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PSC Adopts Distributed Generation Interconnection Standards

Provision last session directed PSC to create rules

MADISON – The Public Service Commission (PSC) today passed out of its agency the final rules to create a statewide standard to connect distributed generation to the larger power grid. Rep. Schooff initiated the rule-making process last session when he pushed for a provision requiring the PSC to create such a standard.

“I am extremely pleased that the PSC has completed its part of the rule-making process after more than two years of hard work to craft the rules. These rules will encourage the use of distributed generation technology to address Wisconsin’s future energy needs,” Schooff said. “I am anxious for the rules to get into place as soon as possible.”

Now that the PSC has adopted final rules, the rules go to the legislature. Once in the Assembly and the Senate, the rules go to committee for review. The committee initially has 30 days to act on the bill. If the committee does not act during this time, the PSC may put the rules into effect. The Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities, on which Rep. Schooff sits, held an information briefing April 1, 2003 on several subjects, including distributed generation interconnection standards.

Industry experts agree that establishing a statewide structure for connecting distributed generation to the power grid is one of the most important steps to bring the practice into the mainstream.

Jay Burnette of the Fairbanks Morse Engine in Beloit served on the PSC advisory committee that helped develop the rules. “I want to thank Fairbanks Morse and Jay Burnette for their work to create these rules,” Schooff said. “Jay was an integral part of the rule-making process and the PSC benefited greatly from his input.”

Distributed generation refers to on-site power generators that allow businesses to produce their own power and sell it back to utility companies. Already, businesses that use distributed generation systems find them very effective as emergency back-up generators and as a substitute power supply when utility prices are high, a practice called “peak shaving.”

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