



UI

An AVANGRID Company

UNITED ILLUMINATING Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild

Frequently Asked Questions About Our Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line 115-kV Rebuild Project

What is the Fairfield to Congress Railroad Transmission Line (T-Line) 115-kV Rebuild Project (the Project)?

The United Illuminating Company (“UI”) is undertaking a series of related system enhancement Projects – known as the Railroad T-Line Rebuild Projects – that will remove UI’s 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines from the top of the catenary support columns that span the Metro-North Railroad (MNR) tracks. The railroad catenary structures were installed over 100 years ago; the UI transmission lines and associated supports and hardware were installed on the catenary structures in the 1960s.

The Project work area will include the overhead transmission line assets, located in the railroad corridor, in the Town of Fairfield and the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut. The Project will involve removing the existing 115-kV lines from the railroad catenary structures and rebuilding the lines on independent monopoles for approximately 7.3 miles from the western portion of Fairfield to UI’s Congress Street Substation in Bridgeport. In addition, the Project will replace approximately 0.23 mile of UI’s transmission lines that extend from the railroad corridor to UI’s Ash Creek Substation in Bridgeport. In addition, the Project will connect the rebuilt 115-kV lines to UI’s Resco, Pequonnock, and Congress Street substations, all in Bridgeport.

What is the purpose of this Project?

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

Where will the Project be located?

The Project will involve work within and along both sides of the railroad corridor, which is owned by the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CT DOT). Approximately 4.7 miles of the railroad corridor is in Fairfield, with 2.7 miles in Bridgeport.

In the Project area, UI’s 115-kV lines are located along both sides of the railroad. However, in Fairfield, only the southern 115-kV line remains on the railroad catenary structures: the 115-kV transmission line north of the tracks was constructed in the 1990s using independent monopoles as part of a new transmission line connecting UI infrastructure to the Eversource Energy owned transmission system.

For this Project, UI will remove the remaining 115-kV facilities from the railroad catenary structures and will rebuild the 115-kV transmission lines on single- or double-circuit monopoles, with new conductors and hardware. The rebuilt lines will also be connected to UI’s four existing substations near the railroad corridor in Bridgeport. The rebuilt 115-kV lines will be situated either south or north of the railroad tracks (depending on location). The new monopoles will be installed either within the CT DOT corridor or on properties near the railroad corridor.

As a result, 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 rebuilt 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 construction schedule will depend on UI’s receipt of all regulatory approvals for the Project. UI’s current plans call for Project construction to begin in Q1 2025, with work performed in segments along the railroad corridor. Overall, construction is expected to be completed in mid-2028, with some final restoration activities expected to extend into 2029. However, in any one area construction and access requirements will be intermittent based upon the construction sequence.

What hours during day/night will construction occur?

UI will perform construction in accordance with the work hours approved by the Connecticut Siting Council. These approved work hours will reflect UI's extensive coordination with CT DOT/MNR, because construction must be carefully scheduled to avoid or minimize conflicts with rail operations. As a result, UI anticipates that construction activities will be scheduled during both daytime and night hours, as well as on weekends, as appropriate to the type and location of work.

What can we expect during construction?

Project construction will involve a series of sequential activities, including surveying/staking work areas; removing vegetation from work areas and conductor clearance zones where necessary; establishing access roads and work pads (and installing appropriate sediment and erosion controls around such areas); 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 will be required to reach each new monopole site, as well as the catenary structures from which UI's existing transmission facilities will be removed. To safely perform construction, work pads will be required around each proposed monopole structure location, as well as adjacent to the railroad catenary structures where UI's infrastructure will be removed.

In addition, vegetation, including trees, will be removed 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 Project is designed to have a minimum service life of approximately 40 years.

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 in advance of construction. Notifications to property owners in the Project area may include door hangers, signage, or personal communication by team members. UI will also post construction updates on its website – UIRailroadTLineUpgrades.com

Will UI have to remove trees for the Project?

Yes, UI will have to remove trees from Project areas, 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 risk due to natural encroachment or during storms. UI and its contractors will follow established Transmission Vegetation Management Protocols within both the UI's easement and CT DOT corridor. 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, UI 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 near the railroad corridor, trees will not be replanted in accordance with UI's Transmission Vegetation Management Protocols. Due to the long-term need to provide safe and dependable service, tall-growing trees will not be permitted in the vicinity of the rebuilt 115-kV lines. However, shrubs and other vegetation that are compatible with the operation of the overhead transmission lines would be allowed to reestablish.

FAQs

Transmission Line 115-kV

How many transmission poles will be installed?

During this Project, approximately 100 galvanized steel monopoles will be installed.

How tall will the new monopoles be?

The heights of the proposed monopole structures will typically vary from 95 feet to 145 feet, 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., watercourses) and to nearby land uses and the built environment (e.g., parking lots, roadways, railroad spurs, elevated areas of the railroad tracks, buildings, underground utilities).

On the eastern portion of the Project, near UI's Congress Street Substation in Bridgeport, two monopoles, each up to 200 feet tall, will be required to support the 115-kV lines for a 1,450-foot span over the Pequonnock River and I-95.

Where will the new monopoles be installed?

The new monopoles will be installed south of the railroad tracks through Fairfield. In Bridgeport, the monopoles will be installed both south and north of the railroad tracks depending on the availability of space next to or within the CT DOT corridor.

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 and UI proposes to install the rebuilt 115-kV lines wherever possible on CT DOT property. Within the Town of Fairfield, most of the new monopoles for the rebuilt 115-kV lines will be located on CT DOT property, south of and adjacent to the railroad tracks. However, in areas where the CT DOT corridor is not wide enough to accommodate the rebuilt transmission lines or conductor clearances for the lines, UI will have to acquire permanent easements from the owners of properties that abut the CT DOT land. Within the City of Bridgeport, the majority of the railroad tracks are elevated, supported by stone retaining walls. The new monopoles cannot be located on top of the retaining walls or where the railroad corridor is narrow. As such, the new monopoles will have to be located on private property north or south of the railroad tracks and UI will acquire permanent easements from the owners of such properties.

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.

If my property or business borders the CT DOT railroad corridor, how long can I expect to have construction in my backyard, or adjacent to my property or business?

Project construction will be performed sequentially, with separate crews performing different tasks, such as surveying, vegetation clearing, access road/work pad construction, monopole installation, and wire stringing, as well as removing the existing UI facilities from the railroad catenary structures. 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 will be within the vicinity of their property. Through the construction phases, intermittent access may be required.

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 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.

How will UI communicate to their customers throughout the construction process?

Customer communications for 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.

Who will pay for the Project?

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.

How can I find more information from UI about the Project?

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 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.