update of the Company's ongoing "beyond 825" wind outlet transmission studies for Southwest Minnesota. Please summarize study results to date for both short-term (2008-2009) and long-term transmission needs, including an analysis of whether a particular route or route-segment under consideration for the current 345/115 kilovolt project might be more compatible with likely future transmission projects than other potential routes under consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John N. Wachtler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "W".

John N. Wachtler

Minnesota Environmental Quality Board

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