



## **PSE&G ELECTRIC RELIABILITY UPGRADE PROJECT DUNELLEN, NEW JERSEY**

### **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

#### **1. WHY IS PSE&G UPGRADING ITS UTILITY LINES?**

PSE&G is currently upgrading the electric power supply in Dunellen to meet the increased demand for power, as well as to provide improved electric reliability to our customers. Since 1990, Dunellen's population has increased more than 10%. Between 2002 and 2012 alone, area demand for electricity is up 30 percent. During the same period, there was an average of 52 area outages a year. This project is designed to improve system reliability.

#### **2. WAS THE TOWNSHIP PROVIDED NOTICE OF THIS PROJECT?**

PSE&G notified Dunellen of this project March 11, 2013.

#### **3. WHO GAVE PSE&G APPROVAL TO INSTALL UTILITY POLES?**

Utilities such as PSE&G are charged with providing safe, adequate and proper electric service, as well as the responsibility to upgrade the system as needed to reliably serve their customers. To do so, they are given a legal right to occupy the public right-of-way with electric and gas facilities without obtaining state or local approvals. The authority for the construction and maintenance of utility poles along public streets in New Jersey is governed by statutory authority in Title 48, and is not subject to the jurisdiction of local boards.

#### **4. WHAT IS THE HEIGHT OF THE EXISTING UTILITY POLES? WHAT IS THE HEIGHT OF THE REPLACEMENT POLES?**

In general, the existing poles stand approximately 40 - 55 feet in height. The replacement poles will range in height from between 55 and 65 feet, approximately 15 to 20 feet higher than the existing poles.

#### **5. WHY DO THE REPLACEMENT POLES APPEAR TWICE AS HIGH AS THE OLD POLES?**

Once a replacement pole is installed and the electric wires are transferred, the old pole is cut to the height of the lowest telephone and/or cable television line that shares the pole. At this time, the public is seeing the replacement pole adjacent to the old pole, which has been cut to a height of approximately 20 – 25 feet above grade, making the new pole appear much taller than the actual 15-20 feet differential.

#### **6. WHY ARE THE REPLACEMENT POLES TALLER?**

The height of a utility pole is determined by several factors: 1) the number of wires carried by the pole – the more wire, the taller the pole; 2) the distance between poles - the greater the distance, the taller the poles; and, 3) the addition of static wire, also known as lightning protection.

#### **7. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE EXISTING AND NEW LINE VOLTAGE?**

Existing pole lines in Dunellen carry 13 kV and/or 26 kV lines. The new pole line will carry the existing lines plus a new 69 kV line.



**8. HOW DID PSE&G DETERMINE THE LOCATION OF THE REPLACEMENT POLE LINE?**

PSE&G considers several factors as part of its pole line selection process. Such factors include but are not limited to: presence or absence of existing utilities, feasibility of engineering and/or construction, use of public and private properties, environmental impacts and approvals, cost and schedule to construct, and feasibility of long term maintenance and accessibility.

**9. WHAT OTHER ROUTE ALTERNATIVES ARE AVAILABLE?**

Based upon electric system design specifications and configuration, the location of existing facilities, and the environmental constraints, no other alternate route exists to accomplish the project goals without the use of private property and/or the installation of an entirely new pole line.

**10. WHY IS PSE&G PRUNING TREES ADJACENT TO THE NEW POLES?**

The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) mandates that PSE&G routinely remove tree branches and limbs to ensure they don't become entangled with, and damage, the electric infrastructure. Regular vegetation management minimizes power outages.

**11. DID PSE&G CONSIDER ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES WHEN PLANNING THIS PROJECT?**

Yes. In accordance with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) regulations, PSE&G evaluated the potential impact to the environment, including land, wetlands, waterways and wildlife. As required, a project notification will be transmitted to NJDEP Division of Land Use Regulation and the NJDEP Bureau of Coastal and Land Use Compliance and Enforcement before work begins.

**12. WILL THE CONSTRUCTION DISRUPT TRAFFIC?**

PSE&G is required to maintain traffic control measures, including assistance from local police personnel, when working in the public right-of-way.

**13. WHAT HEALTH HAZARDS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THESE LINES?**

There is no documented evidence that utility lines pose a health risk. Electric lines of various voltages can be found on almost every roadway in New Jersey, as well as North America.

**14. WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS FOR FIREMAN WHO RESPOND TO DOWNED ELECTRIC WIRE OR TRANSFORMER FIRES?**

Fire fighters who respond to this type of situation know not to handle downed electric wire and/or extinguish transformer fires. Fire fighters and police personnel will secure the area, maintain crowd & traffic control and await response by PSE&G. The hazards are therefore limited to those they may encounter at any other fire.

###

*PSE&G will continue to provide updates to Dunellen officials on the pole lines' relocation effort as information becomes available. In the meantime, should you have additional questions or concerns about this project, please contact PSE&G's Electric Reliability Upgrade number at 800-901-5035. All calls will be returned within 24 hours during normal business days.*