What is the Central to Western Mass Energy Improvement Project?

The Central to Western Mass Energy Improvement Project is proposed to rebuild the existing National Grid E5/F6 circuits throughout Central and Western Massachusetts due to asset condition and aging infrastructure. The Project will include right-of-way (ROW) access improvements where necessary, the replacement of structure foundations, structures, and wire along the approximately 70 miles of existing ROW. Additionally, the Project includes the installation of Optical Ground Wire (OPGW), a type of cable used to transmit data via optical fiber, while providing an additional layer of protection from lightning strikes and other electrical disturbances. These upgrades will allow for additional transmission capacity for future needs, including improving the reliability of the system in the Project area.

Where is this Line Located?

The project will traverse through the communities of Shelburne, Conway, Deerfield, Sunderland, Leverett, Shutesbury, Pelham, Belchertown, Ware, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, East Brookfield, Spencer, Leicester, Auburn, and Millbury, Massachusetts.

Why is this project needed?

The Central to Western Mass Energy Improvement Project is proposed to rebuild the existing National Grid E5/F6 circuits throughout Central and Western Massachusetts due to asset condition and aging infrastructure. The upgrades will allow for additional transmission capacity for future needs, including improving the reliability of the system in the Project area.

What will the new structures look like?

The project includes replacing existing steel double-circuit lattice structures, and 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines, with double-circuit steel monopole structures and transmission lines designed to operate at 115kV standards. Proposed structure heights will vary. In some cases, new structures may be approximately twenty feet taller than existing structures.

What voltage will the new line operate at?

The new transmission lines are designed to operate at 115kV standards but will continue to operate at 69kV until future needs arise.

How wide will the Right-of-Way be with the new transmission line?

The E5/F6 ROW is currently maintained to be clear of tall woody vegetation to approximately 100 feet wide on average throughout the corridor. NEP is proposing to remove trees in select locations to maintain approximately 125 feet of its existing ROW.

• The Quabbin Switch Tap ROW is currently maintained to be clear of tall woody vegetation to approximately 80 feet wide on average throughout the corridor. NEP is proposing to remove trees in select locations to maintain the 80-foot width. Where the Quabbin Switch Tap is located on NEP fee-owned property, approximately 100 feet of the 190-foot width will require selective tree removal.

• The Deerfield Taps ROW is currently maintained clear of tall woody vegetation to approximately 100 feet wide on average throughout the corridor. NEP is proposing to remove trees in select locations to maintain the entire 125-foot-wide ROW.

What is the current schedule for this work?

Construction is anticipated to begin in 2029 and estimated to take several years to complete. This project requires multiple permit approvals consisting of federal, state, and local permits, so the construction schedule may be subject to change. Construction crews will not be working on the entire line at the same time. They will begin on the eastern section working their way along the line. Each structure will be visited intermittently to complete each phase of construction, so you may see different crews come and go.

Will this project cause any power outages or disruptions?

No customer power outages or disruptions are anticipated in relation to the construction of this project. Customers may experience power outages resulting from storms or other weather events; however, these outages would be events unrelated to construction of the project.

What do I need to do if I have installed fencing, pipes, conduits, septic system, a shed or other structures within the ROW?

Such items encroaching within the ROW that have not gone through a prior approval may/will need to be relocated as they will impede our ability to safely access, install, maintain, improve, and construct within the easement/ROW.

How will I know if and which trees will be removed?

As mentioned, NEP is proposing to remove trees in select locations to maintain approximately 125 feet of its existing ROW, so trees and limbs encroaching within this width will be removed unless otherwise specified. Removal of such trees will improve safety and reliability by decreasing the risk of outages that typically occur from trees falling during storm events.

Additionally, access roads may also require widening resulting in subsequent removal of trees and vegetation required to accommodate modern construction vehicles, newer tower structures, and methods currently in use, which has changed considerably from the period of time when the E5/F6 transmission line was originally constructed.

What type of equipment will I see from my home?

For the installation of new structures there will be large construction equipment near and around the base of where the structure will be. Equipment will include, but not limited to concrete trucks, excavators, cranes, and dozers. We may consider using a helicopter in some areas, which will allow us to complete the work more efficiently, minimize disruption to the surrounding environment and reduce emissions.

Where can I find up-to-date information with regards to this project?

We will continue to update this website (www.cmatowmaenergy.com*)* as the project progresses and will continue to send project information via mail to project abutters. Please feel free to let us know if you would like to receive project information by mail if you have not received our mailers. You can also call our project hotline at **888-431-3536** or email info@CMAtoWMAenergy.com and member of our project engagement team will reach out to you to further discuss your inquiry or concerns.