

CHAPTER 25. SUBSTANTIVE RULES APPLICABLE TO ELECTRIC SERVICE PROVIDERS.

Subchapter D. RECORDS, REPORTS AND OTHER REQUIRED INFORMATION.

§25.95. Electric Utility Infrastructure Storm Hardening.

(a) **Purpose.** This section is intended to ensure that each electric utility has developed a Storm Hardening Plan that provides for the implementation of cost-effective strategies to increase the ability of its transmission and distribution facilities to withstand extreme weather conditions.

(b) **Application.** This section applies to all electric utilities.

(c) **Definition.** The following term when used in this section shall have the following meaning, unless the context indicates otherwise.

Storm hardening -- All activities related to improved resiliency and restoration times, including but not limited to emergency planning, construction standards, vegetation management, or other actions before, during, or after extreme weather events.

(d) **Storm Hardening Plan Summary.** By May 1, 2011, a utility shall file with the commission a summary of its Storm Hardening Plan. The summary shall describe in detail the utility's current and future storm hardening plans over a five-year period beginning January 1, 2011. By May 1 of each subsequent year, the utility shall file a detailed summary of any material revisions to the Plan and a detailed summary of its progress in implementing the Plan. A full copy of the Plan shall be provided to the commission or commission staff upon request.

(e) **Updating and contents of Storm Hardening Plan.** A utility's Storm Hardening Plan shall be updated at least every five years and shall include, at a minimum, the utility's:

- (1) Construction standards, policies, procedures, and practices employed to enhance the reliability of utility systems, including overhead and underground transmission and distribution facilities;
- (2) Vegetation Management Plan for distribution facilities, including a tree pruning methodology and pruning cycle, hazard tree identification and mitigation plans, and customer education and notification practices related to vegetation management;
- (3) Plans and procedures to consider infrastructure improvements for its distribution system based on smart grid concepts that provide enhanced outage resilience, faster outage restoration, and/or grid self-healing;
- (4) Plans and procedures to enhance post storm damage assessment, including enhanced data collection methods for damaged poles and fallen trees;
- (5) Transmission and distribution pole construction standards, pole attachment policies, and pole testing schedule;
- (6) Distribution feeder inspection schedule;
- (7) Plans and procedures to enhance the reliability of overhead and underground transmission and distribution facilities through the use of transmission and distribution automation;
- (8) Plans and procedures to comply with the most recent National Electric Safety Code (NESC) wind loading standards in hurricane prone areas for new construction and rebuilds of the transmission and distribution system;
- (9) Plans and procedures to review new construction and rebuilds to the distribution system to determine whether they should be built to NESC Grade B (or equivalent) standards;
- (10) Plans and procedures to develop a damage/outage prediction model for the transmission and distribution system;
- (11) Plans and procedures for use of structures owned by other entities in the provision of distribution service, such as poles owned by telecommunications utilities; and
- (12) Plans and procedures for restoration of service to priority loads and for consideration of targeted storm hardening of infrastructure used to serve priority loads.

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- (f) **Comments.** Interested entities may file comments to the commission staff within 30 days of a utility's filing pursuant to subsection (d) of this section.