

What is a transmission line? Why does Oncor Electric Delivery need to build them?

Transmission lines are the high voltage conductors that move electricity from power plants to distribution systems, which deliver electricity to your homes and businesses. Ensuring adequate transmission capability is essential for electric reliability. It may help to think of them as "highways" for electricity. In the same way that highways are built to ensure that you and your family get from one place to another, transmission lines are necessary to make sure that electricity gets from where it is produced to where it is consumed.

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Hartring - Upland 138 kV Transmission Line Project

As West Texas electric load growth increases with additional oil and natural gas production, it is important to take steps to ensure that a reliable electric system is in place to support the associated load growth. In order for Oncor Electric Delivery Company LLC ("Oncor") to continue to provide safe and reliable electric service in West Texas, Oncor proposes to construct a new double-circuit 138 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line in Reagan and Upton Counties. The proposed line would connect Oncor's planned Hartring Substation in Reagan County, Texas, and Oncor's planned Upland Substation in Upton County, Texas. The planned Hartring Substation is located approximately 5.8 miles east of the intersection of Ranch-to-Market Road (RM) 2594 and Silo Road (also known as County Road 260). The planned Upland Substation is located approximately 0.6 miles west of the intersection of RM 2594 and RM 1555. Completion of the new line will increase Oncor's load-serving capability to the area to facilitate future developments and generally improve electric reliability. The proposed transmission line will be approximately 9 to 12 miles in length, if approved by the Public Utility Commission of Texas ("PUC").

What is the process for approval?

Step 1: Need

 The first step in the process is determining the need for the project. The need for the project dictates essential facilities and prescribes the line type, electrical location, and capacity.

Step 2: Engineering, Routing and Environmental Assessment

- The second step in the process of building a new transmission line is determining potential routes for the line. Oncor and its outside consultants consider a variety of environmental, land use, and other important factors.
- A public meeting is held as a part of the environmental assessment and routing process. The public is encouraged to attend the meeting and learn more about the project, as well as participate. Public input, along with detailed environmental analysis by the consultant and engineering and cost analysis by the utility, is important to the development of good routes for the project.

Step 3: Review/Approval Process

- After the environmental assessment is complete, Oncor will file an application, along with an environmental assessment, with the PUC requesting an amendment to their Certificate of Convenience and Necessity ("CCN"). The application outlines specific attributes of the line, describes the need for the line, proposes various routes for the project, and identifies potential impacts on the surrounding community and environment.
- After Oncor files the CCN application with the PUC, interested parties have an opportunity to participate in the process and express their views to the PUC. The PUC rules establishes a six-month period for the PUC to approve or deny a CCN application. While the requisite formal review and approval process for proposed transmission facilities can be complex, it is one that thoroughly examines essential interests, including the views of the public, to ensure that the State's electric system continues to be reliable and provides the necessary support for sustained development and growth.

Step 4: Post-Approval

If the project is approved by the PUC, Oncor will begin surveying properties, acquiring rights-of-way and constructing the new facilities.