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LANSGING, March 14. The Michigan Public Service Commission today approved a settlement agreement committing The Detroit Edison Company to an explicit action plan to improve reliability in the areas of its service territory th have continued to experience multiple power outages. Under the plan, which responds to concerns expressed by the Commission and raised by the public, the company will undertake 56 separate improvement projects on 34 different circuits. The agreement also complements and enhances Detroit Edison's existing reliability improvement efforts, including increased tree trimming, pole top and line maintenance, and system strengthening. The program begins immediately and concludes by the end of the year.

Today's Commission action follows an MPSC staff investigation, at the direction of the Commission, into Detroit Edison's response to storm outages occurring in July 1999. A staff report, issued in November, concluded that frequent outage complaints to the Commission had doubled over the past three years, there remained 3,014 customers in poor performing areas for two successive years, and the tree trimming cycle committed to by Detroit Edison in a 1996 settlement had not been met. The staff report recommended eight actions designed to improve distribution system reliability. Following release of the staff report, Commission held public hearings in Dearborn, Farmington Hills, and Rochester during which it received comments from more than 50 Detroit Edison customers on their experiences with the company's system reliability.

"The staff report and public comment made clear that certain areas in Detroit Edison's service territory were vulnerable and needed prompt attention," said Chairman John Strand. "The settlement agreement calls for a timely response by Detroit Edison to improve poor performing circuits, imposes increased line clearance activities on the company, and provides staff with the ability to monitor the progress of reliability improvements in the company's service territory."

Detroit Edison, headquartered in Detroit, provides electric service to more than 2 million Michigan customers.

The MPSC is an agency within the Department of Consumer and Industry Services.

Case No. U-12269

March 14, 2000

(MPSC approves settlement agreement requiring distribution system reliability improvements)
