



Public Service Commission Of West Virginia

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PSC Authorizes AEP Vegetation Management Plan

In an effort to improve electric reliability, the Public Service Commission of West Virginia today approved a comprehensive, end-to-end, time cycle based right-of-way vegetation management plan (VMP) for Appalachian Power Company (APCo) and Wheeling Power Company (WPCo), both dba American Electric Power (AEP).

West Virginia has been subject to several severe weather events, including the December 2009 Blizzard, the June 2012 Derecho, Hurricane Sandy in October 2012, and the winter storms experienced in 2013-2014, each of which left thousands of State residents without power for days resulting in millions of dollars in damage, including spoiled food and countless accounts of discomfort, inconvenience and disruption of lives. Many customers faced multiple service disruptions over a three-year period.

In January 2013, the Commission ordered all electric utility companies operating in West Virginia to file a proposal for a comprehensive vegetation trimming program to maintain all rights-of-way over a proposed period of time. The proposals were to cover all distribution and transmission lines, be based on the utility's specific operational and reliability targets, indicate how the program would be coordinated with other entities that have facilities in the rights-of-way or attached to the utility poles, and include a proposed method for rate recovery of the increased costs associated with the programs.

The Commission stated in its Order today that the AEP VMP is expected to increase electric service reliability and lessen the impact and recovery time for service interruptions related to major weather events in the future. The Commission will, in the upcoming base rate case for the Companies, implement a cost recovery mechanism for the program. The approved costs will be subject to annual review and true up by the Commission each year to assure that only actual costs are included in the VMP.

VMPs for four smaller electric utility companies have been approved by the Commission. The VMP proposal submitted by Mon Power and Potomac Edison, dba FirstEnergy is pending before the Commission.

AEP serves more than 478,000 customers in West Virginia. More information may be obtained from the PSC website: www.psc.state.wv.us by referencing Case No. 13-0557-E-P.

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