

IOWA UTILITIES BOARD

IN RE:	
INVESTIGATION INTO IOWA UTILITIES' SUMMER 2024 PREPAREDNESS PLANS AND GRID RESILIENCE PLANS	DOCKET NO. INU-2024-0001

ORDER REQUESTING INFORMATION REGARDING SUMMER 2024 PREPAREDNESS PLANS

Ensuring the resilience of the electric grid is an emerging challenge for the electric industry and governmental entities. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that since 1980 there have been 377 confirmed disaster events in the United States with losses exceeding \$1 billion. From 1980 to 2023, there were an average of 8.5 disasters with losses of \$1 billion or more per year. However, since 2019, the average has increased to 20.4 billion-dollar disasters per year. The data from the NOAA shows that the rate of catastrophic disasters is increasing in the United States.¹

The electric grid is highly interconnected with other critical infrastructure systems, and the failure of the electric grid during a catastrophic event can lead to other cascading and escalating failures.

Iowa Code § 474.1(3) charges the Board with enforcing and implementing Iowa Code § 476.8, which requires public utilities to provide customers with reasonably adequate service.

¹ See NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI), *U.S. Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters* (2024), <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/billions/>.

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Iowa Code § 476.2(1) grants the Board “broad general powers” to effect the purposes of Iowa Code chapter 26. Additionally, Iowa Code § 476.15 provides that “[t]he jurisdiction and powers of the board shall extend as provided in this chapter to the utility business of public utilities operating within this state to the full extent permitted by the Constitution and laws of the United States.”

The Board has previously opened Docket Nos. INU-2022-0001, INU-2022-0002, INU-2023-0001, and INU-2023-0002 to address potential shortfalls in capacity during peak usage days in the summer and winter. While addressing capacity shortfalls continues to be an important topic, the Board also considers it important to understand how Iowa electric utilities are working to ensure their systems are resilient to catastrophic failures. Accordingly, the Board is opening Docket No. INU-2024-0001 to continue its dialogue regarding Iowa electric utilities’ seasonal preparedness and inquire into Iowa electric utilities’ grid resilience.²

The Board has identified questions, in Attachment A to this order, for utilities to answer regarding summer preparedness and grid resilience. The Board is also scheduling a summer preparedness meeting for May 29, 2024, to allow utilities, the Board, and any other interested parties to discuss challenges and solutions for maintaining the reliability and resilience of Iowa’s electric grid this summer.

Only Iowa rate-regulated utilities are required to answer the Attachment A questions. However, any interested party, including other Iowa electric utilities, are welcome to file responses in the docket and/or participate in the May 29 meeting.

² For purposes of this docket “resilience” can be defined as the “ability of an energy system to minimize disruptions to energy service by anticipating, resisting, absorbing, responding to, adapting to, and recovering from a disturbance.” See Argonne National Laboratory, *State Energy Resilience Framework*, at 2 (2016), <https://publications.anl.gov/anlpubs/2017/02/133591.pdf>.

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IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

1. Docket No. INU-2024-0001 is opened to address electric utilities' plans for addressing load shedding on peak summer days and address electric utilities' plans for ensuring grid resilience.

2. Iowa rate-regulated electric utilities are to answer the questions listed in Attachment A, which is incorporated by reference into this order, by filing responses in Docket No. INU-2024-0001 no later than May 22, 2024.

3. A technical conference regarding summer preparedness and grid resilience shall begin at 9 a.m. May 29, 2024 in the Utilities Board's Conference Rooms 1 and 2, located at 1375 East Court Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa.

4. Persons wishing to attend the technical conference scheduled in Ordering Clause 3 shall file a pleading on or before May 22, 2024, indicating whether participation will be in person or virtual.

5. Persons with disabilities who will require assistive services or devices to observe or participate in this technical conference shall contact the Utilities Board at (515) 725-7300 at least five business days in advance to request arrangements.

UTILITIES BOARD

Erik M. Helland 2024.04.23
10:08:31 -05'00'

Joshua Byrnes Date: 2024.04.23
14:58:22 -05'00'

ATTEST:

Keetah A Horras Date: 2024.04.23
15:06:58 -05'00'

Sarah Martz Date: 2024.04.23
10:13:18 -05'00'

Dated at Des Moines, Iowa, this 23rd day of April, 2024.

ATTACHMENT A
INU-2024-0002

1. Is your utility ready to reliably serve peak load for summer 2024? Provide details.
2. Does your utility have any updates to its plans for initiating and managing a systemwide load shed to protect the bulk electric system in the event of an imbalance of electricity supply and demand? If so, what are the updates?
3. What steps has your utility taken in preparation to reliably serve peak load for summer 2024?
4. Does your utility foresee significant load growth due to the construction of data centers and increases in manufacturing? What are your utility's near-term load growth projections? How is load growth impacting the operation of your utility's system through the summer months?
5. Does your utility foresee any supply chain constraints affecting natural gas or coal availability? If so, what are those constraints?
6. What hazards, threats, or vulnerabilities are you most concerned about for your utility? What hazards, threats, or vulnerabilities are you most concerned about for the state of Iowa that may challenge your preparedness plans?
7. Describe the preparations taken to prepare your generation and distribution assets to reliably operate during extreme conditions, such as:
 - a. Drought, including loss or diminishment of water source(s)
 - b. Extreme heat
 - c. High wind events
 - d. Uncontrolled Fire
 - e. Other
8. Has your utility prepared a resilience plan? If so, were stakeholders involved in that process?
9. What metrics, if any, does your utility use to measure resilience?
10. What can the Iowa Utilities Board or the State of Iowa do to support the resilience of your system?
11. How does your utility handle load modifying resources (LMRs)?
 - a. How are you tracking these resources within your territory?

ATTACHMENT A
INU-2024-0002

- b. How often are these resource lists updated?
 - i. Are they updated manually or automatically?
 - ii. How are demand response resources listed or updated?
- c. In general, what is the average response time of these resources? How much notification time is generally needed or used?
- d. Are LMRs in your territory currently tested in any way for things such as response time, modifying capability, availability, etc.?