

ORIGINAL

Case No. DT 07-011

31P

Verizon New England Inc.
d/b/a Verizon Maine

State of New Hampshire

Docket No. DT 07-011

Respondent: John F. Nestor, III
Title: Vice President - State
Government Relations N.H.

REQUEST: Commission – Record Request

DATED: November 6, 2007

ITEM: Commission RR # 10 What is Verizon’s pole inspection practice and what records does it maintain of those inspections?

REPLY: Pole inspections, maintenance and replacements are conducted on an ongoing and regular basis. For example, technicians have been trained in a variety of methods to test each pole prior to performing any work on that pole. This is done regardless of whether the pole is 1) ascended using “climbers”; 2) worked on using a ladder; or 3) worked on from an aerial lift device.

Prior to contact with any pole or performing any pole related work activity, Verizon NH technicians are trained to visually inspect poles and test for foreign voltage. Next, a visual test is conducted for pole rot, splits and damage. A sound and prod test is conducted where a lineman’s hammer is used to identify any rotting. Additionally, a screwdriver is driven into the pole below grade level to detect potential rotting at the base of the pole. Finally, a strand test is conducted where a rope is thrown over the cable/strand and the technician tests its strength by hanging from the rope.

If a pole is deemed unsafe by the technician, it is marked as such and local management is immediately notified. When found in the field, the condition of these poles is communicated to the foreman for review and forwarded to engineering for an immediate work order to replace.

Additional methods deployed to inspect poles, other than when a pole is to be worked on, include visual inspections of the pole when new construction work is being designed; inspections of adjacent poles on either side of the pole to be worked on; field engineers and

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managers identifying hazardous poles in the course of field note-taking and performing quality inspections; and receipt of notice from other utilities and licensees, state and local municipalities, the general public and Verizon Repair Centers.

Based on its field operations throughout the state, Verizon NH reasonably believes that over a 10 year period the vast majority of the poles in its maintenance area are inspected using routine work practices. However, Verizon NH does not maintain documents reflecting the inspection intervals.

Verizon NH replaces defective poles and pole related hardware found to be hazardous on an immediate basis.

All Verizon NH outside forces receive formal instructor-led pole training when they initially assume their work assignments. This training includes educating the technicians on all of the approved methods used to test poles for safety. Training is reinforced annually with all employees as a requirement of Verizon's Safety Knowledge Review Program.

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