



# CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG FIRE RESCUE

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FPSC - COMMISSION CLERK

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January 29, 2018



RE: Docket No. 20170215-EU – Review of electric utility hurricane preparedness and restoration actions

## **Vegetation Management**

It is imperative that Duke Energy continues to support and fund an aggressive tree trimming program in St. Petersburg. The City has the potential to be severely impacted if tree trimming is reduced or not maintained on a regular schedule.

Recommendation: Continue to fund an aggressive and regularly scheduled tree trimming program.

## **Coordination and Communication with Utilities**

**Explain the process to identify and inform electric utilities of local critical facilities and infrastructure, and describe options to improve the process.**

City representatives met with Duke Energy prior to last year's hurricane season. We discussed lessons learned, strengths and weaknesses and opportunities to improve based on our experience with the 2016 hurricane season. This meeting was very productive and well received by both parties. The city provided Duke Energy with the post storm initial push routes and Duke Energy detailed their process for prioritizing restoration.

Recommendation: Continue to support annual pre-storm meetings at the city level. These meetings facilitate better communication and planning for pre and post storm response operations. Annual pre-storm meetings will also allow for the review and identification of critical facilities and infrastructure.

**Describe how electric utilities interact with local emergency operations centers during emergencies, and identify opportunities to improve that interaction.**

Duke Energy's policy has been to have their company representatives assigned only to the Pinellas County Emergency Operations Center (PCEOC). A large metropolitan city like St. Petersburg should warrant a representative assigned to the city's emergency operations center (EOC).

Recommendation: Duke Energy to provide a representative to the city's emergency operations center to assist in post storm communication and coordination of response and restoration.

**Describe option to address communications with utilities prior to during and after a storm event.**

Last year, the county-based system the city was required to use to report downed power lines was time consuming and labor intensive. The city EOC received hundreds of reports from both employees in the field and residents calling the Citizens Information Center (CIC). Each of these reports had to be manually entered into the WebEOC system for Duke's review and action. This manual reporting took hours of critical staff time and created a "middle man" in the reporting system.

City forestry crews encountered problems when responding to downed trees that were entangled in power lines. The crews were not able to determine if the power line had been made safe for them to work around. If in doubt, crews didn't touch the tree. Crews were making multiple trips to the same downed trees waiting for the power company to deem them safe to work around. It is imperative that a better system is employed to allow city forestry crews to clear roads quickly and safely.

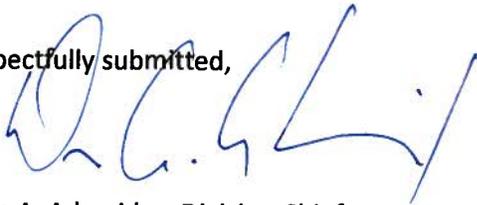
Recommendation: Duke Energy to work with the county and municipalities to develop a more streamlined system to report downed lines encountered or reported to city employees.

Recommendation: Duke Energy to work with the county and municipalities to develop a way to notify or have a Duke Energy team member meet city tree crews in the field to assure power lines pulled down by trees are safe for crews to work around.

**City of St. Petersburg Hurricane Irma - After Action Report comments relevant to the city's interaction with Duke Energy.**

It was difficult to establish a reliable line of communication with Duke Energy. Because of the widespread power outage, citizens were looking to the City for information and guidance. It was difficult for city leadership to obtain this information as Duke Energy was not only inundated with calls themselves, but their outage maps went offline making it difficult for anyone to get an idea of the extent of the outages and timeline for reconnection.

Respectfully submitted,



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Emergency Management Office