



SARASOTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Bernadette A. DiPino
Chief of Police

2099 Adams Lane
Sarasota, FL 34237

February 16, 2018

RE: Utility Hurricane Preparedness and Restoration Comments

To Whom It May Concern,

Please accept this document and cover letter to serve as the City of Sarasota, Florida's response to the State of Florida Public Service Commission's letter of request: "Re; Utility Hurricane Preparedness and Restoration Comments" per Docket Number 20170215.

If you should have any further comments or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Richard Todd Kerkering, CEM, CFM, FPEM
Emergency Manager
Sarasota Police Department
2099 Adams Lane
Sarasota, FL 34237
Richard.kerkering@sarasotafl.gov
941-363-5811

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?**
 - Currently, the City of Sarasota works closely with Florida Power & Light and meets regularly to resolve any potential issues.
2. **What policies or practices can facilitate utility tree trimming and removal of problem trees outside public road right of ways or easements?**
 - Currently, the City of Sarasota works closely with Florida Power & Light and meets regularly to resolve any potential issues as it relates to the City's Tree Ordinance. We believe an education and/or information program for the customer would be beneficial in order to define who is responsible for what portion of the infrastructure as it relates to tree maintenance.
3. **Describe how coordination with local utilities could be improved with regard to tree trimming, planting, relocating or removing trees.**
 - We believe by continuing to stay involved at all levels of jurisdictions is the key. Encouraging utility providers to review and comment on changes to ordinances and code changes will keep the interaction flowing.

Undergrounding of Electric Facilities

4. **What policies or practices could facilitate undergrounding of existing overhead facilities?**
 - Provide incentives for residents/neighborhoods to bury existing overhead lines.
5. **What policies or practices could facilitate undergrounding electric facilities in construction of new electric facilities?**
 - Provide incentives to exceed code requirements.
6. **Describe how the process used to interact with utilities on projects to underground electric facilities could be improved.**
 - Provide long-term incentives.

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.**

- The City of Sarasota Emergency Management meets with County Emergency Management staff to confirm our list of critical facilities prior to the County's annual meeting with Florida Power & Light. This process has worked well to date, but is not without issues. The current problem is what citizens and government believe are critical facilities, and not understanding that regardless of the situation, any one County is still limited on their priority list based upon available resources. Potential problems may arise in the future as a result of growth when multiple jurisdictions compete for the limited spots on the priority list. In order to improve the process, a gauge or formula should be established to prioritize critical facilities.

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

- The City of Sarasota and Florida Power & Light have personnel assigned to the County emergency operations center for coordination issues. Our main two issues during Hurricane Irma were, immediate field crew assistance and utility locators. We have informed Florida Power & Light that we would like to have at a minimum one dedicated field crew to our City. We are not asking them to make repairs, but to safely remove their power lines from obstructions so that our field crews can make the necessary repairs to our infrastructure in a timely and safe manner. We also believe there needs to be an adjustment to the State Statute over financial responsibility when digging. Our City had dozens of water line breaks and when we contacted the underground locators we were told they would not respond. This forced our utility crews to dig by hand resulting in the untimely restoration of drinking water to our citizens. While TECO and Florida Power & Light did begin to respond later on September 11th, our utility department was leery of the potential financial responsibilities of striking other types of underground utilities.

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

- Our system in Sarasota County works well and we need to continue to maintain what we are doing. What is of a concern is, how much of this is a result of the right people doing the right thing, and as people change will the process change. We believe a formal process should be established based upon what is working well.