

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
**CERTIFICATE OF WAIVER**

ISSUED TO

**Xcel Energy**  
**Responsible Person: Thomas Stegge**  
**Waiver Number: 107W-2024-01564**

ADDRESS –

**13620 Fenway Blvd N**  
**Hugo, MN 55038**

This certificate is issued for the operations specifically described hereinafter. No person shall conduct any operation pursuant to the authority of this certificate except in accordance with the provisions contained in this certificate.

OPERATIONS AUTHORIZED

Small unmanned aircraft system (sUAS) operations beyond the visual line of sight of the remote pilot in command (PIC); Small unmanned aircraft system (sUAS) operations in which a participating Visual Observer (VO) is not able to see the unmanned aircraft.

LIST OF WAIVED REGULATIONS BY SECTION AND TITLE

**14 CFR §§ 107.31—Visual line of sight aircraft operation, and  
107.33(b) & (c)(2)—Visual observer**

**STANDARD PROVISIONS**

1. A copy of the application made for this certificate shall be attached to and become a part hereof.
2. This certificate shall be presented for inspection upon the request of any authorized representative of the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, or of any State or municipal official charged with the duty of enforcing local laws or regulations.
3. The holder of this certificate shall be responsible for the strict observance of the terms and provisions contained herein.
4. This certificate is nontransferable.

NOTE—This certificate constitutes a waiver of those Federal rules or regulations specifically referred to above. It does not constitute a waiver of any State law or local ordinance.

**SPECIAL PROVISIONS**

Special Provisions Nos. 1 to 33, inclusive, are set forth on the attached pages.

This Certificate of Waiver is effective from July 23, 2024, to July 31, 2027, and is subject to cancellation at any time upon notice by the Administrator or an authorized representative.

**BY DIRECTION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR**

**Emerging Technologies Division, AFS-700**

**SPECIAL PROVISIONS ISSUED TO**  
**Xcel Energy**

**General.**

This Certificate of Waiver is an amendment which supersedes and replaces Waiver 107W-2023-01488 issued to Xcel Energy for operations under 14 CFR 107. Waiver 107W-2023-01488 is no longer valid.

The FAA's Flight Standards Service has reviewed your application to ensure compliance with the requirements of 14 CFR § 107.200 and § 107.205. Pursuant to these authorities, the Administrator finds that the proposed small unmanned aircraft (sUA) operation can be conducted safely under the provisions of this Certificate of Waiver (Waiver) as listed below because you have established adequate mitigations for risks involved with operating your sUA in the manner you described. Adherence to the provisions of this Waiver establishes the required level of safety within the national airspace system.

The Administrator may cancel this Waiver at any time. As a general rule, this Waiver may be canceled when it is no longer required, there is an abuse of its provisions, or when unforeseen safety factors develop. Failure to comply with any provision listed below is a violation of the terms of this Waiver and will serve as justification for cancellation.

List of Regulations Waived by Section and Title. The following regulations are waived:

14 CFR § 107.31, Visual line of sight aircraft operation, is waived to allow operation of the small unmanned aircraft (sUA) beyond the direct visual line of sight of the remote pilot in command (PIC);

14 CFR § 107.33(b) & (c)(2), Visual observer, is waived to the extent necessary to allow operation of the small unmanned aircraft (sUA) when any Visual Observer (VO) who is participating in the operation may not be able see the unmanned aircraft in the manner specified in § 107.31.

No part of this waiver will function as an airspace authorization under 14 CFR § 107.41. The FAA's Air Traffic Organization responds directly to requests for such authorizations.

**Common Special Provisions.** The Responsible Person is directly responsible for safety of operations conducted under this Waiver and will ensure the Remote Pilot in Command (remote PIC), manipulator of the controls, and visual observer(s) (VO)<sup>1</sup> comply with all provisions of this Waiver.

1. The Responsible Person listed on the Waiver is responsible to the FAA for the safe conduct of the operations. Prior to conducting operations that are the subject of this Waiver, the Responsible Person:
  - a. Must ensure the remote PIC, manipulators of the controls, and VO(s) are informed of the terms and provisions of this Waiver and strictly observe the terms and provisions herein;
  - b. Must ensure the remote PIC, manipulators of the controls, and VO(s) are informed and familiar with part 107 regulations; and
  - c. Evidence of the above (a and b) must be documented and must be presented for inspection upon request from the Administrator or an authorized representative;

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<sup>1</sup> Title 14 CFR § 107.3 defines the term "visual observer." Any VO participating in operations conducted under this Waiver must meet the requirements listed in § 107.33 throughout the duration of flight operations.

2. This Waiver may not be combined with any other waiver(s), authorizations(s), or exemption(s) without specific authorization from the FAA;
3. The FAA has the authority to cancel or delay any or all flight operations if the safety of persons or property on the ground or in the air are in jeopardy or there is a violation of the terms of this Waiver;
4. A copy of this Waiver must be accessible and available to the remote PIC at the ground control station during sUA operations that are the subject of this Waiver;
5. The Responsible Person listed on this Waiver must maintain a current list of pilots by name and remote pilot certificate number used in operations under this Waiver. This list must be presented for inspection upon request from the Administrator or an authorized representative;
6. The Responsible Person listed on this Waiver must maintain a current list of sUA by registration number(s) used in operations under this Waiver. This list must be presented for inspection upon request from the Administrator or an authorized representative;
7. For the purposes of this Waiver, direct participants are the remote PICs, persons manipulating the controls, VOs, and any persons whose involvement is necessary for safety of the sUA operation. All other persons are considered non-participants;
8. If a discrepancy exists between the provisions in this Waiver and the waiver application, the Waiver takes precedence and must be followed;

**Visual Line of Sight Operations Special Provisions** The remote PIC and Visual Observer may conduct sUAS operations without the ability to see the unmanned aircraft throughout the entire flight, provided:

#### **OPERATIONAL PROVISIONS**

9. All operations under this waiver must use one or more VO as described in the waiver application;
10. Operations may not be conducted at night or during civil twilight, as defined in 14 CFR § 1.1 and § 107.29(c), respectively;
11. The area of operation must be remote and safeguarded as described in the waiver application;
12. The sUA must not exceed
  - a. 150 feet above ground level (AGL); or
  - b. Within a 150 foot radius from any natural obstruction or manmade object that is being inspected, not to exceed 400 feet AGL;
13. The remote PIC must ensure:
  - a. Prior to conducting operations under this Waiver, a documented site survey is performed to identify operational area obstacles and boundaries so as to avoid collision with, or damage to property
  - b. Routes are preplanned (using waypoints) prior to flight and aircraft are programmed to automatically follow the route. Manual flights are allowed as necessary;
  - c. Geofencing is used to confine the Operational Volume;
  - d. Return to Home/Return to Land feature must not allow the sUA to deviate from the defined operational volume;

- e. Launch or recovery areas are pre-designated and monitored to keep any human being who is not directly participating in the operation out of the areas prior to, during, and immediately following flight operations;
- f. Sufficient VO(s), defined as the minimum number of VO(s) required to continuously observe at least a 2 statute mile radius of airspace surrounding the sUA in flight, are;
  - i. used to identify any non-participating aircraft prior to their entry into the planned operational area.
  - ii. physically located such that the remote PIC receives sufficient notice to ensure the UA remains well clear of all other aircraft.
  - iii. physically located to notify the remote PIC of any moving vehicle or human presence that may pose a hazard to the operation;

14. The Responsible Person must ensure;

- a. A copy of the Waiver application and Waiver is available to the remote PIC and all other direct participants prior to and during sUAS operations that are the subject of this Waiver;
- b. A copy of the current operations manual as submitted in the Waiver application is available to the remote PIC and all other direct participants prior to and during sUAS operations that are the subject of this Waiver;
- c. All operations conducted under this Waiver follow the procedures outlined in the current operations manual. If a discrepancy exists between the provisions in this Waiver and the procedures outlined in the operations manual, the provisions of this Waiver take precedence and must be followed;
- d. A documented notification from the operator(s) of the sUA to any airport, heliport, known agricultural aerial application operation or aerial military installation within a 3 mile radius of the operating area;
- e. Each remote PIC who will conduct operations under this Waiver is trained in a manner that addresses the items listed in § 107.49(a)-(e) and in a manner that is consistent with how the sUAS will be operated under this Waiver. All training and demonstration for all remote PICs and VOs must be documented and made available upon request by the Administrator or an authorized representative. Training operations may only be conducted under the standard requirements of part 107 (without waiver). The training must include:
  - i. sUA limitations,
  - ii. sUA programming,
  - iii. sUA operational procedures,
  - iv. Abnormal procedures,
  - v. Air traffic avoidance procedures,
  - vi. Crew Resource Management,
  - vii. sUA flight training, and
  - viii. Demonstration of sUA ground and flight skills;

15. Operations Manual: The Responsible Person must;

- a. Update or revise the operations manual submitted with the Waiver application for changes in the operation. The Responsible Person must track such revisions and present revised documents to the Administrator or an authorized representative upon request. The Responsible Person must also present revised documents when applying for extension of or amendment to this Waiver. If any revision to the manual would be contrary to the information provided in the waiver application or obviate a condition or limitation of this waiver, then the Responsible Person must apply for an amendment to this Waiver;

16. Prior to conducting operations under this Waiver, the remote PIC must identify operational area obstacles and boundaries so as to avoid collision with, or damage to property
17. The Responsible Person must ensure all operations conducted under this Waiver follow the procedures outlined in the waiver application. If a discrepancy exists between the provisions in this Waiver and the procedures outlined in the Waiver application, the Waiver takes precedence and must be followed;
18. Prior to operations under this Waiver, all direct participants must attend a safety briefing that addresses at minimum, the following items:
  - a. Designated positions, physical locations, responsibilities, and Crew Resource Management,
  - b. Planned flight operating area,
  - c. Designated launch and recovery areas,
  - d. Verification of geo-fence boundaries,
  - e. Verification of return home and land flight profile, and course,
  - f. Verification of emergency landing site(s), land profile, and course,
  - g. Procedures for avoidance of other aircraft,
  - h. Procedures for operating under this Waiver;
19. Operations subject to this waiver must cease as soon as possible in a manner that does not jeopardize the safety of human beings, property or other aircraft, if, at any time:
  - a. Safety of human beings or property on the ground or in the air is in jeopardy,
  - b. Any failure to comply with the provisions of this Waiver exists,
  - c. sUA control link is lost,
  - d. A non-participating aircraft or person enters the designated flight operating area,
  - e. GPS signal is lost, or sUA GPS location information is degraded or uncertain,
  - f. any part of the DAA strategy is not functioning or unavailable;
20. No sUA flight that occurs under this waiver may carry the property of another for compensation or hire;

## TECHNICAL PROVISIONS

21. Operations conducted under this Waiver may only occur with the make and model sUAS described in the waiver application. Proposed operations of any other manufacturer, make or model of sUAS will require a new waiver application or a request to amend this Waiver;
22. All sUAS operations conducted in accordance with this Waiver must comply with all manufacturer recommendations and limitations for the sUAS;
23. The sUA must be equipped with lighted anti-collision lighting visible from other aircraft at a distance of no less than 1 statute mile for daylight operations;
24. ADS-B OUT (1090/978 MHz) may not be transmitted from the sUAS when operating pursuant to this Waiver. ADS-B IN is required for operations under this waiver;
25. The Responsible Person must maintain each sUAS and its components in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and recommendations. sUAS maintenance includes scheduled and unscheduled overhaul, repair, inspection, modification, replacement, and system software upgrades of the sUAS and its components necessary for flight. A log of all maintenance performed must be kept for each aircraft operated under this waiver. This log must be available to the remote PIC for review prior to

conducting operations that are the subject of this waiver. Each sUAS maintenance log must be presented to the Administrator when requested. The log must contain the following information for each maintenance activity:

- a. A description (or reference data acceptable to the Administrator) of work performed,
  - b. The date of completion of the work performed,
  - c. The name of the person who performed the work, and
  - d. The signature of the person who performed the work;
26. Any sUAS that has undergone maintenance must undergo a functional test flight prior to conducting operations under this Waiver. A log entry must be made for each functional test flight. The log entry must contain at minimum the:
- a. Calendar date,
  - b. sUA registration number,
  - c. Remote PIC who performed the functional test flight,
  - d. Duration of the flight, and
  - e. The result of the functional flight test;
27. A functional test flight may only be conducted under the standard requirements of part 107 (without waiver);
28. sUAS ground control must display in real time the following information: sUA altitude, sUA position, sUA direction of flight or attitude, sUAS flight mode, battery life, DAA status and C2 status. This information must be available at all times to the remote PIC;
29. The sUAS must audibly and visually alert the remote PIC of degraded system performance, sUAS malfunction, or loss of Command and Control (C2) link between the ground control station and the sUA;
30. Prior to conducting operations under this Waiver, the remote PIC must determine all control links used in the sUAS, will maintain the ability to control the sUA at the maximum planned distance for the proposed operation. At all times during operations that are the subject of this Waiver, the remote PIC must maintain the ability to direct the sUA to ensure compliance with the applicable provisions of this waiver;
31. If the remote PIC loses command or control link with the sUA, the sUA must follow a predetermined route to either reestablish link or immediately recover/land at a predesignated location;
32. All emitters used in sUAS must be in compliance with all applicable FCC regulations and all provisions of the FCC authorization granted for the emitter. A FCC experimental authorization may not be used for sUAS operations under this Waiver; and

## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROVISIONS**

33. Operations conducted under this waiver are limited to the locations meeting the performance requirements of this Waiver.