



Control Number: 32182



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TOPIC: PUC Investigation of Methods to Improve Electric and Telecom Infrastructure that will Minimize Long Term Outages and Restoration Costs associated with Gulf Coast Hurricanes due by October 1, 2006.

RE: Project No. 32182
Regulatory Advisory No. 1186

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PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
FILING CLERK

I. On-Going Vegetation Management Program to Protect Overhead Facilities

North Texas Telephone Company in compliance with the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) has an on-going vegetation management program to protect our overhead facilities, and reduce the number and duration of outages caused by high wind events.

Periodic examinations of our overhead facilities are made. From these examinations, it is determined how our vegetation management team will cut, trim, prune, or in certain circumstances, remove the vegetation entirely from the overhead facilities Right-Of-Way (ROW). The vegetation management team works in coordination with all property and landowners, for the control and removal of any vegetation that may be in or near the right-of-way of the overhead facilities.

The cooperation and understanding of all involved individuals makes it possible to ensure a lesser number and duration of outages, and be assured the facilities will be replaced in a more timely and unhindered manner. This open-minded way of thinking is what keeps our utility company and the local communities working together for a higher standard of service.

II. On-Going Cyclical, Ground-Based Inspection Program for Overhead Facilities

North Texas Telephone Company in compliance with the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) has an on-going cyclical, ground-based inspection program of our overhead facilities. The ground-based inspection program makes sure our overhead facilities are maintained in a manner that will provide a reasonable level of service to our customers. Our company closely monitors the operation and maintenance of the overhead transmission and distribution systems that we own.

Overhead facilities make up approximately eight percent (8%) of our total outside plant facility. Although, some of our overhead facilities are attached to structures owned by another utility company, we still maintain a watchful inspection of these facilities. Our company works closely with the other utility companies in maintaining and inspecting the joint use of these overhead facilities. The joint cooperation of both utility companies is what provides the comfort of knowing the overhead facilities are suitable for an extended period of time and continued service without the possibility of overloading the overhead structures.