

Escambia River Electric Cooperative  
Report to the Florida Public Service Commission  
Pursuant to Rule 25-6.0343,F.A.C.  
Calendar Year 2023

**1) Introduction**

Escambia River Electric Cooperative is located in Santa Rosa County and serves the Northern parts of Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties. EREC serves approximately 13,355 meters with approximately 1,811 miles of distribution line and no transmission lines or structures. EREC owns all the distribution, which operates at 12,470 V, and our generation and transmission partner owns all the transmission and substations that are used to serve our customers.

**Contact Information**

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**2) Number of meters served in the calendar year 2023**

Escambia River Electric Cooperative served approximately 13,355 meters in 2023.

**3) Standards of Construction**

**a. National Electric Safety Code Compliance**

Construction standards, policies, guidelines, practices, and procedures at Escambia River Electric Cooperative comply with the National Electrical Safety Code (ANSI C-2) [NESC]. For electrical facilities constructed on or after February 1, 2017, the 2017 NESC applies. Electrical facilities constructed prior to February 1, 2017, are governed by the edition of NESC in effect at the time of the facility's initial construction.

**b. Extreme Wind Loading Standards**

Construction standards, policies, guidelines, practices, and procedures at Escambia River Electric Cooperative are guided by the extreme wind loading standards specified by Figure 250-2(d) of the 2017 edition of the

NESC for major planned work, including expansion, rebuild, or relocation of existing facilities, assigned on or after December 10, 2006.

- 1. New construction;**
- 2. Major planned work, including expansion, rebuild, or relocation of existing facilities, assigned on or after the effective date of this rule;**
- 3. Targeted critical infrastructure facilities and major thoroughfares taking into account political and geographical boundaries and other applicable operational considerations.**

**c. Flooding and Storm Surges**

Escambia River Electric Cooperative is a non-coastal utility; therefore, storm surge is not an issue.

**d. Safe and Efficient Access of New and Replacement Distribution Facilities**

Electrical construction standards, policies, guidelines, practices, and procedures at Escambia River Electric Cooperative provide for placement of new and replacement distribution facilities so as to facilitate safe and efficient access for installation and maintenance. Wherever new facilities are placed (i.e. front, back or side of property), all facilities are installed so that Escambia River Electric Cooperative's facilities are accessible by its crews and vehicles to ensure proper maintenance/repair is performed as expeditiously and safely as possible. Escambia River Electric Cooperative decides on a case-by-case basis whether existing facilities need to be relocated. If it is determined that facilities need to be relocated, they will be placed in the safest, most accessible area available.

**e. Attachments by Others**

The pole attachment agreements between Escambia River Electric Cooperative and third-party attachers include language which specifies that the attacher, not the cooperative, has the burden of assessing pole strength and safety, as set forth in the NESC, before they attach to the pole. Escambia River Electric Cooperative performs follow-up audits of attachments to ensure the attachment is properly installed, maintained, and meet NESC requirements for pole attachments.

**4) Facility Inspections**

**a. Describe the utility’s policies, guidelines, practices, and procedures for inspecting transmission and distribution lines, poles, and structures including, but not limited to, pole inspection cycles and pole selection process.**

Escambia River Electric Cooperative inspects each distribution pole on an 8 year cycle using visual, sound and boring techniques in accordance with RUS standards. Additionally, Escambia River Electric Cooperative uses data gathered during outages to proactively identify troubled lines, poles, equipment, and right-of-way. All of the data feeds back to our pole selection process, which provides a method to determine which poles not to purchase.

**b. The number and percentage of transmission and distribution inspections planned and completed.**

We planned for approximately 30,000 distribution poles or 91.6% to be visually inspected for the 2023 year. This inspection is in conjunction with Escambia River Electric Cooperative’s installation of fiber optic cable. The number of poles visually inspected in 2023 was 23,400 (71.5%) of distribution poles. Escambia River Electric plans to perform inspections and treat approximately 3953 poles in 2024 to maintain our 8-year cycle.

Escambia River Electric Cooperative does not own any transmission poles.

**c. Describe the number and percentage of transmission poles and structures and distribution poles failing inspection in 2023 and the reason for the failure.**

Approximately 2300 poles or 9.8% did not pass inspection. The most common reason for rejection was potential clearance violations for the fiber optic cable being added in the coming months. Due to safety precautions, there were also poles replaced during this inspection process due to rot.

- d. Describe the number and percentage of transmission poles and structures and distribution poles, by type and class of structure, replaced or for which remediation was taken after inspection in 2023, including a description of the remediation taken.**

Poles replaced were of various size and class, and have been or will be replaced with the appropriate size and class.

## **5) Vegetation Management**

- a. Describe the utility's policies, guidelines, practices, and procedures for vegetation management, including programs addressing appropriate planting, landscaping, and problem tree removal practices for vegetation management outside of road right-of-ways or easements, and an explanation as to why the utility believes its vegetation management practices are sufficient.**

Escambia River Electric Cooperative began a 3-year vegetation management cycle for all distribution lines. The primary reason for this is that the right-of-way is cleared 15 feet on both sides of 3 phase lines making a total clearance of 30 feet. While the crews are managing vegetation on a line they look for foreseeable future problems and take care of them at that time. If at anytime there is a problem tree or landscaping, Escambia River Electric Cooperative works with the home owner toward trimming, if possible, or removal, if necessary, while providing restitution if necessary for trees or landscaping that is outside the easement or right-of-ways. In all cases, our current policy is providing the necessary vegetation management needed to reduce outages due to vegetation.

- b. Describe the quantity, level, and scope of vegetation management planned and completed for transmission and distribution facilities in 2023.**

As described in question 5(a), Escambia River Electric Cooperative planned to manage vegetation on 33.3% or 550 miles of the overhead distribution power lines. In 2023, we managed vegetation of approximately 331 miles of distribution power lines, or 20%.