

Springmaid 100kV Transmission Line Open House

Project Need

Impact of the Transmission Network

Switch on the lights and you're completing a circuit that connects your light fixtures to the wires that serve your house, to the larger wires that serve your neighborhood and, ultimately, to an interstate-like network of high-capacity wires that deliver energy over great distances to communities. This complex network – the electric energy transmission system – is critical to our economy and quality of life.

The Project and Location

The Central Electric Power Cooperative, Inc. (Central) is committed to providing safe and reliable power to our customers in York County. To meet that commitment and the growing energy needs of the community, we must build a new transmission line in the Springmaid area of Fort Mill.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is a transmission line?

It's a system of structures, wires, insulators, and associated hardware that carries electric energy from one point to another – operated at relatively high voltages – in an electric power system. Transmission lines, also known as overhead power lines, can transmit large quantities of energy over long distances and are supported by poles.

What does the technical term "load" mean?

In the power distribution system, the load refers to the building or equipment using the power.

What does Central mean when it refers to reliability?

Electric system reliability is the ability of the electric system to supply the power demand and energy requirements of customers always, considering scheduled and unscheduled outages of power lines and power plants, as well as the ability of the electrical system to withstand sudden unanticipated disturbances such as electric short circuits.

What is a substation?

A substation is an assembly of equipment through which electrical energy is passed for transmission, distribution, interconnection, transformation and conversion of switching. Broadly speaking, substations are classified as transmission substations (high-voltage levels) and distribution substations (lower-voltage levels).

Why are you planning so far in advance?

Just like community leaders plan to build new roads and schools to stay ahead of growth, Central must also plan to ensure the energy system is as reliable tomorrow as it is today. Central knows our customers, the local cooperatives

that provide power to homes and businesses count on us. At Central, we forecast years in advance to ensure we have the infrastructure needed to reliably meet our customers' energy needs 24-hours-a-day.

Can you put the lines underground?

Central considers the option of building underground transmission lines for all new projects. However, analysis has shown underground transmission lines are not better than overhead transmission lines because of the extremely high cost to construct and maintain underground lines as well as comply with environmental requirements.

As a regulated utility, Central is required to build infrastructure in the most cost-effective manner to minimize costs to customers. Underground transmission lines can be five to 10 times more expensive than overhead transmission lines. Costs can also exceed this range depending on the final route selected and various other variables.

Underground transmission lines can fail for a variety of reasons, including a manufacturing defect substandard construction or an accidental dig-in. Repairing underground transmission lines is difficult due to access and typically takes much longer than an overhead line. Because a transmission outage can affect thousands of customers, some customers could experience power interruptions for one to two weeks. In addition, building underground infrastructure can significantly impact the environment due to excavation (e.g., wetlands, trees), traffic and commerce. It can also potentially negatively interact with other underground utilities.



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What do “overbuilding” and “underbuilding” mean in the construction of overhead power lines?

Overbuilding is the construction of a transmission line that spans over or on top of existing distribution infrastructure (lines, poles and associated equipment). Underbuilding is the opposite; it's the construction of distribution lines under or below existing transmission infrastructure.

If the transmission line crosses my property, what can I have underneath it?

Low-growing agricultural crops may be planted and harvested within an easement. A property owner can build a fence across or along the easement, if it includes a gate that is at least 16 feet wide to allow Central's trucks to access the easement. Before installing any structure within an easement, the owner usually must receive permission through Central's Right-of-Way Use program. During construction of transmission lines, access to the easement may be limited, or some items within the easement may need to be removed or relocated to prevent potential damage. Existing fences may remain in place, but Central may install a gate or temporarily remove the fence during construction or maintenance of the transmission lines.

Does Central have the necessary land rights to build these new transmission lines?

After we select the preferred route for the new line, we will negotiate with landowners to obtain the required easements – or land rights – for construction and work with town officials to acquire the necessary permits.

What gives Central the right to cut my trees, some of which may not even be within the easement?

Central acquires easements from property owners along the selected route. These easements grant the company the right to clear trees and vegetation that pose a threat to the safety of the public or to the reliability of the transmission line.

Trees that exceed height requirements in or near the right-of-way; trees that are dead, dying, diseased or damaged; trees that are leaning toward the conductors; and trees that are otherwise unsafe or pose a risk to the facilities are considered danger trees. Danger trees could be located inside or outside of the Central's right-of-way and will be removed.

What benefits will my community receive from this project?

Along with increasing capacity to serve your energy needs adequately, the transmission line will enhance the reliability of the electric service.

Do you anticipate any power outages during this project?

We do not anticipate any power outages as a result of this work.

What about electric and magnetic fields, or EMF?

Many studies have been performed regarding EMF from power lines, household appliances and other devices with an electric current. You can find more information on our website at cepci.org/Springmaid.

What if I have other questions?

You can call us toll-free at (803) 888-1060. Leave a message and we'll return your call, or you may email us at Springmaid@cepci.org.

When will construction begin?

The transmission line construction is anticipated to begin in 2022. It is scheduled to be complete by Spring 2023. This schedule is subject to change.

How will you choose the route for this line?

Central selects a route for transmission lines using objective criteria. Our goal is to find a route that minimizes social and environmental impacts, meets the engineering, construction and maintenance requirements of the project and minimizes costs to all our customers.

