



## **Wausau-Duluth transmission line application filed**

Wisconsin Public Service Corporation (NYSE: WPS) and Minnesota Power, Inc. (NYSE: MPL) have filed an application with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) to build and operate a \$125 to \$175 million electric transmission line from Wausau, Wisconsin to Duluth, Minnesota.

The 345-kilovolt transmission line will significantly improve the dependability of Wisconsin's electric transmission system.

"During the past three summers, electric supply could not keep pace with demand, putting the integrity of the entire Midwest's transmission system at risk," said Patrick Schrickel, president and chief operating officer for Wisconsin Public Service Corporation. "Customers expect electricity to be there when it's needed, so we have to make sure the delivery system can fulfill that expectation."

"We understand that landowners have concerns about the possibility of having a power line on their property," said Robert Edwards, president of Minnesota Power's electric operations. "In fact, we made many route segment changes in this application based on input from 18 public meetings. There was disagreement, but we will continue presenting the facts and working to address the concerns of all parties."

The 1,400-page application gives a project overview, proposed schedule, description of need and a routing overview. Approximately 50 percent of the proposed routes are on existing rights-of-way, while 20 percent are on public lands owned by the state, county or local townships.

The PSCW will develop an Environmental Impact Statement in the spring of 2000, and hold public hearings in the summer during which citizens and interested parties will have ample opportunity to ask questions and express their views. After review of all the public testimony, technical information and environmental impacts, the Commission is expected to make a decision by the fall of 2000. If the Commission approves construction of the line, the project would begin immediately and take two to three years to complete.

Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, based in Green Bay, provides electricity and natural gas to 400,000 customers in a 19-county area in northeastern and central Wisconsin, and a portion of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Minnesota Power, Inc., is a diversified services company headquartered in Duluth that provides low-cost electric service in northeastern and central Minnesota. A subsidiary, Superior Water, Light and Power, provides electricity, natural gas and water to customers in Superior and adjacent areas in northwestern Wisconsin.

Hard copies of the application will be sent to each of the county offices and community libraries along the route. An electronic version of the application is expected to be available within the next few days at the project's internet website, [www.powerupwisconsin.com](http://www.powerupwisconsin.com).