



NEWS RELEASE
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Xcel Energy Presents Information to Commission About Recent Power Outages in Fargo

BISMARCK, ND – The North Dakota Public Service Commission (PSC) and officials from Xcel met today to discuss recent power outages in Fargo and other issues surrounding reliability. The PSC had requested a detailed explanation of the cause and impacts of three separate Fargo outages that occurred June 21-23.

According to information shared from Xcel, the outages were not weather related and were completely unrelated and distinct from one another.

- Saturday, June 21 – Exact cause could not be identified, but recovery was exacerbated by construction on North 19th Ave. that interrupted the functioning of the Intelliteam system designed to isolate problems and reroute customers. Over 3,500 customers were out of power for 69 minutes.
- Sunday, June 22 – Outage was caused by a failed splice on an overhead feeder line. Nearly 6,000 customers were out of power for 2 hours and 37 minutes. Xcel has conducted infrared tests of the entire Fargo feeder system to identify any additional problems. The splice was repaired and no additional problems were found.
- Monday, June 23 – Underground cable was cut by a construction operator on the 19th Avenue project. A contractor hired by the company failed to mark the lines properly. Over 1,000 customers lost power with 700 of those restored within 45 seconds by the Intelliteam system and the rest restored about 3 hours later.

“These three consecutive outages in June were alarming for everyone, but I’m pleased to learn that the investigations clearly show they were unrelated and not a sign of a larger problem in the Fargo system,” said Commissioner Julie Fedorchak. “That said, reliability in Fargo remains an issue I will closely monitor to ensure that the significant investments the company is making to improve reliability are paying off for customers.”

Xcel is investing \$37 million to improve North Dakota distribution systems and more than \$100 million in transmission and substation improvements in North Dakota between 2011-2019. Projects underway and completed include hiring a Fargo-based electrical engineer, reconfiguring the Cass County substation to accommodate growth and provide more operational flexibility, upgrades to other Fargo substations, replacing aging underground feeder cables, the CapX2020 345 kV line and significant increases in tree trimming schedules.

Statistics provided by Xcel during the meeting show that North Dakota ranks the best of any state in their territory when it comes to reliability with an average time a typical customer is out of power each year at 77 minutes. Information presented regarding their reliability performance plan show that their

average duration for power outages in North Dakota for 2013 was 74.3 minutes, not meeting the performance target of 57 minutes. More than 1,600 North Dakota customers received a \$50 credit because they experienced more than three outages lasting at least five minutes in 2013.

“North Dakota having the best ranking among the states for reliability is good, but we have to always seek to do even better,” said Commissioner Randy Christmann. “American society is becoming increasingly reliant on a dependable and affordable electric system, so our distribution companies must continue to find ways to improve their service.”

The North Dakota Public Service Commission is a constitutionally created state agency with authority to permit, site and regulate certain business activities in the state including electric and gas utilities, telecommunications companies, power plants, electric transmission lines, pipelines, railroads, grain elevators, auctioneers, commercial weighing devices, pipeline safety and coal mine reclamation. For more information, contact the Public Service Commission at (701) 328-2400 or www.psc.nd.gov.

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