



# The Investor's Voice



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## WHAT'S INSIDE:

**ALLIANT ENERGY STUDY USES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO FIND PHANTOM POWER ..... 2**

**XCEL PLANS TO IDLE PLANTS ... 2**

**UTILITY REGULATORS APPROVE GAS PLANT IN SUPERIOR ..... 2**

**EARNINGS..... 2**

- **WEC ENERGY GROUP RAISES QUARTERLY DIVIDEND**
- **XCEL BOARD DECLARES DIVIDEND ON COMMON STOCK**

**WIND TURBINE DESIGN AIMS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY ..... 3**

**REGULATORS ..... 3**

- **MORE FUNDING PROPOSED FOR CITIZEN UTILITY BOARD**
- **PROPOSED POWER LINE ROUTE DECIDED**

**PEOPLE ..... 3**

- **LANE ELECTED TO WEC ENERGY GROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS**
- **MICHAEL D. GARCIA APPOINTED TO ALLIANT ENERGY BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**XCEL USES ITS CERTIFIED SITES PROGRAM..... 4**

## XCEL ENERGY PROPOSES NEW ELECTRIC VEHICLE PROGRAM

Xcel Energy filed a request with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to provide customers a comprehensive electric vehicle program that would simplify and significantly lower the cost for residential, commercial and fleet customers who would like to install EV charging equipment.

"Our commitment to clean energy is reflected in our strong support for electric vehicles," said Mark Stoering, president, Xcel Energy-Wisconsin. "Electric vehicles are great for the environment, and as they become more affordable, we're going to see more of them on the road. Making it easier for customers to own an electric vehicle while helping them save money simply makes sense."

If approved, customers can use EV charging technology provided by Xcel Energy to help them save money by charging their vehicle during the low-cost overnight hours. With electricity prices cheaper than gasoline, electric vehicles cost less to fuel than combustion engine vehicles. Participating customers can save the most money when charging their vehicles exclusively during off-peak hours from midnight-8 a.m., at prices equating to less than \$0.70 per gallon of gasoline.

Under the residential program, customers can choose to have Xcel Energy install a new, smart EV charger with embedded energy-monitoring capabilities. This equipment can charge a customer's EV faster than a charger that plugs into a typical household outlet. Customers can pay for this new equipment monthly on their bill or up-front.

Xcel Energy is also looking to support commercial customers by expanding the infrastructure services required when installing charging stations for electric vehicles. If the Commission approves the request, Xcel Energy anticipates making the program available in mid-2020.

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"Making it easier for customers to own an electric vehicle while helping them save money simply makes sense."

*Mark Stoering, President,  
Xcel Energy-Wisconsin*

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## MGE PARTNERING WITH DANE COUNTY TO BUILD SOLAR ARRAY

Madison Gas and Electric has filed an application with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin for approval of an agreement to partner with Dane County on a 9-megawatt solar array near the Dane County Regional Airport. The solar array will generate enough carbon-free electricity to provide Dane County with about 40 percent of the energy used by all County-owned facilities.



## ALLIANT ENERGY STUDY USES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO FIND PHANTOM POWER

According to a study by Alliant Energy, you are using power even when you think it's not on. These "always on" devices include things like wireless internet routers, which need electricity to maintain a constant connection, or televisions, which take a long time to power up and need some juice in order to respond when you push the remote control. But there are dozens of other culprits — including computers, printers, rarely used DVD players and anything with a DC power converter — sucking up power around the clock.

A 2015 study by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) estimated nearly a quarter of all household electricity use in the United States is consumed by appliances and other equipment in standby mode. Over the course of a year, that can add up to more than \$300 worth of electricity for the average Wisconsin household and the equivalent output of 50 large power plants.



## WEC BUYS WIND PROJECT

WEC Energy Group has agreed to buy an 80 percent ownership stake in a 250-megawatt wind farm in McLean County, Illinois for \$345 million. The Blooming Grove Wind Farm is expected to begin operations by the end of 2020 and has long-term offtake agreements with affiliates of two multinational companies. "This is the latest in a series of investments that fit exceptionally well with our strategy of deploying capital in renewable energy assets that will serve strong, vibrant companies for years to come," said Gale Klappa, Executive Chairman of WEC Energy Group. Prior to this deal, the company has spent more than \$640 million for similar stakes in wind farms in Nebraska, Illinois and South Dakota over the last two years.

## XCEL PLANS TO IDLE PLANTS

In a filing submitted to Minnesota regulators, Xcel proposes to shut down its Allen S. King and Sherco unit 2 generators during the spring and fall and run them only when profitable.

The move could save between \$8.5 million and \$28 million a year on fuel costs alone, according to Xcel, which expects to save another \$2 million a year in operations and maintenance costs and avoid more than \$27 million in capital investments in the King plant before its retirement in 2028.

As a result, Xcel expects to eliminate between 2.7 million and 6 million tons per year of planned carbon dioxide emissions.

## UTILITY REGULATORS APPROVE GAS PLANT IN SUPERIOR

Wisconsin regulators authorized construction of a \$700 million natural gas generator in Superior in spite of concerns over the project's environmental impact.

The Public Service Commission has voted 2-1 to approve a permit for Dairyland Power Cooperative of La Crosse to build the 625-megawatt Nemadji Trail Energy Center, which is to be jointly owned by Duluth-based Minnesota Power.

The utilities have argued the plant is needed to allow them to move away from coal-fired generation and that it will support the addition of intermittent sources like wind and solar.

## EARNINGS

### WEC ENERGY GROUP RAISES QUARTERLY DIVIDEND

WEC Energy has declared a quarterly cash dividend of 63.25 cents per share on the company's common stock, an increase of 7 percent over the current quarterly dividend of 59 cents a share. This raises the annual dividend rate to \$2.53 a share.



The higher dividend is payable March 1, 2020, to stockholders of record on February 14, 2020. This marks the 310th consecutive quarter — dating back to 1942 — that the company will have paid a dividend to its stockholders.

### XCEL BOARD DECLARES DIVIDEND ON COMMON STOCK

The Board of Directors of Xcel Energy has declared a quarterly dividend on its common stock of 40.5 cents per share. The dividends were payable January 20, 2020, to shareholders of record on December 26, 2019.



Xcel Energy is a major U.S. electricity and natural gas company, with operations in 8 Western and Midwestern states. Xcel Energy provides a comprehensive portfolio of energy-related products and services to 3.6 million electricity customers and 2.0 million natural gas customers through its regulated operating companies.

## WIND TURBINE DESIGN AIMS TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY

A new turbine design from UW-Green Bay's engineering department aims to improve the efficiency of wind power generation. The system's inventor, Md Maruf Hossain, has applied for a patent on the design, and WiSys is seeking commercial partners in the wind power generation industry to help develop the new technology. WiSys handles licensing for UW System universities other than UW-Madison and UW-Milwaukee.

According to an information sheet, most wind power generation comes from horizontal axis wind turbines. But WiSys says vertical axis systems have several advantages including lighter weight and improved function during "turbulent, small and inconsistent wind situations."

## REGULATORS



### MORE FUNDING PROPOSED FOR CITIZEN UTILITY BOARD

Wisconsin lawmakers have introduced a bill that they would say will

streamline aspects of utility regulation while channeling more money to ratepayer advocacy.

The bill would direct \$900,000 a year from ratepayers of Wisconsin's investor-owned utilities to the Citizens Utility Board. The funding, to be administered by the Public Service Commission, would amount to a roughly \$400,000 increase over current levels. "The reason CUB was formed was so there could be a level playing field," said Tom Content, executive director of the 40-year-old organization. "Even with this, we'll be outspent four to one."

PSC Chairwoman Rebecca Valcq said, "It's important to provide stability for a group that plays a critical role in helping regulators make fair decisions."

## PROPOSED POWER LINE ROUTE DECIDED

The Wisconsin Public Service Commission has voted unanimously to require Northern States Power Company, a Wisconsin subsidiary of Xcel Energy, to build a proposed transmission line in northern Wisconsin across the same route of its existing power line.

The company plans to build a new 34.5 kilovolt transmission line and two new substations on the Bayfield Peninsula in addition to the existing 71-mile line to improve reliability of power in the region. Xcel had proposed two possible routes for the project — an east route and a west route. The east route follows the existing utility corridor and was favored overwhelmingly by local residents.

## PEOPLE

### LANE ELECTED TO WEC ENERGY GROUP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tom Lane, Vice Chairman of Energy Capital Partners, has been elected to the board of directors of WEC Energy Group (NYSE:WEC), effective January 1. The addition of Lane reflects the board's commitment to succession planning as several directors approach retirement age.



*Tom Lane*

Lane was a partner at Energy Capital Partners from its inception in 2005 through the end of 2016. Prior to joining the private equity firm, Lane, 62, worked in the Investment Banking Division of Goldman Sachs. As a managing director, he provided senior-level coverage for electric and gas utilities, independent power producers and midstream energy companies throughout the country. Lane is a graduate of Wheaton College. He received an MBA in Finance from the University of Chicago.

### MICHAEL D. GARCIA APPOINTED TO ALLIANT ENERGY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Alliant Energy Board of Directors has appointed Michael D. Garcia as a new director effective January 1, 2020. Mr. Garcia, 55, is President of Domtar Corporation's (NYSE: UFS; TSX: UFS) Pulp and Paper division, responsible for the strategy and oversight of its pulp, paper and biomaterials businesses. Domtar is North America's largest producer of uncoated free sheet (white papers) and one of the largest softwood market pulp producers in the world.



*Michael D. Garcia*

"We're pleased to welcome Michael to our board of directors," said John O. Larsen, Alliant Energy Chairman, President and CEO. "As a military veteran with diverse global executive management experience, he will bring fresh insights and a unique perspective that will help us continue to power what's next for our customers, communities and shareowners."

Mr. Garcia joined Domtar in 2014 after spending more than four years with Evraz PLC. He was Chief Executive Officer for Evraz Highveld Steel and Vanadium from 2011 to 2014 and Senior Vice President, Manufacturing & Supply Chain, from 2010 to 2011.

Mr. Garcia is a Director of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Charlotte Branch, and an at-large board member of the United Service Organization (USO) of North Carolina. He is a graduate of The U.S. Military Academy at West Point and holds an MBA from Harvard University.



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10 East Doty St, Suite 500  
Madison, WI 53703-3397  
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## XCEL USES ITS CERTIFIED SITES PROGRAM

The Stout Technology and Business Park and the Menomonie Industrial Park both have shovel-ready sites certified through Xcel Energy's Certified Sites program.

There are about 130 elements required to become an Xcel Energy certified site, ranging from asking price to environmental studies and a letter of support, said Brian Elwood, general manager, customer and community service for Xcel Energy in Wisconsin and Michigan.

"By promoting economic development, Xcel Energy helps bring jobs and capital investment to the communities and regions we serve," Elwood said. "The certified sites program provides an opportunity for the company to efficiently highlight and market communities' key assets to businesses looking to relocate or to expand operations. Time is of the essence when trying to attract or retain potential clients. Having certified sites cuts some of the red tape, providing speed to market for the potential clients and reducing their risk."

Xcel Energy started the certified sites program in 2017. Nationally, the company has 37 certified sites, five ready sites and 27 ready buildings in its eight-state service territory, Elwood said. In Wisconsin, the company has six certified sites, including the two in Menomonie.

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