



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

NOTICE OF FILING, PUBLIC HEARING, AND PROCEDURAL CONFERENCE

D.P.U. 17-92

June 2, 2017

Petition of Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company each d/b/a National Grid for approval for an Enhanced Vegetation Management Pilot Program and the recovery of associated costs through an Enhanced Vegetation Management Pilot Program Provision, M.D.P.U. No. 1343.

On April 7, 2017, Massachusetts Electric Company and Nantucket Electric Company, together doing business as National Grid (“National Grid” or “Companies”), filed a petition with the Department of Public Utilities (“Department”) pursuant to the Department’s directives in Massachusetts Electric Company/Nantucket Electric Company, D.P.U. 15-155 (2016). National Grid seeks Department approval of: (1) an enhanced vegetation management pilot program (“Pilot”); and (2) its proposed cost recovery mechanism for estimated costs associated with the Pilot. The Department has docketed this matter as D.P.U. 17-92.

National Grid proposes a four-year Pilot in which the Companies will implement a four-year pruning cycle for all the circuits in the Companies’ service territory, and target 30 distribution circuits and 26 sub-transmission circuits located throughout the Commonwealth for enhanced vegetation management measures. National Grid proposes to expand the maximum clearance distance for pruning and tree removal around these targeted circuits and to remove trees identified as a threat in a condition assessment to be conducted by the Companies.

National Grid estimates that the total incremental cost for the Pilot over the proposed four years is approximately \$39.5 million. National Grid proposes to recover estimated incremental operations and maintenance (“O&M”) Pilot costs through a vegetation management factor (“VMF”) to be assessed on all kilowatt-hours delivered to all retail delivery service customers. National Grid proposes to annually file estimated Pilot costs for recovery on December 31, for effect the following April 1. National Grid proposes to reconcile actual Pilot costs through a vegetation management reconciliation factor (“VMRF”), to be filed annually on August 1 of the following year, for effect November 1.

National Grid is not proposing recovery of VMFs in this filing, but provides illustrative VMFs based on estimated Pilot costs for fiscal years 2018 and 2019. According

to National Grid, and based upon illustrative VMFs, a typical residential customer receiving Basic Service using 600 kilowatt-hours per month would experience a bill increase of \$0.37 per month, or 0.3 percent. Illustrative VMFs for other customer classes reflect bill increases between 0.1 percent and 0.5 percent per month. If the Pilot proposal is approved, National Grid will file its first set of proposed VMFs for approval on December 31, 2017, for effect April 1, 2018.

The Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (“Attorney General”) filed a notice to intervene in this matter pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(a). Further, pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), the Attorney General filed a notice of intent to retain experts and consultants to assist her investigation of the Companies’ filing, and has requested Department approval to spend up to \$150,000 in this regard. Pursuant to G.L. c. 12, § 11E(b), the costs incurred by the Attorney General relative to her retention of experts and consultants may be recovered in the Companies’ rates. Any person who desires to comment on the Attorney General’s notice of intent to retain experts and consultants in this matter may submit written comments to the Department not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Thursday, June 22, 2017**.

The Department will conduct a public hearing to receive comments on the Companies’ petition on **Tuesday, June 27, 2017, at 2:00 p.m.** at the Department’s offices, One South Station, 5th Floor, Boston, Massachusetts 02110. The Department will conduct a procedural conference immediately following the public hearing. Any person who desires to comment may do so at the time and place noted above, or submit written comments to the Department not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Tuesday, June 27, 2017**.

Any person who desires to participate otherwise in the evidentiary phase of this proceeding shall file such written petition for leave to intervene no later than close of business (5:00 p.m.) on **Thursday, June 22, 2017**. A petition for leave to intervene must satisfy the timing and substantive requirements of 220 C.M.R. § 1.03. Receipt by the Department, not mailing, constitutes filing and determines whether a petition has been timely filed. A petition filed late may be disallowed as untimely, unless good cause is shown for waiver under 220 C.M.R. § 1.01(4). To be allowed, a petition under 220 C.M.R. § 1.03(1) must satisfy the standing requirements of G.L. c. 30A, § 10. All responses to petitions to intervene must be filed by the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on the second business day after the petition to intervene was filed.

An original and one (1) copy of all written comments or petitions to intervene must be filed with Mark D. Marini, Secretary, Department of Public Utilities, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts 02110, not later than the close of business (5:00 p.m.) on the dates noted above. One copy of all written comments or petitions to intervene should also be sent to counsel for the Companies, Patricia Crowe, Esq., National Grid USA Service Company, Inc., 40 Sylvan Road, Waltham, Massachusetts 02451.

All documents should also be submitted to the Department in electronic format using one of the following methods: (1) by e-mail attachment to dpu.efiling@state.ma.us and the Hearing Officer kerri.phillips@state.ma.us; or (2) on a CD-ROM. The text of the e-mail or CD-ROM must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.P.U. 17-92); (2) the name of the person or company submitting the filing; and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. The electronic filing should also include the name, title, and telephone number of a person to contact in the event of questions about the filing. All documents submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's website (enter "17-92") at: <http://170.63.40.34/DPU/Fileroom/dockets/bynumber>.

A copy of the petition and accompanying exhibits are available for inspection during regular business hours at the Department's offices. In addition, the filing is also available on the Department's website as referenced above. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), contact Theresa Kelly at Theresa.Kelly@state.ma.us or (617) 305-3642.

For further information regarding the petition, please contact counsel for the Companies, Patricia Crowe, Esq., at (781) 907-1848. For further information regarding this notice, please contact Kerri DeYoung Phillips, Hearing Officer, Department of Public Utilities, at (617) 305-3500.

Reasonable accommodations at public or evidentiary hearings for people with disabilities are available upon request. Include a description of the accommodation you will need, including as much detail as you can. Also include a way the Department can contact you if we need more information. Please provide as much advance notice as possible. Last minute requests will be accepted, but may not be able to be accommodated. Contact Theresa Kelly at Theresa.Kelly@state.ma.us or (617) 305-3642.