UI
An AVANGRID Company

TRANSMISSION LINE REBUILDS
Milvon to West River
(Milford to New Haven)

Frequently Asked Questions About Our Milvon to West River Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild Project

What is the Milvon to West River Railroad Transmission Line (T-Line) Rebuild Project?

The United Illuminating Company is undertaking a series of related system enhancement projects – known as the Railroad T-Line Rebuild projects that will separate UI's transmission lines from the railroad catenary structures which were installed over 100 years ago. This project is the Milvon to West River Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild Project (Project). The Project work area will include the overhead transmission line assets, located in the railroad corridor, between the Cities of Milford and New Haven, Connecticut. The Project will involve removing 115-kV lines from the railroad catenary structures and rebuilding the lines on double-circuit monopoles for approximately 9.5 miles between UI's Milvon Substation in Milford and West River Substation in New Haven.

What is the purpose of this Project?

The proposed Project will help improve the structural integrity, and reliability of UI's transmission system. The rebuilt 115-kV lines will conform to current industry and UI standards and will be designed to withstand extreme weather conditions, such as Category 3 hurricane wind loads.

Where will the Project be located?

The Project will involve work generally near the railroad tracks, within and along the surrounding railroad corridor, which is owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT).

Project activities will include the removal of the existing 115-kV facilities from the railroad catenary structures, as well as the installation of the new 115-kV transmission lines (consisting of monopoles, new electric conductors, and optical groundwire) and the reconnection of the rebuilt 115-kV lines to UI's five existing substations adjacent to the 9.5-mile segment of the railroad corridor.

The rebuilt 115-kV lines, which will be located primarily within CT DOT property north of the railroad tracks, will extend for about 5.03 miles in Milford, 0.46 miles in Orange, 3.86 miles in West Haven, and 0.10 miles in New Haven.

In some areas, UI will have to acquire new permanent easements from adjacent landowners. UI also will need new temporary easements to install work pads and access roads – as required to remove the existing 115-kV facilities and install the new 115-kV lines. Some of these work pads and access roads will have to be located outside of the CT DOT property.

When will Project construction start and when will it be completed?

The actual start of construction will depend on UI's receipt of all regulatory approvals for the Project. The construction of the Project will be divided into four segments: West River to Elmwest, Elmwest to Allings Crossing, Allings Crossing to Woodmont and Woodmont to Milvon. UI's current plans call for Project construction on the first segment to begin in late 2023. As the work on each segment is near completion, construction on the next segment will start. The final segment is expected to be completed by fall of 2028, with some final restoration activities expected to extend into 2029. However, in any one area along the 9.5-mile route, construction and access requirements will be intermittent based upon stage and segment.

What hours during day/night will construction occur?

UI will perform construction activities consistent with approvals from the Connecticut Siting Council. For this Project, UI must carefully coordinate construction with CT DOT to avoid or minimize conflicts with rail operations. As a result, UI anticipates that construction activities will be scheduled during both daytime and nighttime hours, as appropriate to the type and location of work.

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What can we expect during construction?

Along each of the four segments, Project construction will involve a series of sequential activities, including surveying/staking work areas; removing vegetation from work and conductor zone areas where necessary; establishing access roads and work pads with the appropriate sediment and erosion controls; installing new structures and conductors, connecting the rebuilt 115-kV lines to the UI substations; removing the existing 115-kV facilities from the railroad catenary structures; and restoring areas affected by construction.

Access roads, which will be primarily temporary and in some cases permanent, will be required to reach each new structure site, as well as the catenary structures from which UI's existing transmission facilities will be removed. To safely perform construction, work pads around the proposed structure locations will also be required to perform construction activities at each site. In addition, vegetation removal, including trees, will be required in certain locations. Some access roads and work pads will remain permanently to facilitate UI's operation and maintenance of the rebuilt 115-kV lines. Restoration of the areas affected by construction is expected to proceed by segment, after the new 115-kV facilities are installed and the existing facilities are removed.

How long are these Project modifications expected to meet the region's needs?

The underlying infrastructure for the Project is designed to have an approximate 40 year service life.

What kind of construction equipment will be involved in the Project?

Various types of construction equipment and vehicles will be required to complete the Project work. For the most part, the equipment expected to be used on this Project is typical of any major construction effort. The type and number of trucks and equipment at Project sites will depend on the construction stage. In general, Project equipment will include vacuum trucks, drill rigs, cranes, excavators, tri-axle dump trucks and other vehicles.

How will nearby property owners be informed about Project activities and schedules?

Where our work will impact abutting properties, property owners will be contacted, and existing conditions will be documented in advance of construction.

UI will post construction updates on its website. Outreach activities to abutting properties may include: door hangers, signage or direct contact by Construction managers.

Will you be cutting down trees during the Project?

Yes, UI will have to remove trees in the Project area, including along the CT DOT corridor and in certain locations adjacent to the CT DOT property. UI has a responsibility to protect its transmission system from trees and vegetation that could pose a threat to it due to natural encroachment or during storms. UI and its contractors follow established vegetation management protocols within both the utility and CT DOT corridors. Should the need arise to trim or remove additional trees on abutting properties, in order to protect the transmission system or access the work locations, we will notify those property owners and work with them on an individual basis.

Will trees be replanted?

Within the CT DOT corridor, and in areas where UI acquires new permanent easement adjacent to the railroad corridor, trees will not be replanted in accordance with the Transmission Vegetation Management Protocol due to the long term need to provide safe and dependable service.

How many transmission poles will be installed?

During this project, we will install approximately 160 galvanized steel "monopoles" – transmission poles rising from a single footing.

How tall will the new monopoles be?

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The heights of the proposed monopole structures will vary from 70 feet to 170 feet tall depending on structure location and span length. The typical span length between structures ranges from approximately 300 and 400 feet. However, in some locations, longer spans (up to 800 feet) were warranted to minimize impacts to environmental resources (e.g., wetlands, culturally sensitive resources) and to nearby land uses (e.g., parking lots, roadways, railroad spurs, steep terrain).

Where will the new monopoles be installed?

The majority of the monopoles will be constructed north of the railroad tracks, within the existing CT DOT corridor.

What will the new monopoles look like?

Will there be power outages during construction?

UI customers should not experience any power outages as a result of construction.

What effects will electric and magnetic fields (EMF) have on those living near the power lines?

Based on the results of investigations performed by an EMF consultant retained by UI, EMF levels at the new UI easement edge are expected to be far lower than internationally recognized safety standards for EMF exposure. UI has designed the rebuilt 115-kV lines to include EMF Best Management Practices, as detailed by the Connecticut Siting Council.

Will you need to expand any rights of way?

Yes. UI and CT DOT have an agreement regarding the co-location of the transmission lines within the railroad corridor. Most of the new monopoles for the rebuilt 115-kV lines also will be located on CT DOT property. However, in areas where the CT DOT corridor is not wide enough to accommodate the rebuilt transmission lines, UI will have to acquire permanent easements from the owners of properties that abut the CT DOT land.

Will I have access to my driveway and/or business?

Yes. UI will strive to minimize any impacts to residences and businesses in the vicinity of the construction area. UI will coordinate with residents or businesses for access as needed for construction.

If I live along the project route, how long can I expect to have construction in my backyard, or adjacent to my property?

Each construction site will have specific details appropriate for the work in the area. The work will progress as quickly as possible given the scheduling and site-specific parameters. Individual property owners in work areas will be notified of site-specific details based on when the construction activities are within the vicinity of their property. Through the construction phases, intermittent access may be required.

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How will UI be communicating to their customers throughout the construction process?

Customer communications for railroad corridor abutters in the project area will include initial notification letters, as well as a section on UI's website that will contain up-to-date information on construction news, progress, and potential delays.

Project Outreach Telephone hotline:
888.848.3697

Dedicated website:
UIRailroadTLineUpgrades.com

The hotline number is for use by any resident or business with questions regarding the Milvon to West River Railroad Transmission Line Rebuild project. UI representatives will also provide property owners and businesses who will be affected by the projects with information on an individual basis as it becomes necessary and available.

How will this project benefit the area?

The project will enhance the reliability and resiliency of the electric transmission grid by replacing the 70-year old transmission assets presently located on the railroad catenary structures. The rebuilt 115-kV lines will be designed to meet current national electric standards and UI standards, which include the ability to withstand extreme weather conditions (e.g., hurricane category 3 loads).

Who will pay for the projects?

Because this project will increase the capacity and reliability for the entire New England grid system, the Independent System Operator-New England (the regional transmission system organization that operates the transmission grid) will review the costs and determine how the costs will be shared across the New England region.

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