

An Electric Service Agreement (ESA) is a contract between a rate regulated electric utility and a large customer that requires significant electric service – such as a data center, mine, refinery, paper mill, recycling facility, or cooling storage operation. ESAs outline the electric service needs of the customer and establish how the utility will meet those needs.

Key regulatory requirements for large customers

Under Minnesota law, including updates enacted in 2025, large electric customers must meet various requirements, which may include:

- Filing or participating in an ESA or large load tariff review
- Demonstrating compliance with applicable state statutes
- Undergoing environmental review if specified thresholds are exceeded. More information on environmental review and data centers is found on the Environmental Quality Board’s website. www.eqb.state.mn.us/environmental-review/data-centers-faq
- Ensuring their electric service needs do not harm system reliability or other ratepayers

The PUC’s role

Large-scale data centers often require new electric facilities. The PUC’s responsibilities include:

- Ensuring utilities meet demand reliably and safely
- Protecting ratepayers from costs driven by service to large-scale data centers
- Reviewing proposed customer-specific rates or incentives
- Overseeing related utility infrastructure investments

These filings move through a structured PUC review process that includes:

1. **Utility filing:** The utility submits the ESA and any associated tariff information.
2. **Public notice & comment period:** The public is invited to review the filing and submit written comments.
3. **PUC review and decision:** The Commission will approve, modify, or reject the agreement at a public Commission meeting (called an Agenda Meeting). The Commission evaluates whether the agreement meets applicable legal standards and is in the public interest.

Utilities file ESAs with the Minnesota PUC. While the Commission emphasizes transparency, some components may be legally classified as trade secret to protect competitively sensitive information. Examples of elements that may be nonpublic include:

- Customer demand/load estimates
- Construction cost estimates for electric infrastructure
- Construction timelines
- Detailed rate information that differs from standard tariffs

The Commission reviews all confidentiality requests and determines what information is public according to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes chapter 13).

How to Get Involved

The **Dockets Open for Comment** page on the PUC website has current ESA filings.

Find this page under “**Quick Links**” on the PUC homepage: mn.gov/puc

How to Follow a Docket: Visit mn.gov/puc

Use “eDockets” to search the docket by number to:

- Review public documents
- Sign up for email updates
- Submit public comments