

What are the easement document requirements?

The easement document grants us the right to locate distribution facilities on your property. The document also requires you, the landowner, to keep the easement area clear so we can access facilities for maintenance and repair. Easement areas should be clear of trees.

What kinds of negotiations should be expected?

While our standard easement is intended to cover normal distribution facility installations, terms or conditions may be negotiated. If you have questions, we provide answers. Our right of way agent is your contact person and your source of information.

Are there specific waivers of rights involved in the easement negotiation process?

For electric facilities, PSC 113.0509 gives you a minimum period of five days to examine the materials we provided before signing any new or revised easement agreement. If you, as the landowner, are comfortable signing the easement agreement after reading the document and getting answers to questions, you may waive the five-day review period established under PSCW Administrative Rules.

No comparable code provision exists for natural gas facilities; however, as a courtesy, we apply the same practice in the attainment of natural gas distribution easements.

Do utilities have the right to use eminent domain?

Yes. However, as a general practice, we do not use eminent domain to install electric or natural gas distribution facilities. Only in extreme situations would we consider the use of our eminent domain rights. In those cases, specific discussions with the landowner regarding the exercise of those rights will occur.

More information

For information on a specific project, contact us or the PSCW.

Contact our distribution right of way group at: 920-272-8799 or easementrequest@integrysgroup.com

Contact the PSCW at:
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin
P.O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-7854
608-266-5481

Because the PSCW does not have detailed information about every distribution project, please provide the following information when contacting them:

- Utility name
- Project name
- Project location

Rights of way and easements

For electric and natural gas distribution facility construction



Introduction

This pamphlet is intended to help you, the landowner, better understand the possible need for new utility facilities, how utilities build those facilities and how you can be an important part of the process.

Electric distribution lines carry electricity from substations to customers. The lines include customer service connections and local distribution lines.

Natural gas distribution pipes carry the gas from regulator stations to customers. The pipes include distribution mains of various sizes and service laterals.

A utility right of way (ROW) is a strip of land that a utility uses to construct, maintain, repair or replace an overhead power line, underground power line or natural gas main. The ROW allows the utility to provide clearance from trees, buildings and other structures that could interfere with the installation, maintenance and operation of the utility facilities. This ROW may be located in the roadway or on private property. It usually is between 6 and 12 feet wide, unless terrain, vegetation, larger utility facilities or unusual construction obstacles require a wider easement.

What are some reasons new or reconstructed power lines might be needed?

New power lines may be needed because of:

- Growth in customers' average electricity use
- Growth in the number of customers and businesses in Wisconsin
- Replacement of old lines
- Development of new substations to meet increased demand

What are some reasons new or reconstructed natural gas facilities might be needed?

New facilities may be needed because of:

- Growth in the number of natural gas customers
- Replacement of old pipes due to age or condition
- Increased usage of natural gas by existing customers

Do utilities need government approval to build new power lines or natural gas mains?

Yes. A variety of permits are needed from various governmental agencies. The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) reviews our request if a project exceeds certain costs.

Local road permits, Wisconsin Department of Transportation permits, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources permits, Federal Aviation Authority permits, etc., are all required if the interests of those agencies are involved.

How is it decided when and where new or reconstructed utility facilities will be built?

Our engineers use computer models of the power and natural gas systems to study the need for new utility facilities. The results help us decide if a new power line or natural gas main is needed or if an existing line or main should be rebuilt or relocated. In some instances, the need for new or rebuilt power lines or natural gas mains becomes apparent due to insufficient capacity to meet customer requirements in an area.

Does the utility have the right to construct its utility facilities on my property?

We usually have the option of building the distribution lines or mains and related facilities on private property or in the road right of way. However, if existing obstacles are in the way, the distribution line or main will be located to avoid these obstacles. If the distribution line or main is located on private property, an easement from the landowner is required. If the distribution line or main is located in road right of way, a permit from the municipality is required.

Wisconsin statutes allow us to construct our utility facilities on or along roadways with the consent of local authorities as long as the utility facilities do not interfere with the use of the roadway by the public or with the use of the adjoining land.

Will my trees need to be cut?

In some cases, power lines must be built along wooded areas or near existing trees. Trees in these areas need to be trimmed and sometimes removed.

To ensure safe and reliable power, power lines and above-ground equipment must be free of interference. This means that tall-growing trees should not be placed near or under existing power lines. We maintain a regular trimming schedule to keep interference from trees to a minimum.

In the case of natural gas facilities, trees or shrubs may need to be trimmed or removed for the installation and maintenance of the gas main.

Before we trim or remove trees along a roadway, we obtain the consent of the tree owner.

What is an easement?

An easement is a written document that grants a permanent right to use land for a specific purpose, such as installing utility facilities to serve you and others. An easement "runs with the land," which means it stays with the property even if ownership changes.

What happens in the easement acquisition process?

We have a standard easement agreement that covers topics such as proper clearance/cover for utility facilities, restoration of the land and tree trimming. You, as a landowner, have the right to understand these issues as well as the need for distribution facilities.

To minimize impact on your property, we make every reasonable effort to locate these facilities in setback areas that are unbuildable.

We also contact each potentially affected landowner and present the easement document.