



**NEWS
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Xcel Energy plans upgrades to sustain regional growth

\$557 million in new high-voltage transmission projects to be built over next six years

ROSWELL, N.M. – Xcel Energy will invest close to \$557 million in new high-voltage transmission lines and substations between now and 2020 to supply power for the growing New Mexico and Texas economies for decades to come.

The projects were identified in a regional study and approved by the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) on April 29. SPP is the regional transmission organization overseeing the reliability of the power grid in portions of eight south-central states including eastern New Mexico and the Texas Panhandle-South Plains regions.

The plans call for 400 miles of new high-voltage transmission lines and 12 new substations, primarily in eastern New Mexico and West Texas, and are part of Xcel Energy's wider Power for the Plains transmission enhancement program. Xcel Energy's transmission network serves both New Mexico and Texas, in addition to portions of Oklahoma and Kansas.

“The growth we’re seeing in New Mexico and West Texas is unprecedented, and it’s being driven primarily by the booming energy and mining sectors,” said David Hudson, president and CEO of Southwestern Public Service Company, an Xcel Energy company. “As a partner in this region’s economic success, we’re committing a huge amount of capital to sustain this growth well into the future.”

The high priority projects approved by the Southwest Power Pool include:

- Upgrades or modifications to nine existing substations
- Construction of 12 new substations
- Construction of 149 miles of new 115-kilovolt transmission lines
- Construction of 245 miles of new 345-kilovolt transmission lines

“In addition to these projects, Xcel Energy’s New Mexico investments include more than \$60 million in new transmission facilities approved by SPP in February and 240 miles of new distribution lines that deliver power directly to customers, mostly in Lea and Eddy counties,” Hudson said.

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Xcel Energy is managing the workload by adding more employees in New Mexico, and has formed a multidisciplinary team from across the region to better coordinate communication and logistics in partnership with key customers and community leaders.

One of those community partners, the Carlsbad Department of Development, is taking a long view of the current economic growth and the investments that will sustain it. Executive Director John Waters said the type of investment Xcel Energy is making will benefit everyone in the region.

“Our industries and businesses help us sustain an exceptional quality of life, but if the vital infrastructure that powers this way of life is not improved and expanded, business could go elsewhere,” Waters said. “We want everyone to understand the critical role Xcel Energy and all our utilities play in providing for the basic needs of our economy.”

Looking further out, Xcel Energy is evaluating options for adding more generating capacity in order to accommodate load growth in southeastern New Mexico, depending on how quickly the demand for electricity grows.

Area residents can learn more about Xcel Energy’s role in providing for the regional economy through the Power for the Plains website, www.powerfortheplains.com, which focuses on high-voltage transmission line investments and has been enhanced with a southeastern New Mexico section where information on several large transmission projects is already in place. This section will be updated as more projects are identified.

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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