

CHAPTER 7847
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
LARGE ENERGY FACILITIES

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7847.0010 DEFINITIONS.

Subpart 1. **Scope.** For the purpose of parts 7847.0100 to 7847.0320, the following terms have the meanings given them.

Subp. 2. **Commission.** "Commission" means the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Subp. 3. **Applicant.** "Applicant" means the person or persons submitting a certificate of need application.

Subp. 4. **Coal supplier.** "Coal supplier" means any entity engaged in Minnesota in the wholesale distribution of coal or transportation into this state of any coal intended for use or distribution in the state or transshipment from the state.

Subp. 5. **Construction.** "Construction" means significant physical alteration of a site to install or enlarge a large energy facility, but not including activities incident to preliminary engineering or environmental studies.

Subp. 6. **Department.** "Department" means the Department of Public Service.

Subp. 7. **Large energy facility.** "Large energy facility" has the meaning given in Minnesota Statutes, section 216B.2421.

Subp. 8. **Person.** "Person" means any individual, partnership, corporation, joint stock company, unincorporated association or society, municipal corporation, or any government or governmental subdivision, unit, or agency other than a court of law.

Subp. 9. **Petroleum supplier.** "Petroleum supplier" means any petroleum refinery in the state, and any entity engaged in transmission or wholesale distribution of more than 100,000 gallons of crude petroleum or petroleum fuels or oil or derivatives thereof annually in this state.

Subp. 10. **Utility.** "Utility" means any entity engaged in the generation, transmission, or distribution of electric energy and any entity engaged in the transmission or distribution of natural or synthetic natural gas, including but not limited to a private investor owned utility or a public or municipally owned utility.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115*

7847.0020 PURPOSE AND SCOPE.

Subpart 1. **Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to provide procedures to be followed in the issuance of a certificate of need for the construction of large energy facilities in Minnesota pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 1974, section 116H.13. These rules are adopted pursuant to the power of the commission conferred by Minnesota Statutes 1974, section 116H.08, clause (a).

Subp. 2. **Scope.** On or after the effective date of agency rules governing assessment of need criteria, no large energy facility for which such criteria have been promulgated shall be sited or constructed in Minnesota unless a certificate of need for said facility has been issued by the commission pursuant to this chapter. Provided, however, that any utility that, as of the

effective date of agency rules for criteria of assessment of need governing its facility, has pending before the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board an application for a certificate of site compatibility, an application for corridor designation, or an application for a permit for transmission line construction may pursue its application before the board; but in any event, shall not begin construction of said facility until a certificate of need for said facility has been issued pursuant to this chapter.

Subp. 3. Exception. Any person who, as of the effective date of rules of criteria of assessment of need governing the facility, has pending before the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board an application for a certificate of site compatibility, an application for corridor compatibility, or an application for a construction permit for a transmission line, or who has received a certificate of corridor compatibility may pursue the pending application and subsequent applications for a construction permit for the facility, before the board. However, such person shall not begin construction of said facility until a certificate of need for said facility has been issued pursuant to this chapter.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; 17 SR 1279*

APPLICATIONS AND PRELIMINARY MATTERS

7847.0100 APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF NEED.

Subpart 1. Time, form, and content. Except as provided in part 7847.0020, subpart 2, any person desiring to construct a new large energy facility in Minnesota shall submit an application for a certificate of need for said facility to the commission prior to commencing construction of said facility or, in the case of large electric generating facilities and large high voltage transmission lines, prior to filing an application for a certificate of site compatibility or an application for a transmission line corridor designation. The application shall contain the information required in the applicable substantive rules (see chapters 7849, 7851, 7853, and 7855) and shall be verified by the person responsible for its preparation.

Subp. 2. Number of copies. An applicant shall submit the original and four copies of its application, including one unbound copy, and shall make additional copies available upon request of the commission.

Subp. 3. Fee. Each application for a certificate of need shall be accompanied by a fee as prescribed by the applicable substantive rules (see chapters 7849, 7851, 7853, and 7855).

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115*

7847.0110 PUBLIC INSPECTION AND COMMISSION EVALUATION.

Subpart 1. Application available to public. An application shall be available for viewing by the public at the office of the commission. Any person may request a copy of the application. Each person requesting a copy shall identify himself or herself and the person represented, if any. The commission may grant any such request for good cause shown. Any state or local or federal agency requesting a copy of an application shall receive one. The applicant shall supply the commission with sufficient copies of the application to enable the commission to comply with this subpart.

Subp. 2. Commission evaluation. Immediately following receipt of an application, the commission shall evaluate the application and the need for the proposed facility and may, if it so elects, within 60 days of receipt of the application, issue its report thereon. A copy of the report shall be served on all parties to the proceeding. The persons responsible for preparation of the report shall be available for examination regarding the report by parties to the proceeding. The commission may become a party to the proceeding by filing a notice of intervention pursuant to part 7847.0130, subpart 1, but in any event shall be deemed a party if it has exercised its option to issue a report pursuant to this subpart.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; 17 SR 1279*

7847.0120 STATE AGENCY PARTICIPATION.

Any state agency authorized to issue permits for siting, construction, or operation of large energy facilities shall present its position regarding the need for the facility proposed in

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the application at the public hearing. Any such state agency may become a party to the proceeding by filing a notice of intervention pursuant to part 7847.0130, subpart 1.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115*

7847.0130 INTERVENTION.

Subpart 1. Notice of intervention. The department and any federal, state, or local agency with authority to grant permits or certificate of siting, construction, or operation of large energy facilities may become a party to the proceeding by filing a notice of intervention with the commission. Such notice shall be filed within 30 days of the date of issuance of the notice of application unless after that time the commission, at its discretion, permits the filing of a notice of intervention. Such notice shall contain:

A. a statement of the jurisdiction of the agency with respect to the proposed facility; and

B. a statement of the agency's interest in and its position with respect to the application.

Subp. 2. Petition for leave to intervene. Any person wishing to become a party to the proceeding may petition for leave to intervene by filing a petition for leave to intervene. Such petition shall be filed within 30 days of the date of issuance of the notice of application unless after that time the commission, at its discretion, permits the filing of a petition for leave to intervene. Such petition shall contain:

A. a statement of the interest of the petitioner in the proposed facility; and

B. a statement of the position of the petitioner with respect to the application.

Subp. 3. Service. A copy of any notice of intervention or petition for leave to intervene shall be served upon the applicant and all other parties by the proposed intervenor, and proof of service shall be filed with the notice or petition.

Subp. 4. Granting petition to intervene. The administrative law judge shall grant or deny any petition to intervene within ten days after such petition has been filed with the commission. A petition for intervention shall be granted if the administrative law judge determines that the petitioner may be materially affected by the outcome of the proceedings, or the intervention of the petitioner will materially advance the consideration of the application.

Notice of the action of the petition shall be served on all parties.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32*

7847.0140 PARTIES.

Subpart 1. Identity. Parties to any proceeding under these rules shall include the applicant, and any person who has properly intervened under part 7847.0130.

Subp. 2. Representation. Any party in a proceeding under these rules shall be represented by counsel; provided, however, that the administrative law judge may, upon good cause shown, permit any party to represent himself or herself.

Subp. 3. Consolidation of parties. The administrative law judge may consolidate parties that are similarly situated on determining that such consolidation would enhance the orderliness and efficiency of the hearing without substantially prejudicing any party.

Subp. 4. Role of participants. Any person who is not a party to a proceeding may appear and give written or oral testimony at the public hearing. However, the right to call and examine witnesses is reserved exclusively to parties to the proceeding.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32; 17 SR 1279*

7847.0150 CONSOLIDATION.

At any time prior to a hearing, the administrative law judge, either upon the judge's own motion or upon motion of any party, may recommend to the commission that separate proceedings be consolidated for hearing on determining that the separate proceedings present substantially the same issues of fact or law, a decision in one proceeding would affect the

rights of parties in another proceeding, and consolidation would not substantially prejudice any party.

The commission shall take action on any recommendation on consolidation within five days after the recommendation is made. If the judge orders proceedings consolidated, notice of consolidation shall be served on all parties.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32; 17 SR 1279*

PREHEARING, HEARING, AND REHEARING

7847.0200 ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE.

Subpart 1. Appointment and qualifications. Within five days of receipt of an application, the commission shall appoint an administrative law judge. Such appointment shall be in accordance with law and any applicable rules. The administrative law judge shall be an attorney licensed to practice law in Minnesota. At the time of appointment, the person shall not be an employee of, or on retainer to, the commission. To the extent possible, the judge shall possess some familiarity with the type of facility proposed in the application. After appointment, the administrative law judge shall be considered an employee of the commission for the sole purpose of compensation and authorization to conduct the hearing and recommend findings of fact and a decision to the commission. In all other respects the judge shall be independent of the commission.

Subp. 2. Authority. The appointment of the administrative law judge shall, to the extent permitted by law, authorize the administrative law judge to call and conduct the hearing and recommend a decision to the commission.

Subp. 3. Functions. The functions of the administrative law judge shall be to hear and rule on preliminary motions, issue subpoenas, conduct the hearing, examine witnesses, make such preliminary discovery, interlocutory, or other orders as the judge deems appropriate, recommend a decision to the commission, and do all things necessary or proper to the performance of the foregoing.

Subp. 4. Disqualification. The commission may, for good cause shown, revoke the appointment of any administrative law judge upon the filing of a petition for disqualification by a party or upon the commission's own motion. Unless the basis for the request for disqualification is misconduct on the part of the administrative law judge, any petition for disqualification shall be filed within ten days after the appointment of the administrative law judge. The reasons for the revocation shall be made a part of the official record.

An administrative law judge shall withdraw from participation in a hearing at any time prior to the final determination if the judge deems himself or herself disqualified for any reason.

Whenever an administrative law judge is disqualified or removed, the commission may vacate and annul all proceedings and orders issued as of the date of disqualification, or may order the hearing to proceed in the same manner as if disqualification had not occurred.

Subp. 5. Hearing date. Within ten days after an application is received by the commission, the administrative law judge shall set a time and place for a public hearing on the application. The hearing shall commence within 80 days after the receipt of an application.

Subp. 6. Administrative law judge to issue notice. Within ten days after an application is received by the commission, the administrative law judge shall issue a notice of application and hearing. Such notice shall contain a brief description of the substance of the application, the name of the administrative law judge, and the time and place of hearing, and shall be published in the State Register. The notice shall also be published in newspapers of general circulation throughout the state, and shall be publicized in such other manner as the commission may deem appropriate. Copies of the notice shall be mailed to appropriate state, federal, and local agencies.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32; 17 SR 1279*

7847.0210 PREHEARING CONFERENCE.

A prehearing conference where all parties are invited and which is open to the public may be held at the discretion of the administrative law judge at any time for the purpose of considering such matters as the administrative law judge shall direct, including, but not limited to:

- A. the simplification or settlement of any issue;
- B. the disclosure of the identity of witnesses and a summary of the testimony of each;
- C. the exchange of documentary evidence and the reports of expert witnesses to be submitted at the hearing; and
- D. any other appropriate matter.

The conference shall be an informal proceeding conducted fairly and expeditiously by the administrative law judge. Any decision made or agreements reached at the prehearing conference shall be included in a prehearing order issued by the administrative law judge not less than three days prior to the hearing. Said order shall be served on all parties. No agreement may be made to waive the public hearing.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32*

7847.0220 MOTIONS.

Subpart 1. **In writing.** Any application for procedural relief shall be made by motion that, unless made during the hearing, shall be made in writing and shall state with particularity the relief or order sought. A motion shall be filed with the administrative law judge and served on all parties in accordance with part 7847.0230.

Subp. 2. **Answers.** Any party may reply to a motion within ten days after its service or within such time as the administrative law judge shall state.

Subp. 3. **Delay.** No procedural motion shall cause the delay of a hearing unless the administrative law judge determines that good cause for such delay exists.

Subp. 4. **Administrative law judge's ruling.** The ruling of the administrative law judge shall be served on all parties, or if made at the hearing, shall be made part of the record.

Subp. 5. **Review.** The ruling of the administrative law judge on any motion shall be subject to review by the commission only upon its review of the report of the administrative law judge as provided in part 7847.0280.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32; 17 SR 1279*

7847.0230 SERVICE.

Copies of all pleadings, except applications, and copies of all petitions to intervene, written motions, and notices shall be served upon all other parties personally or by mail and proof of service shall be filed with the administrative law judge. When a party is represented by an attorney, service upon the attorney shall be deemed service upon the party.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32*

7847.0240 DISCOVERY.

Upon motion of any party for good cause shown, the administrative law judge may permit the service of interrogatories, the taking of depositions, or such other discovery as may be appropriate. No motion made under this part shall be granted except upon a showing that the moving party has made a request for the information sought and such request has been refused and that the information produced would be relevant to the proceeding or may demonstrably lead to relevant information. The administrative law judge may issue subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses or the production of documents. Parties shall determine whether such requests shall be complied with and inform the requester of that decision within three working days, and shall provide the discovery requested within a reasonable time.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32*

7847.0250 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

Upon request of the administrative law judge and subject to the limitations contained in part 7847.0260, subpart 7, the applicant shall submit such additional information as the administrative law judge deems necessary. The application of an applicant who without good cause shown fails to comply with an order to supply additional information may be dismissed. Any other party who without good cause fails to comply with any order to supply additional information may be dismissed.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32*

7847.0260 THE HEARING.

Subpart 1. Conduct of hearing. The hearing shall be open to the public. The parties may cross examine witnesses and present evidence, rebuttal testimony, oral argument, and written briefs. The sequence of events shall be determined by the administrative law judge.

Subp. 2. Witnesses. Any party may be a witness or may present witnesses on the party's behalf. All testimony at a hearing shall be under oath or affirmation. Every party shall have the right to cross examination of adverse witnesses. Any person offering oral testimony who is not a party shall be subject to cross examination by any party.

Subp. 3. Statement by any person. Any person may submit a written statement, under oath, relevant to the subject matter of the hearing prior to or at the hearing. In the absence of special circumstances, any person submitting such a statement shall be subject to cross examination by any party. If such person is not available for cross examination upon timely request, the written statement may be stricken from the record, in whole or in part, or may be given such weight as the administrative law judge deems appropriate.

Subp. 4. Cross examination of preparer of application. The person or persons responsible for preparation of the application or other persons having substantial knowledge of its preparation shall be available for cross examination by any party. Failure to comply with this section may result in dismissal of an application.

Subp. 5. Cross examination of preparer of commission report. The person or persons responsible for the preparation of the commission report or other persons having substantial knowledge of its preparation shall be available for cross examination by any party.

Subp. 6. After close of hearing. All statements or information submitted after the close of the hearing during the period in which the record is open shall become a part of the record only if submitted under oath or by affirmation. Such statements or information shall be provided to all parties and proof of service shall be filed with the administrative law judge at the time such statements or information is submitted. Upon request of a party, the administrative law judge may reconvene the hearing for the purpose of cross examination of the statement or information submitted after the close of the hearing.

Subp. 7. Rules of evidence. Rules of evidence:

A. Admission: the administrative law judge may admit and rely on evidence that possesses probative value commonly accepted by reasonable people. The administrative law judge shall give effect to the rules of privilege recognized by law. Proposed evidence that is incompetent, irrelevant, immaterial, repetitious, or otherwise objectionable may be excluded.

B. Official notice: the administrative law judge may take notice of judicially cognizable facts and, in addition, may take notice of technical or scientific facts within the judge's specialized knowledge. Where final determination rests on official notice of material facts not appearing in the evidence in the record, the administrative law judge shall serve and file a statement of notice of facts upon the parties. A party is entitled, upon timely request, to an opportunity to rebut such facts.

C. Burden of proof: the burden of proving any contested assertion of fact in the proceeding shall be upon the proponent thereof.

Subp. 8. Transcript. A verbatim record of the hearing shall be taken by court reporters or by recording equipment. A court reporter shall be used if demanded by any party. Unless the commission agrees to bear the expense of the court reporter, such expense shall be paid by the party demanding the reporter. If a transcript is requested, the commission may require the requesting party to pay the reasonable cost of preparing the transcript.

Subp. 9. **Cameras.** Television, newsreel, motion picture, still, or other cameras, and lights or other devices used in connection with such cameras, shall be permitted in the hearing room while the hearing is in progress, subject to such conditions and restrictions as the administrative law judge may impose in order to avoid disruption of the hearing. Mechanical recording devices, in addition to those provided by the commission or at its discretion, shall also be permitted in the hearing room during the course of the hearing subject to such conditions and restrictions as the administrative law judge may impose in order to avoid disruption of the hearing.

Subp. 10. **Interference.** Pursuant to and in accordance with provisions of Minnesota Statutes 1974, section 624.72, no person shall interfere with the free, proper, and lawful access to or egress from the hearing room. No person shall interfere with the conduct of the hearing.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32; 17 SR 1279*

7847.0270 PROPOSED FINDINGS AND BRIEFS.

Within 20 days after the close of the hearing, the parties shall file proposed findings and conclusions and a brief in support thereof.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115*

7847.0280 REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE.

The administrative law judge shall prepare a written report of findings and a recommendation as to issuance of a certificate of need, and submit it to the commission within 50 days after the close of the hearing. The commission shall immediately serve a copy of the report on all parties to the proceeding.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32; 17 SR 1279*

7847.0290 COMMENTS AND EXCEPTIONS.

Within ten days following receipt of the administrative law judge's report, any party may file written comments on or exceptions to the findings and recommendation of the administrative law judge. Such comments or exceptions shall be served upon all parties.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32*

7847.0300 THE RECORD.

In each proceeding the commission shall prepare an official record, which shall contain:

- A. all pleadings, motions, and intermediate rulings;
- B. the prehearing order of the administrative law judge, if any;
- C. all evidence received or considered;
- D. a statement of matters officially noticed;
- E. questions and offers of proof, objections, and rulings thereon;
- F. proposed findings and briefs in support thereof;
- G. the report of the administrative law judge;
- H. all comments and exceptions and briefs in support thereof; and
- I. all memoranda or data submitted to the administrative law judge by the commission staff or any person in connection with the proceeding.

The official record shall be made available to the commission for use in reaching its decision.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32*

7847.0310 DECISION OF COMMISSION.

Within 30 days after the date of the administrative law judge's report, and in any case within 180 days after receipt of the application, the commission shall render a decision on the

application. The decision shall be in writing and shall be accompanied by a statement of the reasons therefor, including a concise statement of conclusions upon each contested issue of fact necessary to the decision. The commission shall also rule on any decision of the administrative law judge appealed to the judge during the course of the proceeding. The decision shall be served on all parties to the case.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; L 1984 c 640 s 32; 17 SR 1279*

7847.0320 REHEARING.

Subpart 1. **Commission's right to reconsider.** The commission may, within 180 days after the receipt of the application upon request and good cause shown or on its own motion, reconsider a final decision.

Subp. 2. **Petition for rehearing.** Within 30 days of the issuance of the commission's decision, any party to the matter may request a rehearing by filing a petition for rehearing. Such petition shall contain the name and address of the petitioner, the commission designation for the matter, and the reasons for the petition.

Subp. 3. **Commission's action.** The commission shall grant or deny a petition for rehearing as part of the record. Such petition shall be granted upon a showing that there are irregularities in the hearing, errors of law, newly discovered material evidence of such importance as likely to have altered the outcome of the hearing, or upon a showing of good cause for failure to appear at the hearing. Evidence and argument may be presented at the discretion of the commission, in written or oral form or both, by any party to the matter with respect to the granting or denial of petition.

Subp. 4. **Notice of rehearing.** Notice of rehearing shall be served on all parties and published in the same manner prescribed for notice of hearing.

Subp. 5. **Rehearing procedure.** A rehearing in a matter shall be conducted in the same manner prescribed for a hearing.

Subp. 6. **Decision after rehearing.** The decision after rehearing shall be made in the same manner prescribed for the decision after a hearing.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 216B.08; 216B.2421; 216B.243; 216C.10*

History: *L 1983 c 289 s 115; 17 SR 1279*