

**Cass County Electric Cooperative Inc.**  
**PURPA EISA FAQs**  
**(FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)**

**Why did Cass County Electric Cooperative publish a Notice to Consider PURPA Standards?**

Cass County Electric Cooperative is required by federal law to consider four new standards that deal with energy efficiency and smart grid resources and investments.

**Am I required to respond to the Notice to Consider PURPA Standards or to participate in the proceeding?**

No, Cass County Electric Cooperative members are not required to respond to the notice or participate in the proceedings. Participating in the proceedings is optional. You may choose to participate if you have information or comments that you would like Cass County Electric Cooperative to consider before a final decision is made on the standards.

**If I have a complaint about my electric bill, should I participate in this proceeding?**

No, this proceeding will not address individual complaints about a Cass County Electric Cooperative member's electric bill. You should contact our headquarters office with any billing complaints or concerns.

**What does "PURPA" mean?**

"PURPA" is an acronym that refers to the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act. Originally enacted in 1978, this Act is a federal law intended to address national energy issues through programs that encourage conservation and efficiency while maintaining equitable rates. Congress has amended PURPA several times since 1978 and most recently, through the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007.

**What is the purpose of this federal law?**

Congress enacted PURPA to encourage:

- 1) Conservation of the electric energy supplied by utilities
- 2) The efficient use of electric utility facilities and resources; and
- 3) Equitable rates for electric consumers

**What does "EISA" mean?**

"EISA" is an acronym that refers to the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. This Act added four new ratemaking standards to PURPA, and large regulated and non-regulated electric utilities (including electric cooperatives like Cass County Electric Cooperative) are required to make a decision about those new standards.

## **What ratemaking standards must Cass County Electric Cooperative consider?**

Federal law requires Cass County Electric Cooperative to consider standards for:

- 1) Integrated Resource Planning to Promote Energy Efficiency
- 2) Rate Design Modification to Promote Energy Efficiency Investments
- 3) Smart Grid Investment
- 4) Smart Grid Information

## **What does “Integrated Resource Planning to Promote Energy Efficiency” mean?**

The term “Integrated Resource Planning” (IRP), broadly defined, refers to a comprehensive planning process intended to systematically consider appropriate supply and demand resources under a utility’s control to meet current and future load requirements. The term “energy efficiency” generally refers to efforts that allow consumers to use less energy without altering their behavior through, for example, increasing the use of new technologies or replacing old energy-consuming devices with newer, more efficient versions.

## **What does “Rate Design Modification to Promote Energy Efficiency Investments” refer to?**

Standard ratemaking practices may not encourage, or could even discourage, utilities from adopting energy conservation measures. This standard directs utilities to look at specific utility incentives that influence the adoption of or investment in energy efficiency.

## **What does “Smart Grid Investment” refer to?**

“Smart Grid Investment” refers to a utility practice of considering ‘smart grid’ technologies in utility plant designs. This standard directs utilities to consider factors such as total costs, cost-effectiveness, improved reliability, security, system performance, and societal benefit when evaluating ‘smart grid’ technologies vs. ‘non-advanced’ grid technologies.

## **What does “Smart Grid Information” refer to?**

“Smart Grid information” refers to data made available by implementing smart grid investments. This standard is intended to require that electricity purchasers be provided with direct access to information concerning pricing, usage, intervals, and sources (including generation type and greenhouse gas emissions), either in writing or in electronic form.

## **Could my electric rates change as a result of this project?**

In this proceeding, the board must determine, in part, whether implementing the standards will encourage equitable rates for Cass County Electric Cooperative members. If the board decides to implement one or more of the ratemaking standards, it is possible that such a decision might change the rates Cass County Electric Cooperative members pay for electricity.

## **Who decides whether the Cass County Electric Cooperative will implement the new ratemaking standards?**

The Cass County Electric Cooperative's board of directors will make the final decision.

## **What process will the Board use to make its decision?**

The Board Resolution regarding Consideration of the PURPA Standards describes the process that will be followed to reach a final decision. The resolution can be found on Cass County Electric Cooperative's website. The board has set up an uncontested process called a "rulemaking proceeding" in which those interested in the proceeding submit written comments to discuss the standards.

## **Who may participate in the proceeding?**

All members of Cass County Electric Cooperative have a right to participate in the proceeding, as do the Secretary of Energy and any other affected electric utility. Members of the public who are not members of the Cass County Electric Cooperative may also submit comments.

## **If I want to participate and submit comments, what should I do?**

Persons interested in participating in the proceeding are invited to notify Cass County Electric Cooperative of their intent to participate by submitting written comments, data, views, arguments, and other evidence on the standards being considered. Responses and any comments, data, views, arguments, and other evidence must include the person's name, contact information, and relationship to Cass County Electric Cooperative and be submitted in writing to Cass County Electric Cooperative, Attn: Jane Lindemann, board recording secretary, P.O. Box 8, Kindred, North Dakota 58051-0008, or by e-mail at [jlindemann@kwh.com](mailto:jlindemann@kwh.com). The comments do not need to be in any particular format.

## **Is there a deadline to submit written comments on the standards?**

Yes, the deadline to submit written comments on the standards is August 14, 2009.

## **If I want to participate in the PURA standard review process, do I need to hire a lawyer?**

It is not necessary to hire a lawyer to participate in this hearing. Although this is a regulatory proceeding, the Cass County Electric Cooperative board of directors designed this process so that Cass County Electric Cooperative members could participate in it easily by submitting comments and questions in writing. An open house for the Cass County Electric Cooperative board's review and consideration of these previously submitted written comments and questions from interested participants will also be held.

**When will the open house be held?**

The open house will be held October 14, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the Cass County Electric Cooperative offices located at 4100 32<sup>nd</sup> Ave S., in Fargo, North Dakota. Cass County Electric Cooperative will provide written notice of this open house to the interested participants who have previously submitted comments and questions, as well as posting the open house notice on the Cass County Electric Cooperative website.

**Is Cass County Electric Cooperative required to implement the new ratemaking standards?**

No. Federal law only requires the Cass County Electric Cooperative to consider and determine whether to implement the standards.