



## NEWS RELEASE

MASSACHUSETTS MUNICIPAL WHOLESALE ELECTRIC COMPANY

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### **State review board approves siting, construction and operation of new MMWEC power plant**

LUDLOW, Mass. – Dec. 17, 2008 - The Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board (EFSB) has approved the construction and operation of a new, 280-megawatt power plant by the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) at the company's Stony Brook Energy Center in Ludlow.

In its Dec. 12 order, the EFSB finds that, subject to certain conditions, "the construction and operation of the proposed facility will provide a reliable energy supply for the Commonwealth with a minimum impact on the environment at the lowest possible cost."

The decision comes after extensive review by the EFSB of the site selection process and a broad range of potential environmental impacts, including air quality, land use, water, wetland, visual, noise and safety impacts. MMWEC filed its petition for EFSB approval to build the plant on June 29, 2007. The EFSB process included public and evidentiary hearings, response by MMWEC to more than 130 discovery requests, and testimony before the board by MMWEC staff and consultants.

"This decision is an important step forward for the project, which is needed to help meet the future power requirements of Massachusetts municipal utilities and other project participants," said MMWEC Chief Executive Officer Ronald C. DeCurzio. "We greatly appreciate the Siting Board's thorough review and approval of the project, which is designed to be one of the most efficient and environmentally sound power plants in the country," he said.

MMWEC's proposed Stony Brook 3 power plant, scheduled for operation in 2013, represents an expansion of existing generating facilities at the Stony Brook site, where the non-profit, public corporation currently operates two units with a generating capacity of 522-megawatts. The site already has natural gas, oil and water pipelines as well as the transmission facilities and other infrastructure needed to support the new unit.

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The new plant will use the latest and most efficient combined-cycle generating technology in which hot exhaust gas from the combustion turbine is used to produce steam and generate additional electricity in a separate steam turbine. To minimize emissions, the plant's primary fuel will be clean-burning natural gas with ultra-low-sulfur distillate oil used as a backup fuel supply. Emissions will be reduced further through the use of advanced, highly efficient combustion technology and state-of-the-art emissions control technology.

Conditions of the EFSB decision involve limitations on oil use; methods for addressing CO<sub>2</sub> and particulate emissions; plans for addressing noise and traffic issues during construction; and updating Emergency Response, Spill Prevention and Solid Waste Recycling plans to reflect operation of the new unit.

DeCurzio said that the plant's ongoing development will not be hindered by any of the conditions, many of which reflect work that is scheduled for completion as the plant moves closer to construction and commercial operation.

The EFSB decision is one of several favorable permitting decisions for the plant. The state Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs approved the plant's Final Environmental Impact Report in December 2007, and MMWEC has received favorable rulings from the Ludlow Conservation Commission, the state's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program and the Federal Aviation Administration.

During the current development phase, MMWEC is working to complete the plant's environmental, regulatory, contracting and other requirements, which will enable the organization to prepare the cost and schedule estimates needed to move into the final phase, including financing and construction. The plant's projected 2013 commercial operation date reflects the schedule for resolution of long-standing transmission problems in the Springfield, Mass. area.

Utilities participating in the current development phase of the new unit include 24 Massachusetts municipal utilities, the Pascoag (RI) Utility District and the Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative, the joint action agency for Connecticut municipal utilities.

The Massachusetts municipal utilities are based in the communities of Ashburnham, Boylston, Chicopee, Georgetown, Groton, Holden, Holyoke, Hudson, Hull, Ipswich, Littleton, Marblehead, Middleton, North Attleborough, Paxton, Peabody, Princeton, Shrewsbury, South Hadley, Sterling, Templeton, Wakefield, West Boylston and Westfield.

MMWEC is a non-profit, public corporation and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that provides a wide range of power supply, financial and other services to the state's consumer-owned municipal utilities.