



Control Number: 32182



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November 18, 2008

Public Utility Commission of Texas
P. O. Box 13326
Austin, TX 78711

RE: Project No. 32182 – “PUC Investigation of Methods to Improve Electric and Telecommunications Infrastructure to Minimize Long Term Outages and Restoration Costs Associated with Gulf Coast Hurricanes”

2008 DEC - 11 AM 10:10
PUC PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
FILING CLERK

In response to David Featherston's letter dated October 15, 2008 this letter contains the requested information concerning Wood County Electric Cooperative's (WCEC) programs related to vegetation management and ground-based inspections for overhead facilities. Because WCEC does not operate any transmission lines within fifty miles of the Texas coast, the cooperative is not filing an inventory of transmission facilities.

The primary goal of WCECs vegetation management program is to minimize service interruptions and maintain safe distribution and transmission while preserving environmental integrity. To do this, we rely on using a combination of methods, both mechanical and chemical, depending on the situation.

Vegetation Management:

WCEC's vegetation management program is designed to protect both transmission and distribution systems. The WCEC transmission system is 69kV and 138kV levels. All transmission right-of-way (ROW) is mowed on an annual basis. The mowing operator is visited each day by the cooperative's ROW supervisor who documents progress and analyzes and reports structure abnormalities and/or aerial vegetation encroachment. Reported problems are transmitted to the proper department for corrective action.

Distribution system clearing is performed on a 6-8 year cycle to maintain our 3,700+ miles of line. Clearing consists of cutting, side trimming and mowing. In addition, herbicide is sprayed on a rotation basis in five to six substation service areas that are in mid-cycle of the clearing crews. All ROW clearing work is accomplished by WCEC crews and contract crews.

Ground-Based Inspections

WCEC completes a ground-based inspection of all transmission lines every ten years and approximately 10,000 distribution poles each year. This timing level is targeted to complete the

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distribution system inspection in ten years. These inspections include checking the pole integrity and proper operation of equipment. When deemed necessary by visual queues, poles are climbed and more closely inspected to determine if there is hardware corrosion, pole damage, or cross-arm damage that requires corrective action.

Corrective action can consist of pole replacement, but if the pole does not require condemnation, action may include wood pole ground line treatment, fumigant application, or preventive wrap treatments.

Summary

WCEC's aggressive approach to right-of-way maintenance has served the cooperative well over the years. The resulting benefits of our proactive measures include reduced outages, a safer system, and reduced/avoided emergency maintenance and repair costs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Debbie Robinson".

Debbie Robinson
CEO/General Manager