

PSC: Announces requirement for utilities to file workforce and supplier diversity, affordability data

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MADISON – The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) announced today that all regulated utilities, regardless of size and ownership type, will be required to provide workforce diversity data as part of the utility’s 2020 Annual Report. Utilities will be required to submit information about the Board of Directors and all employees, regardless of position, in various demographic categories, including women, racial and ethnic minorities, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. This is the first time utilities are required to submit workforce diversity data, ultimately furthering Governor Evers’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts statewide.

“Diversity and inclusion within the utility industry are not just important because of the tremendous impact they have on both employees and the financial health of the utility. Ultimately, diversity and inclusion efforts impact the manner in which utility customers are served,” said PSC Chairperson, Rebecca Cameron Valcq. “Collecting this data also will provide an opportunity for our partners to encourage diversity and inclusion throughout the industry.”

The PSC will also require privately held utilities with at least 15,000 customers to provide information about supplier diversity and procurement goals and actual spending for women-owned, minority-owned, veteran-owned, disability-owned, and LGBT businesses in the previous calendar year, and the utilities’ plan for implementing and realizing their goals for the following year. In addition, these same investor-owned utilities with at least 15,000 customers will be required to provide a detailed household economic burden index analysis. This analysis shall evaluate residential energy (electric and/or natural gas) and residential water utility customer bills as percentages of household income by county. These utilities include Madison Gas & Electric Company; Northern States Power Wisconsin (Xcel

Energy); Superior Water, Light, and Power Company; Wisconsin Electric Power Company (We Energies), Wisconsin Gas Company, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, and Wisconsin Power and Light (Alliant Energy).

“The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the need to understand energy and water affordability and the effect Commission decisions have on all customers. The data we are collecting will help to inform our decisions and ensure we have the tools necessary to make sure critical utility service is provided not only safely and reliably, but equitably and affordably, as well,” added Valcq.

Each year, regulated utilities are required to file an annual report with the PSC. The report requires utilities to submit information on a variety of topics and enables the PSC to remain informed about the manner and method of utility management. To provide utilities sufficient time to file, the PSC has extended the annual report deadline from April, 1 2021, to June 1, 2021.