

Request for Stakeholder Comments – 12/19/2017  
Docket No. 20170215-EU  
Response from the City of Homestead  
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January 26, 2018

### **Vegetation Management**

1. What policies or practices can facilitate utility tree trimming and removal of problem trees along public road right of ways or easements?
  - a. The Electric Utility in the City of Homestead performs tree trimming on all City circuits on a three year cycle. Funding for this activity is approved annually by the City Council, as the electric utility is a city department. If additional tree trimming is deemed necessary, the spending would need to be increased, and the increase approved by the City Council.
  - b. A small portion of the city is served by FPL, who has a similar three year cycle for tree trimming of electrical circuits.
2. What policies or practices can facilitate utility tree trimming and removal of problem trees outside public road right of ways or easements?
  - a. Our City has an ordinance that requires the property owner to perform tree trimming on private property for any vegetation within 10 feet of power lines.
  - b. The City could put more focus on enforcing the existing ordinance.
3. Describe how coordination with local utilities could be improved with regard to tree trimming, planting, relocating or removing trees.
  - a. As a City department, the local municipal electric utility reviews all plans that go through Building and Zoning and looks for any potential vegetation conflicts before signing off on the plans. If conflicts exist, they are resolved prior to the electric utility signing off.
  - b. The bulk of the small section of the city served by FPL has mostly underground power lines.

### **Undergrounding of Electric Facilities**

4. What policies or practices could facilitate the undergrounding of existing overhead electric facilities?
  - a. Perhaps an assessment on the tax bill to assist with the costs of undergrounding. The costs for relocating existing overhead electrical facilities to underground can be significant.
5. What policies or practices could facilitate undergrounding electric facilities in construction of new electric facilities?
  - a. Miami-Dade County ordinance calls for all residential subdivisions built after 1977 to have their electrical services installed underground. (Miami-Dade County Code Section 28-15. e)
6. Describe how the process used to interact with utilities on projects to underground electric facilities could be improved.
  - a. As our Electric Utility is a City department, we have easy access to the management team at the electric utility. The biggest obstacle to undergrounding existing electrical facilities is the cost.

### **Coordination and Communication with Utilities**

7. Explain the process to identify and inform electric utilities of local critical facilities and infrastructure, and describe options to improve the process.
  - a. As our Electric Utility is a City department, all critical facilities and infrastructure designations are agreed upon on a yearly basis in meetings with the City's EOC Manager, City Manager and City department heads. Discussions regarding the status of critical facilities following a severe weather event are held at daily EOC briefings.
8. Describe how electric utilities interact with local emergency operations centers during emergencies, and identify opportunities to improve that interaction.

- a. As a City department, the Electric Utility is a critical member of the City's EOC team. Discussions regarding the status of power restoration are a part of every EOC briefing and meeting held before, during and after severe weather events or any other emergency situations that significantly affect the electrical grid.
  - b. A small portion of the City is served by FPL, and it would be helpful if the FPL representative attended more of the City's EOC briefings. Unfortunately, our city is one of several that the FPL representative has to cover, and so the individual is stretched thin after a storm event.
9. Describe options to address communications with utilities prior to, during, and after a storm event.
  - a. Communications with the City's electric utility are currently good. Improvements could be made by making the outage status information more visible to the City's officials.
  - b. Updates from FPL on a more granular, city-specific basis would be more helpful.