

General Comments about FAQs

Answers provided by Department of Commerce staff in response to CEE inquiries should be viewed as current guidance only. DoC staff have pointed out several times that the Commissioner has no authority to accept or reject municipal CIP proposals and, in addition, that the Commissioner's recommendations will be in the form of suggestions for what a utility should do next biennium (not requirements that it change its programs in the current biennium). DoC staff have also stated that they won't be saying yes or no to a CIP project before it is submitted, but will wait until they have the actual submission before deciding whether they will view a project favorably or not.

The law passed in 2001 puts a declining cap on municipal utility spending for load management activity under CIP. The Minnesota Legislature clearly wants to see municipals operate more projects that reduce electric use (as opposed to just managing load) and that make modifications on the customer side of the meter. Department of Commerce staff likewise are interested in seeing more projects of this nature. We assume that DoC will review CIP filings with the expectation of seeing more projects of this type over time. We recommend that municipal utilities keep this political context in mind in developing their CIP plans.

We recommend that you read the document posted on CEE's web site entitled: Information from the Department of Commerce staff regarding Municipal CIP Filings, April 2002. This contains information obtained earlier from DoC staff that may be relevant to a question you have.