



June 15, 2005

NOTICE of Request by Xcel Energy for a Minor Alteration Permit for the Expansion of the Eastwood Substation and for the Wilmarth to Eastwood Line Upgrade and Construction, located in Blue Earth County, Minnesota

Xcel Energy, is planning to convert the existing Wilmarth-Eastwood-Rapidan 69 kV transmission line to 115 kV between Wilmarth Substation and Eastwood Substation, which will include constructing approximately 0.5 miles of new 115 kV transmission line; expand the existing Eastwood Substation; and convert the voltage of the Eastwood Substation from 69 kV to 115 kV. The project is located in Blue Earth County, Minnesota, in the City of Mankato and Lime and Mankato Townships

The project would support the addition of the Mankato Energy Center to the transmission line system. According to Xcel Energy, without the proposed improvements to the existing 69 kV line and the Eastwood Substation, the planned interconnection of the 650 megawatt Mankato Energy Center power plant to the Wilmarth substation would overload the substation's three 115/69 kV 70 MVA transformers at a rate of 133 percent. If an outage of one of the transformers were to occur, the other two transformers at Wilmarth would be overloaded at a rate of 170 percent. This project would eliminate this problem and continue to ensure reliable service to the Mankato area.

Xcel Energy maintains that the project as proposed constitutes a Minor Alteration. A Minor Alteration is a change in an existing transmission line that does not result in significant changes in the human or environmental impact of the facility. In accordance with Minnesota Rules, part 4400.3820, the EQB Chair is providing notice to the public that Xcel Energy has applied for approval of this project. The public has until July 1, 2005, to submit comments on this project. The decision will be made within ten days after the close of the public comment period whether to authorize the Minor Alteration or to determine that the alteration is not minor and requires a full permitting decision.

Xcel Energy mailed information on this project on June 8, 2005, to persons on the EQB Energy Facilities Permitting general notification list. To submit comments, ask questions, or seek further information about this proposed project, please contact David Birkholz at (651) 296-2878 or david.birkholz@state.mn.us.