

NEWS RELEASE  
MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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PSC Grants Stay Pending Appeal

HELENA - The Montana Public Service Commission on Tuesday approved a request to limit the availability of long-term fixed rates to qualifying wind projects during a pending court appeal.

Commissioners granted NorthWestern Energy's request for a stay, explaining that they were persuaded by the utility's argument that not granting the request could render the case moot and potentially harm consumers.

Wind developers may still seek long-term agreements to sell the utility power at market-based rates under other options in the tariff. At the same time, Montana's Renewable Portfolio Standard requires NorthWestern Energy to purchase, through competitive solicitations, 15 percent of its power from renewable resources by 2015.

Appeals were filed in January in the First Judicial District Court of Montana after a previous commission lifted a tariffed 50-megawatt cap on new wind projects eligible for standard-offer rates. In a filing with the Commission, the utility said developers of certain wind projects known as "qualifying facilities," or QFs, have "inundated" the company with requests for long-term agreements to purchase power at long-term fixed rates.

The Commission, citing concerns for the impact on ratepayers, granted the stay eliminating the availability of fixed rates for wind generators between 100 kilowatts and 10 megawatts. QFs that are 100 kilowatts or smaller would still be eligible for long-term standard rates under the utility's current tariff schedule QF-1.

For more information, visit [psc.mt.gov](http://psc.mt.gov) or contact PSC Communications/Research Director Justin Post at (406) 444-6171. Follow the PSC at [Twitter.com/@MT\\_PSC](https://twitter.com/MT_PSC) or visit [Facebook.com/MontanaPSC](https://facebook.com/MontanaPSC).