



**NEWS
RELEASE**

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March 25, 2015

Northwest Panhandle gets \$15 million in grid upgrades

Xcel Energy boosting capacity of transmission lines, adds XIT substation in Dalhart

AMARILLO, Texas – Continued growth in electric demand in the northwestern Texas Panhandle is leading Xcel Energy to invest an additional \$15 million in high-voltage transmission facilities that were upgraded just three years ago as part of the company's Power for the Plains transmission improvement project.

In 2012, Xcel Energy built a new 115-kilovolt transmission line connecting its Potter County Substation north of Amarillo to the Dallam Substation near Dalhart – a distance of approximately 75 miles. The new line was designed to be upgraded to 230 kilovolts for future expansion, but faster-than-anticipated economic growth has led the company to complete that upgrade sooner rather than later. Additionally, a new substation called the XIT Substation is under construction in Dalhart to serve as the new termination point for the upgraded line.

“We knew when we built this line that it ultimately would be upgraded to 230 kilovolts, but we anticipated the growth that would drive that upgrade would happen much later,” said David Hudson, president of Southwestern Public Service Company, an Xcel Energy company. “Since that time, the ag-based economies of communities in that section of the Texas Panhandle have done quite well, and a major new oil field has been developed in the area. It is clear we need more capacity on that system in the near term.”

Construction crews have already begun work on the XIT Substation. All line and substation work is expected to be completed and energized by the end of 2015.

The northwestern Panhandle projects are among several key capital investments Xcel Energy is making in its Texas-New Mexico service area. The company is investing more than \$3.5 billion across the region to upgrade its power delivery systems and power generating units. More information on transmission projects can be found at www.powerfortheplains.com.

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Xcel Energy's Southwestern Public Service Company has close to 1,800 employees serving 14 communities in eastern and southeastern New Mexico and 80 communities in the Panhandle and South Plains of Texas. The company purchases a significant amount of renewable energy, owns seven power plants across this region, and owns and maintains close to 7,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines that also stretch into the Oklahoma Panhandle and portions of southwestern Kansas.

Xcel Energy (NYSE: XEL) is a major U.S. electricity and natural gas company with regulated operations in eight Western and Midwestern states. Xcel Energy provides a comprehensive portfolio of energy-related products and services to 3.5 million electricity customers and 1.9 million natural gas customers through its regulated operating companies. Company headquarters are located in Minneapolis. More information is available at www.xcelenergy.com.

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