

PSE&G ELECTRIC RELIABILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Utility Infrastructure Upgrades - Frequently Asked Questions - Westfield

ABOUT THE PROJECT

1. Why is this upgrade needed?

Parts of our current electric system were built for life in the 1960s. A modern network is needed to meet the increased electric demands and reliability expectations of the 21st century.

2. How will customers benefit?

- **Increased power capacity:** With 300% more capacity, the new lines will better support our modern, technology-driven lifestyles, including work-at-home schedules, increased electronics usage, and expanding electric vehicle adoption.
- **Fewer and shorter outages:** Smart sensors and relays will be added to automatically detect problems and redirect the flow of electricity, reducing outages and expediting restorations.
- **Supporting clean energy:** A smarter grid will connect customers with renewables like solar and offshore wind. A more robust electric network is vital to New Jersey's clean energy vision.

3. What are 69,000-volt (69 kV) electric lines?

69kV electric lines are the standard of the 21st century. They will ultimately replace and enhance a 50+ year-old system built on 26kV lines, increasing reliability, capacity and safety.

4. What is the difference between the existing and new line voltage?

Existing pole lines carry 4kV, 13kV or 26kV lines. The replacement pole line will carry the existing lines plus a new 69kV line for added reliability and capacity, as well as lightning protection.

5. Why aren't the lines being built underground?

Building the 69kV utility lines underground is six to seven times more expensive than typical utility pole construction. The additional expense does not include burying any of the existing electric service lines, telecommunication, and cable. PSE&G is an overhead utility, meaning that power lines are built overhead where feasible. The vast majority of 69kV lines built by PSE&G since 2007 are overhead. Lines are built underground only when engineering determines it is necessary, such as crossing a railroad, highway or river.

6. What would it cost to construct the project underground?

If our engineering indicates that overhead construction is feasible and a municipality requests that a line be installed underground, the municipality must pay for the cost differential.

7. What is the route for this project and how was it chosen?

The Westfield portion of the route will include Central Avenue (from the Clark border to South Avenue) and South Avenue (from Central Avenue to the Scotch Plains border). This work is part of a larger route that will run from our Springfield Road Substation in Union Township to our Front Street Substation in Scotch Plains.

PSE&G considers many factors in its pole line selection process, including presence of existing utilities; feasibility of engineering and construction; use of public and private property; environmental impacts; cost; construction schedule; feasibility of long-term maintenance; and accessibility.

8. Where else are 69 kV lines in New Jersey?

Since 2007, PSE&G has updated more than 575 miles of power lines in almost 100 towns. Over the next several years, PSE&G will replace 400 miles of power lines and equipment that is 50+ years old.

CONSTRUCTION

9. How long will the project take to complete in Westfield? When will it start?

The project will take approximately 9 months to complete. Work is expected to begin on or about Thursday August 24, 2023.

10. How many poles will be installed?

The project will replace roughly 142 existing poles in Westfield. The new poles will also be made of wood, similar to the existing poles.

11. How tall and how far apart are the poles?

In general, the height of the existing poles is between 38 and 43 feet above ground, with a 13-inch diameter. The replacement poles will typically range between 56 and 61 feet above ground with a 16-inch diameter. The new poles will have the same spacing as the existing poles.

12. Why are the replacement poles taller?

Several factors determine the height of a utility pole.

- The number of wires carried by the pole – the more wire, the taller the pole.

- The voltage of the wires -- different voltages require different spacing between the wires.
- The addition of static wire, also known as lightning protection. This project involves installing both a 69kV line and lightning protection on the new poles.

13. Why is PSE&G trimming and removing trees near the new poles?

Regular vegetation management minimizes power outages. The NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and utility best practices require that PSE&G remove tree branches and limbs to prevent damage to electric lines.

14. How many trees will be trimmed and removed?

In accordance with PSE&G's company policy and the Town of Westfield's tree ordinance, each tree that is removed will be replaced with two new utility-friendly trees. In Westfield, approximately 86 trees will be trimmed, 3 private trees will be removed, and 19 municipal trees will be removed, several of which are dead or in serious decline.

15. When will the old poles be removed?

The old poles will be removed by the phone and cable companies once they transfer their wires onto the new pole lines.

16. How will you communicate with the Westfield community when the project begins?

Construction project updates will be communicated through the town, our website (www.pseg.com/reliability/westfield), postal service and door-to-door notifications. Customers can also contact PSE&G through the PSE&G Reliability Hotline, by calling: 877-678-5784.

17. What kind of impacts will there be to customers during construction and how will you mitigate impacts?

- PSE&G will work with municipal officials to minimize any disruptions and coordinate traffic flow during construction. We will also communicate any disruptions directly with impacted customers. On days when school is in session, crews will work to minimize disruption to school pickup and drop off when possible.
- The work will be done in stages, i.e. pole set, transfer existing construction, build-up 69kV, set-up for wire installation, wire installation, tie-in wire, set-up for fiber installation, fiber installation, tie-in fiber. Typically, a crew will be at same pole up to 5 times, intermittently, during the course of the project.
- No mess will be left behind. When a new pole is installed, the excess dirt is left around the base of the new pole. This is left for two reasons: to compensate for any settling and for Verizon to use to back-fill when they remove the old pole. If a customer has a concern about the soil left at the base of a pole and requests us to remove it, we can. The same process is used if we open a sidewalk, except we would make repairs around the base of new pole with either a new sidewalk flag or repairs around the base of pole, depending on field

- conditions. If we set a new pole in a location with brick pavers, we will stack the bricks next to the pole for Verizon to use once they remove the old pole and restore the area the pole was removed from. No other material or equipment would be left at the work location when crews are not working.
- There may be momentary lane/street closures mainly for pole installations so we can perform the work safely. There may also be momentary sidewalk or driveway closures so we can perform the work safely. If a driveway or parking lot needs to be blocked for an extended amount of time, we will coordinate in advance with the residential or commercial customer. We will have police officers with our crews every day for the duration of the project and they will work with our crews to coordinate traffic flow. PSE&G works with the Westfield Police Department to review our traffic control plan to maintain the safety of the general public as well as our crews.