

PUBLIC POLICY REPORT

FEDERAL UPDATE

Supreme Court Blocks the Clean Power Plan

In a 5-4 vote, the Supreme Court granted a stay request from 27 states and various groups to block implementation of the President's Clean Power Plan while it is under challenge. Arguments on the case before the D.C. Circuit Court are scheduled to begin on June 2, 2016. The final decision is expected to be appealed to the Supreme Court by the losing party.

GE to Phase out CFL Bulbs

Up until the last few years, the compact fluorescent light was the go-to choice for customers seeking an energy-efficient replacement for the standard incandescent bulb. But as the light quality of LEDs improved and their cost decreased, manufacturers and retailers began shifting their efforts in that direction. Now, General Electric Company said it would stop making and selling the bulbs in the United States by the end of 2016.

Mainstreet Index Shows Rural Economy Trending Downward

The Creighton University Rural Mainstreet Index, which measures rural economic strength, has reached its lowest level in six years. The index, scored on a scale of 0 to 100, fell to 34.8 in January from 41.5 in December. It has declined for five consecutive months. Over the last 12 months, prices for farm products have fallen by approximately 15 percent, and for fuels by roughly 20 percent.

STATE UPDATE

Governor Branstad Joins 16 Other Governors in Energy Plan

Governors from 17 states committed to working together to seek cleaner energy and transportation, and to build a better electrical grid. The bipartisan group announced what it's calling the Governors' Accord for a New Energy Future. The governors intend to work together on energy planning and policies. The accord says the goal is to expand participating states' economies while protecting citizens' health and the environment. The governors are from California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Nevada, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington.

Iowa Number Two Nationally in Installed Wind Energy

The American Wind Energy Association reports that Iowa has surpassed California to become the nation's second-leading state in installed wind energy capacity with 6,212 megawatts. California has 6,108 and Texas leads with 17,713.

MidAmerican Energy Completes Two Major Wind Projects

MidAmerican Energy Company announced it has completed work on two major wind farm projects that add more than 1,200 megawatts of wind generation capacity. The company said it has completed the Highland wind farm in O'Brien County and the Adams wind farm in Adams County. The Highland wind farm is the fifth and final piece of MidAmerican Energy's Wind VIII project. MidAmerican Energy also completed its Wind IX project when the Adams wind farm was placed in service. Together, Wind VIII and Wind IX bring MidAmerican Energy's total wind generation capacity to nearly 3,500 megawatts, an amount that represents about 42 percent of the company's installed generation capacity.

State Legislation

The first Funnel Week ended with the following bills of interest to the utility industry still eligible for debate:

SF 2006 – Property Taxes Collected from Wind Energy

SF 2216/HF 2277 – Definition of a Public Utility

SF 2182 – Nonprofit Energy Efficiency Grant Program

HF 2174 – Geothermal Tax Credits

SSB 3080 – Increase Solar Tax Credits

SSB 3115/HSB 617 – Rapid Response to State Declared Disasters

SSB 3001 / HF 2288 – Biochemical Tax Credit

Upcoming Activities in 2016

NRECA New CEO Orientation – Arlington, VA

March 1 – 3

IAEC Superintendents' and Foreman's Spring Conference – Des Moines, IA

March 10 – 11

CIPCO Informational Meeting & Reception – Altoona, IA

March 15

CIPCO Annual Meeting – Altoona, IA

March 16

IAEC REC Day on the Hill – Des Moines, IA

March 16

Good Friday – CIPCO Offices Closed

March 25

Consumer Price Index

Month	Seasonally Adjusted Change from Previous Month
Jan. 2016	0.0%
Dec. 2015	-0.1%
Nov. 2015	0.0%
Oct. 2015	0.2%
Sept. 2015	-0.2%
Aug. 2015	-0.1%
Unadjusted Rolling 12 Month Average: 1.4%	