

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA**

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF)
XCEL ENERGY, INC. FOR APPROVAL TO)
EXTEND EXPECTED MERGER BENEFITS TO)
ITS SOUTH DAKOTA SERVICE TERRITORY)
AND CUSTOMERS)

ORDER APPROVING
PETITION AND CLOSING
DOCKET

EL00-029

On September 19, 2000, the Public Utilities Commission (Commission) received an application by Xcel Energy, Inc. (Xcel) fka Northern States Power for approval of a memorandum of understanding which would provide benefits to its customers and service territory. According to the memorandum, Xcel proposes to provide an additional contribution to its annual economic development investment within its service territory for a limited time and also agrees to a conditional rate moratorium until May 1, 2004. The agreement is being offered to provide rate payers expected benefits of the recent merger between Northern States Power Company and New Century Energies Company. On June 1, 2001, Xcel submitted to the Commission a Petition to Provide Merger Assurances in the State of South Dakota which includes, among other things, an annual economic investment of \$150,000 per year for five years to Xcel's service territory in South Dakota.

At its regularly scheduled June 19, 2001, meeting, the Commission discussed this matter. Commission Staff recommended approval of the Petition to Provide Merger Assurances in the State of South Dakota.

The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL Chapter 49-34A. The Commission unanimously voted to approve the Petition to Provide Merger Assurances in the State of South Dakota and closed the docket. As the Commission's final decision in this matter, it is therefore

ORDERED, that the Petition to Provide Merger Assurances in the State of South Dakota is approved and incorporated by reference and the Stipulations and Agreements filed in Minnesota between the Minnesota Department of Commerce, the Minnesota Office of Attorney General, and Northern States Power shall be incorporated by reference.

Dated at Pierre, South Dakota, this 27th day of June, 2001.

| |
|--|
| CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE |
| The undersigned hereby certifies that this document has been served today upon all parties of record in this docket, as listed on the docket service list, by facsimile or by first class mail, in properly addressed envelopes, with charges prepaid thereon. |
| By: <u><i>Delaine Kalkes</i></u> |
| Date: <u>6/27/01</u> |
| (OFFICIAL SEAL) |

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:

James A. Burg
JAMES A. BURG, Chairman

Pam Nelson
PAM NELSON, Commissioner