South Dakota regulatory process

PowerOn Midwest
Big Stone South to Brookings

Otter Tail Power Company · Xcel Energy

PowerOn Midwest - South Dakota is an electric transmission project from the Big Stone South substation near Big Stone City, SD to the Brookings Substation near the South Dakota border. PowerOn Midwest - South Dakota is a segment of the PowerOn Midwest Project.

All high-voltage transmission proposals like PowerOn Midwest - South Dakota must undergo a comprehensive state regulatory review overseen by the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (SD PUC).

In South Dakota, the primary approval needed is a Facility Permit that must be obtained before a transmission line can be built. The SD PUC reviews routing applications for high-voltage transmission lines, and if approved, issues an order granting a Facility Permit that authorizes construction and operation of the facility (transmission line).

Facility Permits for transmission lines are required under some of these circumstances:

- 115 kilovolts (kV) or greater
- Greater than 2,640 feet in length
- Crosses a public highway

Utilities must demonstrate the following to obtain a Facility Permit:

- Why the proposed route has been selected
- The purpose of the transmission line
- Need for the transmission line
- Estimated revenue generated by the line
- Environmental and human impacts

The process to obtain a Facility Permit generally takes approximately 12 months before the PUC issues a decision. Before making a determination, the SD PUC will hold public input hearings to collect feedback.

In addition to the Facility Permit, a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) must be obtained from each county where the transmission line will be located.

Public meetings and feedback

The PUC will schedule a public hearing within 30 days after the application for a Facility Permit is filed. The public hearing will give local landowners along the project the opportunity to learn more about the project and provide feedback before the SD PUC issues a decision. The PUC will make a final decision within 12 months after the application is filed.

Key milestones in the process

1 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Prior to filing the Facility Permit Application, we will host public open houses to give landowners the opportunity to learn about the project and provide initial feedback. We'll notify landowners near the project study area when the open houses are scheduled.

2 APPLICATION FILING

The project anticipates submitting a Facility Permit Application in 2026. The SD PUC will review the application and may deny, return or amend the application. If the application is denied or returned, changes can be made to the application and resubmitted.

3 NOTICE TO LANDOWNERS

Within 30 days after the application has been filed, landowners located within one-half mile of the proposed site will be notified by certified mail about the project including the date, time, and location of a public input hearing.

4 PUBLIC INPUT HEARING

The SD PUC will schedule a public input hearing within 30 days after the application is submitted. The SD PUC will publish the hearing date, time, and location of the hearing three times in at least one newspaper in each county where the project may be located.

5 CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS

The project will apply for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) in each county where the transmission line may be located. A CUP from each county must be obtained before the transmission can be constructed.

6 PUBLIC INPUT HEARING

The SD PUC will issue its decision on the Facility Permit within 12 months of the application filing.

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