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WESTAR ENERGY APPLIES FOR SMART GRID FUNDING

Company plans concept project called “SmartStar Lawrence”

TOPEKA, Kan., Aug. 4, 2009 — Westar Energy (NYSE:WR) today announced it has applied with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for up to \$20 million in funding under the Smart Grid Investment Grant program.

The company’s application calls for development of a smart grid concept town in Lawrence, Kansas. Called “SmartStar Lawrence,” the project will include installation of “smart” meters, interactive Web access, technology enhancements and improved service in Lawrence. The project is estimated to cost a total of \$40 million and is contingent on DOE approval of funding for half of it, about \$20 million. Approval could take as long as six months.

Westar Energy has researched smart grid technology for more than two years. The company chose Lawrence as the concept town for this technology due to its size and its wide range of customers, including a mobile student population, commercial and industrial customers and educational institutions. While Lawrence customers will be the first to receive smart meters, the systems and equipment the company plans to install will enable the same technology throughout Westar’s service territory.

“We think SmartStar Lawrence is a responsible yet meaningful approach to initially deploying smart grid technology,” said Bill Moore, Westar Energy president and chief executive officer. “We’ll see what works for our customers, prior to expanding to other areas. This should also give us, our regulators and public officials valuable information to see how smart grid technology fits into a smart Kansas energy policy.”

Smart grid technology is a state-of-the-art approach to managing electricity systems. In the event of a power outage, for example, Westar will more easily determine the cause and restore power more quickly. Customers with smart meters and internet access will be able to daily monitor how much electricity they use and how much it costs.

“This technology may be the essential factor in giving customers better choice and control over their energy usage, as well as allowing Westar to introduce programs to help curb demand and costs during times of peak usage,” said Moore.

Once underway, Westar expects SmartStar Lawrence will take two to three years to fully implement.

“A project that brings smart meters and real time data to Lawrence consumers is the exact connection we need to help us make wise use of our natural resources,” said Rob Chestnut, Lawrence mayor. “When households can monitor and adjust their energy uses, Lawrence will be able to make a larger impact in the arena of energy conservation. I appreciate Westar’s work to create a smart grid and to select Lawrence as the first community.”

Today’s application filing meets the DOE’s deadline of August 6 for consideration in the first round of Smart Grid Investment Grant funding. The DOE plans subsequent rounds late this year and in early 2010.

Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 681,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has about 6,800 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates more than 35,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.WestarEnergy.com>.

WESTAR ENERGY
SMART GRID FUNDING APPLICATION AND SMARTSTAR LAWRENCE
PROJECT FACT SHEET



Project Description

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The company chose Lawrence as the concept town for this technology due to its size and its wide range of customers, including many student residents, commercial and industrial customers and educational institutions. While Lawrence customers will be the first to receive smart meters, the systems and equipment the company plans to install will enable the same technology throughout Westar's service territory.

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PROJECT FACT SHEET

<p>Application Details</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Recovery and Reinvestment Act – Smart Grid Investment Grant • Up to 50% match for selected projects • Filing made with DOE on August 5, 2009 • 90-day initial review process for notice of selection • If selected, up to another 90-day review process for notice of funding • Once underway, project reporting will be available at www.recovery.gov
<p>SmartStar Lawrence Project Details</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$40 million project in greater Lawrence area • Base smart grid deployment for Westar Energy • Equipment - 48,000 meters, automated distribution equipment, smart grid-enabled outage management system, significant internal information technology infrastructure work • 27-month installation, beginning 2010
<p>Customer Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced service reliability and response to outages • Daily energy use and cost information available to the customer • Optional services such as text and email alerts for bill trends and outages • Robust web portal with energy savings tips, carbon footprint calculator, neighborhood comparative analysis information • Enables offering demand side programs such as two way thermostats and smart, time of use pricing option • Supportive of “behind the meter” emerging consumer products such as smart appliances, in home energy displays and personal home energy management applications.
<p>Westar Benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved ability to meet changing customer expectations • Increased reliability of the electric system • Advanced outage management tools • Better utilization of electric system • Operational efficiencies from automated meter reading, remote service switches, automated knowledge of outages and location • More detailed energy use information for customer service delivery • Confirms smart grid benefit assumptions prior to larger deployment • Identifies most effective customer products and services • Identifies required business process changes to support smart grid
<p>Timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August, 2009 - Westar Energy files DOE funding application • November, 2009 – DOE issues Notice of Selection to applicants • February, 2010 – DOE issues Notice of Funding to applicants • Fall, 2010 – SmartStar Lawrence meter installation begins
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