

Service Date: December 29, 2016

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

IN THE MATTER OF NorthWestern) REGULATORY DIVISION
Energy's Application for Approval of)
Avoided Cost Tariff Schedule QF-1) DOCKET NO. D2016.5.39

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Montana Public Service Commission (PSC) will conduct a public hearing in the matter of the *Application for Approval of Avoided Cost Tariff Schedule QF-1* ("Application") filed by NorthWestern Corporation, doing business as NorthWestern Energy ("NorthWestern"). **The public hearing on NorthWestern's application will commence on January 18, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at the PSC's business office, 1701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, Montana 59601.** The hearing will continue from day to day as necessary.

In its Application, NorthWestern requests that the PSC approve a new QF-1 tariff on both an interim and final basis. The proposed avoided cost rates would apply to Qualifying Facilities ("QF") with a nameplate capacity of three megawatts or less. "Standard rates" for purchases from QFs are based on NorthWestern's "avoided costs," which are reviewed by the PSC, made available to the public, and "applicable to all contracts with qualifying facilities which do not choose to negotiate a different rate." Mont. Admin. R. 38.5.1901(2)(j) (2016). In its Application, NorthWestern proposes to decrease standard rates. On May 17, 2016, NorthWestern filed a *Motion for Emergency Suspension of the QF-1 Tariff for New Solar Qualifying Facilities with Nameplate Capacities Greater than 100 kW*. On June 16, 2016, the Commission voted to grant NorthWestern's motion and suspend its obligation under QF-1 tariff option 1(a) standard rates for solar projects greater than 100 kW pending issuance of a final order.

A copy of NorthWestern's Application and related documents are available for inspection at the PSC's business office, 1701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, Montana 59601, and can also be viewed on its website (<http://psc.mt.gov>) under Docket D2016.5.39. The Montana Consumer Counsel represents consumer interests before the PSC and also has a copy of the application

available for inspection at 111 North Last Chance Gulch, Suite 1B, P.O. Box 201703, Helena, Montana 59620-1703, telephone (406) 444-2771.

The PSC's jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Title 69, Chapter 3 of the Montana Code Annotated. *See* Mont. Code Ann. § 69-3-604 (2015). Anyone needing accommodation for a physical, hearing, or sight impairment in order to attend or participate in the hearing should contact the PSC at (406) 444-6199 at least one week prior to the hearing. The PSC will make every effort to accommodate individual impairments.

BY THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

BRAD JOHNSON, Chairman
TRAVIS KAVULLA, Vice Chairman
KIRK BUSHMAN, Commissioner
ROGER KOOPMAN, Commissioner
BOB LAKE, Commissioner