

comment, the electric utility demonstrates and the State regulatory authority or the Commission, as the case may be, finds that compliance with such requirement will:

(i) Impair the electric utility's ability to render adequate service to its customers; or

(ii) Place an undue burden on the electric utility.

(c) *Rates for sales of back-up and maintenance power.* The rate for sales of back-up power or maintenance power:

(1) Shall not be based upon an assumption (unless supported by factual data) that forced outages or other reductions in electric output by all qualifying facilities on an electric utility's system will occur simultaneously, or during the system peak, or both; and

(2) Shall take into account the extent to which scheduled outages of the qualifying facilities can be usefully coordinated with scheduled outages of the utility's facilities.

**§ 292.306 Interconnection costs.**

(a) *Obligation to pay.* Each qualifying facility shall be obligated to pay any interconnection costs which the State regulatory authority (with respect to any electric utility over which it has ratemaking authority) or nonregulated electric utility may assess against the qualifying facility on a nondiscriminatory basis with respect to other customers with similar load characteristics.

(b) *Reimbursement of interconnection costs.* Each State regulatory authority (with respect to any electric utility over which it has ratemaking authority) and nonregulated utility shall determine the manner for payments of interconnection costs, which may include reimbursement over a reasonable period of time.

**§ 292.307 System emergencies.**

(a) *Qualifying facility obligation to provide power during system emergencies.* A qualifying facility shall be required to provide energy or capacity to an electric utility during a system emergency only to the extent:

(1) Provided by agreement between such qualifying facility and electric utility; or

(2) Ordered under section 202(c) of the Federal Power Act.

(b) *Discontinuance of purchases and sales during system emergencies.* During any system emergency, an electric utility may discontinue:

(1) Purchases from a qualifying facility if such purchases would contribute to such emergency; and

(2) Sales to a qualifying facility, provided that such discontinuance is on a nondiscriminatory basis.

**§ 292.308 Standards for operating reliability.**

Any State regulatory authority (with respect to any electric utility over which it has ratemaking authority) or nonregulated electric utility may establish reasonable standards to ensure system safety and reliability of interconnected operations. Such standards may be recommended by any electric utility, any qualifying facility, or any other person. If any State regulatory authority (with respect to any electric utility over which it has ratemaking authority) or nonregulated electric utility establishes such standards, it shall specify the need for such standards on the basis of system safety and reliability.

**§ 292.309 Termination of obligation to purchase from qualifying facilities.**

(a) After August 8, 2005, an electric utility shall not be required, under this part, to enter into a new contract or obligation to purchase electric energy from a qualifying cogeneration facility or a qualifying small power production facility if the Commission finds that the qualifying cogeneration facility or qualifying small power facility production has nondiscriminatory access to:

(1)(i) Independently administered, auction-based day ahead and real time wholesale markets for the sale of electric energy; and

(ii) Wholesale markets for long-term sales of capacity and electric energy; or

(2)(i) Transmission and interconnection services that are provided by a Commission-approved regional transmission entity and administered pursuant to an open access transmission tariff that affords nondiscriminatory treatment to all customers; and

(ii) Competitive wholesale markets that provide a meaningful opportunity to sell capacity, including long-term and short-term sales, and electric energy, including long-term, short-term and real-time sales, to buyers other than the utility to which the qualifying facility is interconnected. In determining whether a meaningful opportunity to sell exists, the Commission shall consider, among other factors, evidence of transactions within the relevant market; or

(3) Wholesale markets for the sale of capacity and electric energy that are, at a minimum, of comparable competitive quality as markets described in paragraphs (a)(1) and (a)(2) of this section.

(b) For purposes of § 292.309(a), a renewal of a contract that expires by its own terms is a “new contract or obligation” without a continuing obligation to purchase under an expired contract.

(c) For purposes of § 292.309(a)(1), (2) and (3), with the exception of paragraph (d) of this section, there is a rebuttable presumption that a qualifying facility has nondiscriminatory access to the market if it is eligible for service under a Commission-approved open access transmission tariff or Commission-filed reciprocity tariff, and Commission-approved interconnection rules. If the Commission determines that a market meets the criteria of § 292.309(a)(1), (2) or (3), and if a qualifying facility in the relevant market is eligible for service under a Commission-approved open access transmission tariff or Commission-filed reciprocity tariff, a qualifying facility may seek to rebut the presumption of access to the market by demonstrating, *inter alia*, that it does not have access to the market because of operational characteristics or transmission constraints.

(d)(1) For purposes of § 292.309(a)(1), (2), and (3), there is a rebuttable presumption that a qualifying facility with a capacity at or below 20 megawatts does not have nondiscriminatory access to the market.

(2) For purposes of implementing paragraph (d)(1) of this section, the Commission will not be bound by the one-mile standard set forth in § 292.204(a)(2).

(e) Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator (Midwest ISO), PJM Interconnection, L.L.C. (PJM), ISO New England, Inc. (ISO-NE), and New York Independent System Operator (NYISO) qualify as markets described in § 292.309(a)(1)(i) and (ii), and there is a rebuttable presumption that qualifying facilities with a capacity greater than 20 megawatts have nondiscriminatory access to those markets through Commission-approved open access transmission tariffs and interconnection rules, and that electric utilities that are members of such regional transmission organizations or independent system operators (RTO/ISOs) should be relieved of the obligation to purchase electric energy from the qualifying facilities. A qualifying facility may seek to rebut this presumption by demonstrating, *inter alia*, that:

(1) The qualifying facility has certain operational characteristics that effectively prevent the qualifying facility’s participation in a market; or

(2) The qualifying facility lacks access to markets due to transmission constraints. The qualifying facility may show that it is located in an area where persistent transmission constraints in effect cause the qualifying facility not to have access to markets outside a persistently congested area to sell the qualifying facility output or capacity.

(f) The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) qualifies as a market described in § 292.309(a)(3), and there is a rebuttable presumption that qualifying facilities with a capacity greater than 20 megawatts have nondiscriminatory access to that market through Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) approved open access protocols, and that electric utilities that operate within ERCOT should be relieved of the obligation to purchase electric energy from the qualifying facilities. A qualifying facility may seek to rebut this presumption by demonstrating, *inter alia*, that:

(1) The qualifying facility has certain operational characteristics that effectively prevent the qualifying facility’s participation in a market; or

(2) The qualifying facility lacks access to markets due to transmission

constraints. The qualifying facility may show that it is located in an area where persistent transmission constraints in effect cause the qualifying facility not to have access to markets outside a persistently congested area to sell the qualifying facility output or capacity.

(g) The California Independent System Operator and Southwest Power Pool, Inc. satisfy the criteria of § 292.309(a)(2)(i).

(h) No electric utility shall be required, under this part, to enter into a new contract or obligation to purchase from or sell electric energy to a facility that is not an existing qualifying cogeneration facility unless the facility meets the criteria for new qualifying cogeneration facilities established by the Commission in § 292.205.

(i) For purposes of § 292.309(h), an “existing qualifying cogeneration facility” is a facility that:

(1) Was a qualifying cogeneration facility on or before August 8, 2005; or

(2) Had filed with the Commission a notice of self-certification or self-recertification, or an application for Commission certification, under § 292.207 prior to February 2, 2006.

(j) For purposes of § 292.309(h), a “new qualifying cogeneration facility” is a facility that satisfies the criteria for qualifying cogeneration facilities pursuant to § 292.205.

[Order 688, 71 FR 64372, Nov. 1, 2006; 71 FR 75662, Dec. 18, 2006]

**§ 292.310 Procedures for utilities requesting termination of obligation to purchase from qualifying facilities.**

(a) An electric utility may file an application with the Commission for relief from the mandatory purchase requirement under § 292.303(a) pursuant to this section on a service territory-wide basis. Such application shall set forth the factual basis upon which relief is requested and describe why the conditions set forth in § 292.309(a)(1), (2) or (3) have been met. After notice, including sufficient notice to potentially affected qualifying cogeneration facilities and qualifying small power production facilities, and an opportunity for comment, the Commission shall make a final determination within 90 days of

such application regarding whether the conditions set forth in § 292.309(a)(1), (2) or (3) have been met.

(b) Sufficient notice shall mean that an electric utility must identify with names and addresses all potentially affected qualifying facilities in an application filed pursuant to paragraph (a).

(c) All potentially affected qualifying facilities shall include:

(1) Those qualifying facilities that have existing power purchase contracts with the applicant;

(2) Other qualifying facilities that sell their output to the applicant or that have pending self-certification or Commission certification with the Commission for qualifying facility status whereby the applicant will be the purchaser of the qualifying facility’s output;

(3) Any developer of generating facilities with whom the applicant has agreed to enter into power purchase contracts, as of the date of the application filed pursuant to this section, or are in discussion, as of the date of the application filed pursuant to this section, with regard to power purchase contacts;

(4) The developers of facilities that have pending state avoided cost proceedings, as of the date of the application filed pursuant to this section; and

(5) Any other qualifying facilities that the applicant reasonably believes to be affected by its application filed pursuant to paragraph (a) of this section.

(d) The following information must be filed with an application:

(1) Identify whether applicant seeks a finding under the provisions of § 292.309(a)(1), (2), or (3).

(2) A narrative setting forth the factual basis upon which relief is requested and describing why the conditions set forth in § 292.309(a)(1), (2), or (3) have been met. Applicant should also state in its application whether it is relying on the findings or rebuttable presumptions contained in § 292.309(e), (f) or (g). To the extent applicant seeks relief from the purchase obligation with respect to a qualifying facility 20 megawatts or smaller, and thus seeks to rebut the presumption in § 292.309(d),