Xcel Energy proposes program to provide additional assistance for customers with their energy bill

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. (February 27, 2023) – Xcel Energy filed a request with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin today to create a new program to expand assistance to lower-earning households who need additional assistance to pay their energy bills. The proposal for the new program followed several months of discussion and coordination with the Citizens Utility Board (CUB).

Xcel Energy’s proposal would make it the first utility in Wisconsin to offer a targeted assistance program and would increase the total amount of income-qualified support by 50%, or an estimated $5 million annually. As part of the new program, customers who already receive assistance from the Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) would be automatically enrolled.

The program is similar to targeted income-qualified energy support efforts offered by Xcel Energy in other states it serves.

“Through this new program we are seeking to increase financial assistance to customers who are having the most difficulty paying their energy bills,” said Tyrel Zich, regional vice president, Xcel Energy-Wisconsin. “We know these are challenging economic times and we will continue to find ways to support our customers and communities.”

If approved, Xcel Energy’s program would seek to lower eligible customer bills to no greater than 4% of their annual income for each service type, (electric or natural gas) with a maximum reduction of $600 per year. The program also provides additional support to customers who have fallen behind on their bills.

“Energy bills take up a large chunk of low-income customers’ household budgets, so CUB is glad to work with Xcel on this targeted approach to help those who are struggling to make ends meet,” said Tom Content, executive director, Citizens Utility Board. “This innovative program marks a positive step forward in tackling energy burden in Wisconsin.”

Customers are encouraged to contact Xcel Energy if they’re having difficulty paying their bills. Representatives can connect them to payment assistance programs or customers are encouraged to directly sign up for assistance with WHEAP.

Xcel Energy anticipates PSCW approval later this year and plans to implement the program prior to the 2023-24 heating season.

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About Xcel Energy
Xcel Energy (NASDAQ: XEL) provides the energy that powers millions of homes and businesses across eight Western and Midwestern states. With its Wisconsin headquarters in Eau Claire, the company is an industry leader in responsibly reducing carbon emissions and producing and delivering clean energy solutions from a variety of renewable sources at competitive prices. For more information, visit xcelenergy.com or follow us on Twitter and Facebook.