

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**IR 15-296**

**ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION UTILITIES**

**Investigation into Grid Modernization**

**ORDER OF NOTICE**

On July 8, 2015, the Governor signed House Bill 614, implementing goals of the state 10-year energy strategy developed by the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning. The “strategy document” can be found at <http://www.nh.gov/oep/energy/programs/documents/energy-strategy.pdf>.

Pursuant to House Bill 614, the Commission “shall open a docket on electric grid modernization on or before August 1, 2015.” The strategy document states that “[g]rid modernization refers to a wide range of actions aimed at ensuring that the electric grid is more resilient and flexible, better able to integrate variable energy sources and demand side management, and capable of providing real-time information to help customers manager this energy use and reduce energy cost.”

Grid modernization is a broad topic that encompasses many elements, including replacement of aging infrastructure, outage management, the integration of distributed generation, and education of customers on how to manage their energy use for the benefit of the electric delivery system and to minimize energy costs. Grid modernization includes the incorporation of “smart meters”, however, pursuant to RSA 374:62, no electric utility is allowed to install a smart meter device without the written consent of the customer.

Given the breadth of the topic, the strategy document suggests that the Commission conduct an investigation or information-gathering proceeding as a first step, to give stakeholders a chance to learn about grid modernization and to explore to what extent that grid modernization is workable in New Hampshire. The Commission has decided to follow the suggestion. Interested parties will have until September 17, 2015 to provide comment on the definition, or elements, of grid modernization that should be included in this investigation. The Commission is also interested in hearing from parties who have expert knowledge in grid modernization. Finally, the Commission directs Staff to schedule a technical session following the receipt of comments to determine whether the parties can agree on the scope of this investigation and to develop a procedural schedule.

The electric distribution utilities shall be mandatory parties to this proceeding.

Subsequent filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, will be posted to the Commission's website at [www.puc.nh.gov](http://www.puc.nh.gov).

**Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby**

**ORDERED**, that interested parties file comments on the scope of this investigation no later than September 17, 2015, such filing to be consistent with the requirements of N. H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.02; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that, following review of those comments, the Staff shall schedule a technical session to discuss whether agreement can be reached on the scope of the investigation and to develop a procedural schedule; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that pursuant to N.H. Code Admin. Rules Puc 203.12, the Executive Director shall notify all persons of this investigation by publishing a copy of this Order of Notice no later than July 31, 2015, by causing it to be posted on the Commission's website.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this thirtieth day of July, 2015.



Debra A. Howland  
Executive Director

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, NHPUC, 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429; 603-271-2431; TDD Access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance should be made one week prior to the scheduled event.