



## City of South Daytona

Office of the City Manager / Department of Public Works

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**DATE:** February 1, 2018

**TO:** Public Service Commission

**FROM:** City of South Daytona  
Les Gillis, P.E., Deputy City Manager  
Public Works Director

**RE:** Docket No. 20170215-EU – Review of Electric Utility Hurricane Preparedness and Restoration Actions  
Request for Comments

### Vegetation Management

1. *What policies or practices can facilitate utility tree trimming and removal of problem trees along public road right of ways or easements?*

**City of South Daytona Response:** Within the City of South Daytona, it appears that tree trimming activities are too infrequent. It would seem that adequate line clearance from vegetation would be a high priority to reduce power outages. Our electrical utility provider, Florida Power and Light (FPL), has made great strides in informing the public of the necessity of tree trimming. Line clearing does not have the same intense negative connotation that it had a decade ago. Residents have become more tolerant of the activity.

The number of requests we receive from our residents asking for trees to be trimmed off of the power lines have increased over the last two years. There is no mechanism (or at least it is not well known) that allows cities to pass these tree trimming requests onto our electric utility provider. Residents can report outages or streetlight trouble online; they should be able to report a tree trimming issue online as well.

2. *What policies or practices can facilitate utility tree trimming and removal of problem trees outside public road right of ways or easements?*

**City of South Daytona Response:** There needs to be a way for a resident to report a tree trimming issue online. In addition, cities need to be able to pass along tree trimming requests to utility providers more easily. Those complaints can then be compiled by the utility provider and tracked to know exactly where their trouble spots are located.

A policy needs to be setup to cease rear yard feeds and move those utilities to the front of the property in the right of way. Utility providers have difficulty accessing rear yard feeds for maintenance and repairs.

3. *Describe how coordination with local utilities could be improved with regard to tree trimming, planting, relocating or removing trees.*

**City of South Daytona Response:** Informational packets could be distributed by the electric utility advising what can and cannot be planted underneath lines. This information can be used by cities to evaluate development plans and restrict certain plantings underneath lines.

### Undergrounding of Electrical Facilities

4. *What policies or practices could facilitate the undergrounding of existing overhead electric facilities?*

**City of South Daytona Response:** Currently, the undergrounding of electrical facilities is not a grant eligible construction activity. Cities receive federal money for improvement projects but undergrounding of electrical facilities is a cost that is not grant eligible. In many cases, the undergrounding of facilities is the only way to make a project feasible, such as fitting a wide sidewalk down a narrow right of way. If undergrounding of electrical facilities were made a grant eligible activity, more segments would be completed and more projects would become feasible.

5. *What policies or practices could facilitate undergrounding electric facilities in construction of new electric facilities?*

**City of South Daytona Response:** A policy needs to be instituted where all new development must have their utilities buried on the property, including those located in adjacent rights of ways. The City of South Daytona currently requires the burying of electrical utilities in our redevelopment district; which has met with positive reviews from developers.

6. *Describe how the process used to interact with utilities on projects to underground electric facilities could be improved.*

**City of South Daytona Response:** When the City of South Daytona buried overhead lines in our redevelopment district years ago, we were being asked to accommodate future growth by burying more conduit than what was needed. In some cases, we installed two conduits for one utility which to this day, almost a decade later, remains empty. Removing this requirement to bury additional conduit for future growth has to be considered.

### Coordination and Communication with Utilities

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

**City of South Daytona Response:** A yearly review of critical facilities and infrastructure must be mandated. With the economy picking up, development is starting to take off again. Critical facilities and infrastructure will start changing yearly. The utility providers must communicate with the cities at least once a year to confirm critical facility and infrastructure changes.

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

**City of South Daytona Response:** During Hurricane Irma, swift and accurate information regarding utility outages were scarce. In many instances, it appeared that representatives were not sure where their work crews were located. Although, the electrical utility provider worked quickly to restore power, residents wanted to know what areas were being brought up first so they could anticipate being restored. It probably would be a good policy to hire additional personnel whose function would be to report where work crews are located so that information could be passed along to municipalities to share with their residents.

9. *Describe options to address communications with utilities prior to, during, and after a storm event.*

**City of South Daytona Response:** There seemed to be a shortage of utility representatives following Hurricane Irma. Our contacts seemed overextended and hard to reach. We received very little information from the telecommunication providers. A policy to expand the number of representatives so that each one could focus on a smaller segment of the grid would be more beneficial to cities and their customers.