

POLK-BURNETT ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Policy No.: M-40

Subject: **Member Requests for a Specific Type of Primary Power Line Construction**

Objective: To identify member and Cooperative responsibilities and provide direction for Cooperative employees when a member requests a specific type of construction (primary overhead or underground) either for new or existing facilities.

Background: Throughout the year, the Cooperative receives requests from members for a specific type of construction for various reasons some examples being:

- Avoidance of cutting/removal of a member's trees.
- Construction of a new building conflicts with existing facilities.
- Personal preferences.
- Conflicts with existing underground facilities, landscaping, difficult terrain and waterways.

It is recognized by the Cooperative that underground construction methods are generally requested by the members of the Cooperative due to the fact they are more aesthetically pleasing. With this in mind, this policy intends to set forth an opportunity for the members to affect their preference.

Policy: As in past years, the Cooperative has constructed power lines using both overhead and underground construction methods, each offering differing benefits under certain circumstances. The Cooperative will analyze each request on a case by case basis, considering usual and customary line design principles and practices as to the determination of construction type with the ultimate objective being that it best serves the membership as a whole in providing the most safe, reliable service at the least possible cost. The request will be honored if: (1) feasible, (2) the member(s) fulfill their responsibilities as outlined in this policy in a timely fashion, and (3) any cost differential from what was originally planned for and what is needed to complete a request will be borne by the requesting members(s).

The following are some, but not all, considerations taken into account in the determination of the type of construction method to be used: obtaining right-of-way easements, present and future loading of the line, overcurrent protection, various agency codes/rules/regulations, potential future connections, aesthetics, reliability, safety, necessary grounding points, operating flexibility, topography, right-of-way vegetation, existing foreign utilities, repair accessibility, relationship to existing foreign easements, waterways and wetlands, member property impacts, and electric rate costs to the members as a whole.

**Member Opportunity:**

1. Once the Cooperative has determined the method of power line construction, either for the replacement of an existing power line or for a new power line, the member(s) of record affected by said line will be given notice of such intent.
2. The members shall be given a reasonable amount of time to respond with their concerns. If, after the Cooperative provides a rough estimate of the additional cost of a different type of construction method, one or more members seriously wish to investigate a

different type of construction , said member(s) must contact the Cooperative for information on the relevant process. At this point if more than one member is involved, a spokesperson designated by the interested members and acting on their behalf shall be chosen to represent them and all future correspondence with the Cooperative should be through that individual.

3. Prior to commencement of any work performed, the responsibilities of the member spokesperson include, but is not limited to; contacting all affected members to determine their involvement, acting in the best interests of the affected members, securing necessary easements, conveying information from affected members to the Cooperative and vice versa, securing necessary deposits and payments, meeting all other requirements as directed by the cooperative, and resolving any disputes.
4. A deposit shall be required by the Cooperative for labor and equipment costs charged for preliminary line design and cost estimating. Labor and equipment costs expended during the designing stages of the project will be deducted from this deposit with the remainder being refunded if the project fails to go through as desired by the group. If the project goes through as desired by the group, any remaining amount will be applied to that portion of the cost the group is responsible for.
5. Once an additional cost is known, the member(s) wishing such construction of choice will be responsible for the full payment of said cost prior to any construction being performed. This payment is a contribution in aid of construction and the ownership and control of the power line will remain solely with the Cooperative.
6. The Cooperative is responsible to work with each affected location and within reason, will try to accommodate their wishes as to the location of the Cooperative's facilities. However, construction costs, accessibility, and future operation, maintenance, and replacement of the facilities will be priority factors in the determination of the construction type and placement of Cooperative facilities.
7. Following a reasonable amount of time, the proposed line will be placed into the construction schedule or delayed based upon the member(s) desire to move forward with the construction method of choice.
8. For major feeder lines, as determined by the Cooperative, a different construction method shall not be less than one (1) mile section lengths of a proposed line unless otherwise, based upon a non-typical situation, determined by the Cooperative. For single-phase power lines this may be reduced to 1,000 linear feet. This distance may be reduced if the proposed work location is on the end of a line or if it is a short radial tap. This will help to avoid the problem of a line being constructed using two different types of construction methods in shorter sections of line that would result in additional operational costs and reduced reliability for the members as a whole.
9. Nothing contained in this policy shall be construed to require the Cooperative to delay the placement of lines or other construction activities deemed necessary within the sole and absolute discretion of the Cooperative.
10. This policy can be modified in part or whole at any time at the discretion of the board of directors.