

Bulletin 2025-02

March 24, 2025

Changes proposed to Rule 007: Facility Applications – available for written feedback until May 23, 2025

The Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) has issued a draft blackline version of the rule formerly known as Rule 007: *Applications for Power Plants, Substations, Transmission Lines, Industrial System Designations, Hydro Developments and Gas Utility Pipelines*.

The draft blackline version is available for written feedback until May 23, 2025. A number of issues were assessed to inform this draft blackline version of Rule 007: *Facility Applications*. This assessment included feedback received through written and oral consultation, conducted by the AUC, that was held from May to September 2024, consideration of the *Electric Energy Land Use and Visual Assessment Regulation (EELUVAR)* enacted on December 6, 2024, and the current interim information requirements published in [Bulletin 2024-25](#).

The [interim information requirements](#) continue to apply until the final version of the rule is released.

The draft blackline version of Rule 007 also includes changes to clarify, reorganize and improve the rule. This document describes major issues considered and the rationale for the changes proposed. It is not an exhaustive list of the changes proposed in the draft blackline.

Interested parties may submit their written feedback on the draft blackline by emailing engage@auc.ab.ca. In your email, please include the following subject line: 007 rule feedback. Submissions are due on May 23, 2025.

All feedback submissions will be made publicly available on the Rule 007 [Engage page](#).

The AUC will issue the revised Rule 007 after considering the feedback received on the draft blackline.

Alberta Utilities Commission

Appendix

Issues considered and changes proposed

Description of the issue	Proposed change to Rule 007	Location in blackline
<p>Municipal feedback¹</p> <p>Through the AUC inquiry into the ongoing economic, orderly and efficient development of electricity generation in Alberta (Module A Report), the AUC heard that its information requirements should provide an opportunity for municipal feedback on proposed projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added municipal land use information requirements for power plants, hydro developments and energy storage facilities. Added a municipal engagement form information requirement for power plant, hydro developments and energy storage projects to facilitate feedback from municipalities on the compliance of projects with municipal planning policies and an applicant's consultation program. Added a process for the use of the municipal engagement form for power plant, hydro development and energy storage facility applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New municipal land use information requirements in sections WP, SP, TP, OP, HE and ES. Municipal engagement form required in WP, SP, TP, OP, HE and ES and located in Appendix A1. Appendix A1, Section 6.3.
<p>Visual impact assessments</p> <p>In its Module A Report, the AUC committed to enhancing the existing visual impact assessment requirements within Rule 007 to include a more structured visual impact assessment methodology within the AUC application review process.</p> <p>These changes are intended to meet the AUC's commitments and align with the <i>EELUVAR</i>. They are consistent with the interim information requirements released in Bulletin 2024-25.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added information on when a visual impact assessment is required, and that it must include an evaluation of the visual impact, visual simulations and discussion of proposed mitigation measures. Specifies that a wind power plant application will not be accepted if it is in a zone where that development is prohibited by the <i>EELUVAR</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New visual impact assessment section in sections WP, SP, TP, OP and HE.

¹ Bulletin 2024-02 described amendments to Rule 009: *Rules on Local Intervener Costs*, expanding eligibility for cost recovery for certain parties. Rural electrification associations, municipalities and other previously ineligible participants may also qualify for partial cost recovery in circumstances where they intend to file expert or other evidence or argument that will assist the AUC in understanding issues material to the subject proceeding but would not, in the absence of partial cost recovery, otherwise be presented to the AUC.

Description of the issue	Proposed change to Rule 007	Location in blackline
<p>Agricultural land use and assessments</p> <p>The <i>EELUVAR</i> requires agricultural impact assessments to be submitted as part of the application for wind and solar power plants sited on “high quality agricultural land” as defined in the regulation.</p> <p>The proposed changes are to align Rule 007 with the <i>EELUVAR</i> and the interim information requirements released in Bulletin 2024-25, and to implement a consistent standard of expected productivity for proposed agrivoltaics plans to enhance regulatory certainty and predictability.</p> <p>The Commission is also considering how or whether to assess agricultural impacts in checklist applications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates include requiring the submission of the Land Suitability Rating System ranking for the project land, discussion regarding irrigation, and if applicable, submission of an agricultural impact assessment. • Added requirements regarding soils and current and proposed agricultural activities, including co-location of current or proposed agricultural activities with the proposed project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New agricultural information section in power plant sections WP and SP.
<p>Reclamation security</p> <p>Recent amendments to the <i>Conservation and Reclamation Regulation and Activities Designation Regulation</i> enable Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEPA) to implement mandatory reclamation security for wind and solar power plants. Until further direction is provided on that program, the proposed changes are consistent with the interim information requirements released in Bulletin 2024-25.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added the set of interim information requirements released in Bulletin 2024-25. Requires explanation of the standard of reclamation, amount, frequency, form, timing, beneficiaries of security and a third-party estimate of the costs to reclaim the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New reclamation security section in sections WP, SP, TP, OP, HE and ES.
<p>Timelines to construct</p> <p>The AUC is proposing changes to its current practice of allowing time extension applications and assessing those applications on a case-by-case basis. The proposal would provide a five-year construction period for all types of power plant and energy storage facility approvals, with no further time extensions except in very limited circumstances (e.g., construction is substantially completed and there is a minor additional delay).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the power plant or energy storage facility’s initial approval date, applicants will have five years to finish construction. • After that time, applicants must file a new application. • Time extension requests of short duration will only be available in limited and exceptional circumstances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added Section 5.1 for power plants and Section 10.7.1 for energy storage facilities.

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<p>Solar glare</p> <p>The AUC is considering whether to place standard limits on solar glare levels and duration for solar power plants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed changes to described receptors for solar glare assessments. Specified the heights of route receptors in glare modelling. Specified fields of view for different types of route receptors. Defined limits for acceptable glare levels and duration. Added requirements about glare mitigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added requirements in SP (Section 4.4.2).
<p>Shadow flicker requirements</p> <p>The AUC is considering whether to implement a standard for acceptable levels of shadow flicker duration and requirements for mitigation for wind power plants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specified the scenarios for shadow flicker assessments. Added defined limits for acceptable shadow flicker duration. Added requirements about shadow flicker mitigation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added requirements in WP (Section 4.3.2).
<p>Indigenous consultation</p> <p>The AUC considered its existing Indigenous consultation requirements and proposed certain changes to clarify information provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require applicants to identify if the Government of Canada requires consultation with Indigenous groups and include those groups in the participant involvement program. Clarified information requirements for on-reserve applications. Added information requirements if an applicant wants the Commission to consider benefits to an Indigenous group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added Appendix A1-B. New sections in Appendix A1-B.
<p>Energy storage safety requirements</p> <p>The AUC is considering various additional requirements for energy storage facilities related to emergency response for energy storage facilities, and air quality dispersion modelling for battery energy storage facilities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation that the applicant will continually update and improve its emergency response program and finalize the site-specific response plan two months prior to construction commencement. Requirements specifically for battery energy storage facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added requirements in ES (Section 10.3).