



**For Immediate Release**

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## **NIPSCO Electric Generating Facility: OUCC Invites Public Comments**

### ***IURC Hearing Scheduled for Dec. 18 in La Porte***

If you would like to comment on Northern Indiana Public Service Company's (NIPSCO's) proposed electric generating facility in Jasper County, you have the chance to do so.

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC), the state agency representing consumer interests in cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), is inviting written consumer comments for the official case record through Dec. 19, 2023. In addition, the IURC will hold a public field hearing in the case on Dec. 18, 2023, in La Porte, Ind.

#### **Written Consumer Comments**

The OUCC is using its technical and legal resources to review NIPSCO's testimony and exhibits. The agency is scheduled to complete its analysis and file testimony on Dec. 21, 2023.

Public comments are invited in writing through Dec. 19, 2023. Consumers who wish to submit written comments for the case record may do so via the OUCC's website at [www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm](http://www.in.gov/oucc/2361.htm), by email at [uccinfo@oucc.in.gov](mailto:uccinfo@oucc.in.gov), or by mail at:

Public Comments  
Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC)  
115 W. Washington St., Suite 1500 SOUTH  
Indianapolis, IN 46204

The OUCC needs to receive all written consumer comments **no later than Dec. 19, 2023**, so that it can: 1) Consider comments in preparing its testimony and 2) File them with the Commission to be included in the case's formal evidentiary record. Comments should include the consumer's **name, mailing address**, and a reference to either "**IURC Cause No. 45947**" or **NIPSCO Generation Facility**. Consumers with questions about submitting written comments can contact the OUCC's consumer services staff toll-free at 1-888-441-2494.

#### **Public Field Hearing**

The IURC is scheduled to hold a public field hearing on NIPSCO's request on Monday, Dec. 18, 2023, at the La Porte Civic Auditorium (1001 Ridge Street). The hearing will start at 6:00 p.m. local time. Consumers are encouraged to arrive by 5:45 p.m. for an overview of field hearing procedures and the case process. Attendees are required to comply with all local health and safety regulations. No final decisions about the case will be made at the hearing.

The field hearing's sole purpose is to receive public testimony.

- Consumers can speak directly to the Commission under oath and on the record.
- Oral comments presented during the field hearings will become part of the case record. They will carry the same weight as written consumer comments submitted to the OUCC by Dec. 19.

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- Utilities do not make presentations or answer questions during field hearings. The focus, again, is on public input. In this case, NIPSCO filed testimony and exhibits in September 2023.
- Commissioners are not allowed to answer questions about the case. They will ultimately render a decision after weighing evidence from the utility, the OUCC, and intervening parties.
- OUCC staff will be available to answer questions during the hearing.

## Case Overview

NIPSCO is seeking IURC approval to build and operate a 400-megawatt natural gas-fired power plant at the R.M. Schahfer Generating Station site near Wheatfield, including recovery of costs through electric rates. The proposed plant would replace a portion of the electric generating capacity from the coal-fired Schahfer station, which is scheduled for retirement in 2025.

In its testimony, NIPSCO estimates the construction & financing costs at approximately \$643.7 Million. The utility is seeking Commission approval to recover construction and financing costs as they are incurred, adjusting rates as frequently as every six months.

Natural gas rates, charges, and service are not at issue in this case.

In its review, the OUCC is focused primarily on whether the proposed facility would provide the most cost-effective means for the utility to meet its generation needs for current and future customers, is consistent with the utility's long-term generation planning, and whether NIPSCO's proposed rate recovery is reasonable.

Several additional parties have intervened in this case, including the Citizens Action Coalition of Indiana, United Steelworkers Locals 12775 and 13796, and a group of industrial customers including Cleveland Cliffs Steel, Marathon, United States Steel Corp., and USG. Any testimony the intervenors file is due Dec. 21, 2023.

An IURC order is currently expected in May 2024.

NIPSCO's electric utility serves more than 483,000 customers in 20 counties.

The OUCC is posting case updates online at [www.in.gov/oucc/electric/key-cases-by-utility/nipSCO-electric-rates/nipSCO-electric-gas-generation-proposal/](http://www.in.gov/oucc/electric/key-cases-by-utility/nipSCO-electric-rates/nipSCO-electric-gas-generation-proposal/). Case updates are also available through the agency's monthly electronic newsletter. Consumers can subscribe at [www.in.gov/oucc/news](http://www.in.gov/oucc/news).

(IURC Cause No. 45947)

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) represents Indiana consumer interests before state and federal bodies that regulate utilities. As a state agency, the OUCC's mission is to represent all Indiana consumers to ensure quality, reliable utility services at the most reasonable prices possible through dedicated advocacy, consumer education, and creative problem solving.