FILED March 30, 2016 INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

STATE OF INDIANA

INDIANA UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

INVESTIGATION BY THE INDIANA)	
UTILITY REGULATORY COMMISSION,)	
UNDER IC §§ 8-1-2-58 AND 59, TO)	
INVESTIGATE ELECTRIC UTILITY)	
TREE-TRIMMING PRACTICES AND)	
TARIFFS RELATING TO SERVICE)	CAUSE NO. 43663
QUALITY IN THE STATE OF INDIANA.)	
)	
RESPONDENTS: ALL INDIANA)	
JURISDICTIONAL ELECTRIC)	
UTILITIES)	

DUKE ENERGY INDIANA'S SUBMISSION OF 2015 VEGETATION MANAGEMENT REPORT AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Respondent Duke Energy, Inc. hereby submits its 2015 Vegetation Management Report

and Vegetation Management Plan in accordance with the November 30, 2010 Order in this

Cause.

Respectfully submitted,

DUKE ENERGY INDIANA, INC.

PAIL By \ IIII D Counsel for Duke Energy Indiana, Inc.

Melanie D. Price, Atty. No. 21786-49 Kelley A. Karn, Atty. No. 22417-29 Steven J. Moss, Atty. No. 9234-29 Duke Energy Business Services LLC 1000 East Main Street Plainfield, Indiana 46168 (317) 838-1254 (telephone) (317) 838-1254 (telephone) (317) 838-1842 (facsimile) melanie.price@duke-energy.com kelley.karn@duke-energy.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing submission was delivered

electronically this 30th day of March, 2015, to the following:

OUCC

David Stippler Randall C. Helmen Office of Utility Consumer Counselor Suite 1500 South 115 W. Washington Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 Email: <u>dstippler@oucc.in.gov</u> Email: <u>rhelmen@oucc.in.gov</u>

IMPA

Kristina Kern Wheeler Indiana Municipal Power Agency 11620 North College Avenue Carmel, Indiana 46032 Email: <u>kwheeler@impa.com</u>

VECTREN SOUTH

Robert E. Heidorn Southern Indiana Gas & Electric Company, Inc. d/b/a Vectren Energy Delivery of Indiana, Inc. One Vectren Square Evansville, Indiana 47702 Email: <u>rheidorn@vectren.com</u>

NIPSCO

Christopher C. Earle NiSource Corporate Services 101 W. Ohio Street, Suite 1707 Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 Email: <u>cearle@nisource.com</u>

<u>IP&L</u>

Teresa E. Morton Barnes & Thornburg LLP 11 South Meridian Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 Email: <u>tmorton@btlaw.com</u>

IMPA and IMEA

Michael B. Cracraft Steven W. Krohne Ice Miller One American Square Suite 2900 Indianapolis, Indiana 46282 Email: michael.cracraft@icemiller.com steven.krohne@icemiller.com

VECTREN SOUTH

Robert M. Glennon Robert Glennon &Assoc., P.C. 3697 N. Co. Rd. 500 E. Danville, Indiana 46122 Email: <u>glennon@iquest.net</u>

<u>WVPA</u>

Randolph G. Holt Wabash Valley Power Association, Inc. 722 N. High School Road Indianapolis, Indiana 46224 Email: <u>R_holt@wvpa.com</u>

JEROME E. POLK

Polk & Associates, LLC 6300 Falconsgate Avenue Davie, FL 33331-2928 Email: jpolk@polk-law.com

<u>I&M</u>

Jeffrey M. Peabody Barnes & Thornburg LLP 11 South Meridian Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 Email: jpeabody@btlaw.com

INDIANA STATEWIDE

Charles W. Ritz III Parr Richey Obremskey Frandsen & Patterson LLP 225 W. Main Street P.O. Box 668 Lebanon, Indiana 46052 Email: <u>critz@parrlaw.com</u>

HOOSIER

Jeffrey W. Hagedorn Huber, Goffinet & Hagedorn 727 Main Street Tell City, Indiana 47586 Email: jhagedorn@psci.net

By <u>Ulel au D</u> PAIN Counsel for Duke Energy Indiana, Inc.

Melanie D. Price, Atty. No. 21786-49 Kelley A. Karn, Atty. No. 22417-29 Steven J. Moss, Atty. No. 9234-29 Duke Energy Business Services LLC 1000 East Main Street Plainfield, Indiana 46168 (317) 838-1254 (telephone) (317) 838-1254 (telephone) (317) 838-1842 (facsimile) melanie.price@duke-energy.com kelley.karn@duke-energy.com



Duke Energy Indiana

Annual Vegetation Management Report for Calendar Year 2015 Cause No. 43663

2015 Vegetation Management – Financial Report (Budget Vs. Actual)

2015 Original Budget: \$31,443,854

2015 Actual Expenditures: \$30,781,504

The above reflects the expenditures associated with the vegetation management program to support approximately 16,000 distribution miles and approximately 6,000 transmission miles in the State of Indiana. The above dollars exclude major event days as defined by the major event day methodology detailed in "IEEE Std. 1366, IEEE Guide for Electric Power Distribution Reliability Indices".

2015 Vegetation Management Reliability Report (Tree SAIFI):

Total Tree System Average Interruption Frequency "SAIFI": 0.20

Total Indiana SAIFI from all causes for 2015 is 1.03. Tree SAIFI was approximately 19% of total Indiana SAIFI.

Tree SAIFI is defined as System Average Interruption Frequency Index for tree related events only. The SAIFI index is the average number of interruptions a customer would expect to have over a given period of time that were caused by trees in the State of Indiana.

The above indices exclude major event days as defined by the major event day methodology detailed in "*IEEE Std. 1366, IEEE Guide for Electric Power Distribution Reliability Indices*".

2015 Vegetation Management Customer Complaints Report

With regard to customer complaints, Duke Energy tracks in detail tree trimming and vegetation management inquiries or complaints that are filed with the Commission. For the purpose of this annual report, Duke Energy Indiana has included the customer concerns that were not resolved in the field and were escalated to management for resolution. Duke Energy Indiana had 19 customer complaints related to tree trimming/vegetation management; 18 were informal complaints to the Consumer Affairs Division that have been reviewed and closed. There was one complaint referred to management, which was reviewed as noted and closed.

Duke Energy Indiana uses advance customer notification as well as its Call Center to minimize and manage inquiries related to tree trimming and vegetation management. These inquires may be passed on to the Vegetation Management team to help further inform or educate customers regarding tree trimming questions and concerns. Through these processes, inquiries were generally resolved in the field.

Complaints Referred to the Commission

For the year 2015, Duke Energy had 17 informal complaints to the Consumer Affairs Division related to vegetation management. Below is a brief description of the complaints and resolutions.

Complaint	Description	Resolution	Status
1	Customer stated that they had trees trimmed without prior notice and were concerned that a large portion was cut from two maple trees.	Customer log shows a door hanger was left. Two large maples sit between her house and the power line; they were trimmed to arboricultural standards. Customer insisted trees be topped which we did at her request. She was then satisfied.	Closed
2	Customer was concerned about the pruning of a particular tree.	Duke Energy discussed tree pruning with customer, work resumed and issue resolved.	Closed
3	Customer was concerned that a tree was being cut down versus being trimmed.	Duke Energy met with customer to discuss; trees were removed and issue resolved.	Closed
4	Customer concerned about the use of herbicide.	Duke Energy contacted customer and issue resolved.	Closed

Complaint	Description	Resolution	Status
5	Customer was concerned debris was not removed after tree removals to improve reliability.	Duke Energy met with customer, cleared debris, and issue was resolved.	Closed
6	Customer concerned about inadequate debris cleanup following the removal of tree that had fallen on a power line.	Duke Energy met with customer, removed excess debris, and issue was resolved.	Closed
7	Customer wanted clean-up of debris after storm event.	Duke Energy met with customer and explained the storm debris clean-up policy.	Closed
8	Customer said he did not receive customer notification.	Duke Energy records reflect that customer was provided routine notice.	Closed
9	Customer was upset that requested tree trimming had not been completed.	Duke Energy met with customer, removed trees as requested, and issue was resolved.	Closed
10	Customer had concerns regarding easement rights and service.	Duke Energy met with customer to discuss easement rights and concern was resolved.	Closed
11	Customer concerned that access to electrical line clearing was needed through his property.	Duke Energy met with customer and issue was resolved.	Closed
12	Customer alleging Duke Energy removed trees without easement rights and requested compensation.	Duke Energy investigated. Customer permission had been obtained prior to tree removal.	Closed
13	Property owner was concerned with tree trimming along roadside and stated trucks blocked the roadway.	Duke Energy met with customer to apologize for inconvenience.	Closed
14	Customer stated herbicide used at substation adjacent to his field killed two acres of crops.	Duke Energy contacted customer and issue was resolved.	Closed
15	Property owner concerned about debris left behind after recent tree clearing.	Duke Energy contacted customer and performed remaining cleanup work.	Closed

Complaint	Description	Resolution	Status
16	Customer concerned about tree limbs lying across service lines.	Duke Energy worked with customer and issue was resolved to customer's satisfaction.	Closed
17	Customer had concerns regarding tree removal on the easement adjacent to her property.	Duke Energy met with customer to discuss. Concern was resolved.	Closed
18	Customer complained about service outage due to storms.	Appeal of Commission Consumer Affairs Decision ongoing.	Open

Complaints Referred to Management

There was one complaint that was not quickly resolved in the field and was referred to manager level for resolution. Below is a brief description of this complaint and resolution.

Complaint	Description	Resolution	Status
1	Customer complained brush was not chipped.	Duke Energy returned to property to pick up brush. Customer was hostile; crews left and filed police report.	Closed



Midwest Vegetation Management Program



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SECTION 1 – GOAL, OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

Duke Energy's vegetation management goal is to balance the need for safe and reliable utility service with safe and cost-effective vegetation management practices.

The primary objective of the Duke Energy Midwest Vegetation Management Program (DEM VMP) is to control the growth of incompatible vegetation along the electric lines in order to help provide safe and reliable service to our customers. This is accomplished by using qualified personnel to monitor the condition of the utility rights-of-way and by initiating various vegetation control practices to reduce, manage or eliminate incompatible growth. This integrated vegetation management program is essential in providing safe and reliable electric service by ensuring that trees and brush near or within rights-of-way are periodically maintained or removed to help reduce potential outages and hazards near our facilities.

The consistent implementation of industry accepted vegetation management practices reduces the risk and likelihood of tree and power line conflicts, as well as service interruptions and allows for the full utilization of the operating system.



SECTION 2 – DEFINITIONS

ANSI A300- American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A300 for Tree Care Operations, provides the generally accepted industry performance standards for the care and management of trees, shrubs, and other woody plants.

BRUSH- A perennial woody stem less than six inches DBH (diameter at breast height) in an unmaintained or natural area is classified as brush.

CONTRACTOR- Corporation to whom the Vegetation Management work is awarded.

HAZARD TREES- A tree that is dead, structurally unsound, diseased, shallow-rooted, leaning or otherwise defective that could strike electrical lines or equipment of the distribution or transmission system if it falls or is cut.

INTEGRATED VEGETATION MANAGEMENT- Vegetation plan that combines various components including pruning, mowing and herbicide applications to manage the growth of vegetation on the electric utility rights-of-way.

LEGAL- Duke Energy Legal Department.

PRIMARY LINE- Electric conductor(s) that carry greater than 600 volts of electricity.

RIGHT-OF-WAY (ROW)- A strip of land that an electric utility uses to construct, inspect, maintain, repair or replace an overhead or underground power line. The ROW allows the utility to provide clearance from trees, buildings and other structures that could interfere with the line installation, maintenance and operation. ROW may include licenses, easements and other rights to access property.

RIGHT-OF-WAY SERVICES DEPARTMENT- Duke Energy department that oversees right-ofway issues.

SECONDARY LINE- Electric conductor(s) that carry 600 volts or less of electricity.

SINGLE PHASE- A type of electric power line construction that contains one conductor carrying primary voltage.

THREE PHASE- A type of electric power line construction that contains three conductors carrying primary voltage.

TRANSMISSION LINE- a set of electrical conductors that carry 69 kV or more of electricity.

TWO PHASE- A type of electric power line construction that contains two conductors carrying primary voltage.

TREE- A perennial woody stem equal or greater than six inches in DBH (diameter at breast height) is classified as a tree.



SECTION 3 - FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL LAWS

Contractor shall perform all work in conformance with DEM VMP requirements and work specifications, Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) regulations, American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A300 and Z133, and all federal, state, county, and municipal laws, ordinances and regulations applicable to said work.

The governing entities include but are not limited to:

Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission Indiana Department of Transportation Kentucky Public Service Commission Kentucky Department of Transportation Public Utility Commission of Ohio Ohio Department of Transportation Kentucky Agriculture Pesticide Department Ohio Agriculture Pesticide Department Hamilton County Park Division Cincinnati Forestry Department Butler County Park Division Department of Natural Resources Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Indiana Department of Environmental Management American National Standards Institute (ANSI)



SECTION 4 – PROPERTY ACCESS RIGHTS / REQUIREMENTS

The rights to access, inspect, or perform the work associated with vegetation management practices include, but are not limited to, established legal instruments, easements, public road rights-of-way, municipal ordinances, state statutes, regulatory rules, tariffs and other legal authority. The Duke Energy Midwest Vegetation Management (DEM VM) Specialist should, when necessary, utilize the available supporting documents to pursue the completion of necessary work activities in order to maintain vegetation growth to the established standards of acceptance in the provision of safe and reliable electric service. If there are objections, restrictions or limitations that prevent completion of the necessary work activities, the DEM VM Specialist should contact the Right-of-Way Services Department or Legal Department for specialized assistance.

A list of items to determine property access rights include, but are not limited to:

- Existing property easement, prescriptive easements, public road rights-of-way and / or agreements
- State statutes
- Municipal codes
- Commission rules and regulations
- Customer consent



SECTION 5 – WORK QUALITY AND SAFETY STANDARDS

All work shall be performed in conformance with DEM VMP Requirements, OSHA regulations, American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A300, ANSI Z133, Tree Care Industry Association's (formerly the National Arborist Association) standards, Dr. Shigo's *Field Guide for Qualified Line Clearance Tree Workers*, National Electrical Safety Code (NESC), International Society of Arboriculture Best Management Practices, and all federal, state, county, and municipal laws, statutes, ordinances and regulations applicable to said work.

Clearance to obtain safety and reliable electric service are based on, but not limited to, consideration of the following:

National Electrical Safety Code (NESC)

ANSI A300 Standard - American National Standards Institute A300 for Tree Care Operations

ANSI Z133 Standard - American National Standards Institute Z133 for Tree Care Operations - Safety Requirements

OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.269 - Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standard 29 CFR 1910.269 (a)(1)(i)(E) for Electric Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution

Field Guide for Qualified Line Clearance Tree Workers by Dr. Alex Shigo



SECTION 6 – CLEARANCE SPECIFICATIONS AT THE TIME OF ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

TRANSMISSION CONDUCTORS 230KV AND 345KV

- As a best practice, the ROW shall be maintained to the outside edge of ROW
- No overhanging/encroaching branches permitted
- DEM VMP's goal is to eliminate any incompatible vegetation within the maintained ROW

TRANSMISSION CONDUCTORS 69KV AND 138KV

- Minimum of 15 feet clearance to the side of all conductors
- Minimum of 15 feet clearance below the lowest conductor
- No overhanging/encroaching branches permitted
- As a best practice, the ROW shall be maintained to the outside edge of ROW
- DEM VMP's goal is to eliminate any incompatible vegetation within the maintained ROW that has a mature height of greater than 15 feet

TWO AND THREE PHASE PRIMARY DISTRIBUTION LINES

- Minimum of 10 feet clearance to the side from all conductors or to the previously established width
- Underneath the primary: minimum of 10 feet clearance below the conductors
- Overhanging branches above the conductors shall be removed unless identified as structurally sound and established

SINGLE PHASE PRIMARY DISTRIBUTION LINES

- Minimum of 10 feet clearance to the side from all conductors or to the previously established width
- Underneath the primary: minimum of 10 feet clearance below the conductors
- Overhanging branches above the conductors shall be removed to a minimum height of 15 feet, and at a 45-degree angle. All dead and structurally weak branches overhanging any primary voltage wires shall be removed



OPEN WIRE SECONDARY LINES

- 5 feet clearance to the side from open wire secondary lines
- 5 feet clearance above and below open wire secondaries

SERVICE CONDUCTORS AND STREET LIGHT CONDUCTORS

Pruned to remove any obvious line-damaging limbs in contact with the conductors



SECTION 7 - INSPECTION AND MONITORING

Aerial inspections shall be performed on each transmission circuit (69kv and above) a minimum of two times per year in order to observe vegetation conditions on the transmission system. These aerial inspections may be coordinated with routine transmission facility inspections but should provide for the capabilities to specifically identify unsuitable vegetation conditions.

Any unsuitable vegetation conditions shall be noted along with location, structure numbers, or other information that will provide details necessary to return to the location by ground to address the condition. This information shall also be recorded in the appropriate database logs.

Vegetation conditions observed that pose an immediate threat to the operation of the line or public safety shall be reported immediately to the Duke Energy System Operations Control Center and the Duke Energy Midwest Vegetation Management (DEM VM) Specialist responsible for that area.

Vegetation related ground inspections shall be performed on an as needed basis as determined by the field DEM VM Specialist.



SECTION 8 - VEGETATION CONTROL METHODS

- TREE SIDE TRIMMING- Trees found along the right-of-way edge will, in most cases, encroach upon the electrical conductors through the side growth of their limbs. The maintenance of these trees requires the removal or partial removal of those potentially interfering limbs. Industry standards dictate the proper methods of "pruning" such limbs so as to minimize any damages to the tree. These methods are referred to as natural trimming, drop crotch or lateral trimming techniques. Stubbing and tearing of bark shall be avoided at all times. Tree trimming may be performed by aerial buckets where accessibility permits. In some areas that are less accessible, off-road buckets may be assigned to perform the work. In other remote areas, boom mounted cutting devices or helicopters may be employed to perform the pruning activities. In terrain where no mechanical equipment can access the trees at issue, the contractor must resort to manual climbing of the trees in order to perform the pruning operations.
- HAZARD TREE REMOVALS- Trees found adjacent to or within the right-of way that are dead, structurally unsound, diseased, shallow-rooted, leaning or otherwise defective that could strike electrical lines or equipment of the distribution or transmission system if it falls or is cut are removed. Stumps from downed (live) trees shall be treated with herbicides, where appropriate and possible.
- TREE REMOVALS- Trees which are in close proximity to electrical facilities can require substantial amount of maintenance in order to prevent them from causing reliability problems. In many cases these trees must be pruned extensively. These trees may be identified for removal and the property owners are consulted.
- BRUSH REMOVAL- Incompatible brush within the transmission and distribution right-of-way corridors is eliminated if possible. When such vegetation is eliminated, it will normally be cut down either by manual or mechanical means. If the stems are of a smaller size or are a result of the re-sprouting of previously removed stems, the vegetation may be controlled by the application of approved and environmentally acceptable herbicides, and applied in compliance with all regulations. All chemicals used in line clearing operations shall be registered with the EPA, the applicable Ohio, Indiana and/or Kentucky regulating state authority and are subject to approval by DEM VMP.
- RIGHT-OF-WAY MOWING- In situations where brush height is of significant size and therefore not conducive to herbicide applications, the right-of-way may be mechanically mowed with brush hogs or other mowing equipment. This equipment is typically used where there are substantial areas of such brush along with heavy densities.



 HERBICIDE- Because of a variety of terrain, differences in soil, land use, and vegetation types, we use integrated vegetation management practices which include environmentally acceptable chemical control methods as a supplement or substitute to mowing or hand cutting.

SECTION 9 – CONTRACTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

STANDARDS TO FOLLOW- Contractor shall perform all work in conformance with DEM VMP requirements, OSHA regulations, ANSI 300, ANSI Z133, Tree Care Industry Association's (formerly the National Arborist Association) standards, Dr. Shigo's *Field Guide for Qualified Line Clearance Tree Workers*, NESC, International Society of Arboriculture Best Management Practices and all federal, state, county, and municipal laws, ordinances, rules and regulations applicable to said work.

INCLUSIONS- Contractor shall furnish all labor, tools, transportation, equipment and materials necessary to perform the work. Herbicides used for stump treatment during maintenance operations in compliance with these specifications shall be furnished by the Contractor.

SUPERVISION AND OVERSIGHT- Contractor must have on-site supervision responsible for all work in each area that work is undertaken. Each supervisor, general foreman and/or lead person on miscellaneous work crews (reactive crews) must have a cellular phone or other suitable method of communications. Contractor must make all telephone numbers available to Duke Energy representatives. All other crews must have a suitable means of communication to respond to emergencies and daily work needs. The Contractor must provide the location of office facilities and contact names and telephone numbers for all supervisors and general foremen to Duke Energy prior to the commencement of any work under the contract. Contractor shall immediately advise the Duke Energy VM Specialist of any changes in the contact names and numbers as they occur.

RESPONSE- Contractor agrees that supervisors or general foremen shall respond to Duke Energy or property owner/customer calls within one hour of the call during the day and two hours at night. Contractor agrees to make available at least one general foreman per designated area at all times during the term of the contract. The number of general foremen required may vary depending upon the areas awarded.

COMMUNICATIONS- Contractor must have at least one English speaking employee per work group.

REPORTING- Contractor shall work with Duke Energy VM Specialist(s) to determine crew reporting procedures and ensure that the Duke Energy VM Specialist(s) are aware of crew locations at all times. Contractor is also responsible for ensuring that notification is given if any work under the contract is suspended or stopped during normally scheduled times.

PERSONNEL TRAINING- Contractor shall be responsible for its personnel completing training and demonstrating necessary levels of competence to perform the work. Duke Energy shall not be obligated to pay for services performed by personnel who have not been trained and who have not demonstrated



competence. Contractor shall have and maintain all relevant employee documentation. Contractor shall comply with all applicable laws that may impact Contractor's employment obligations under the contract agreement, including the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 and Form I-9 requirements. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Contractor shall perform all required employment eligibility and verification checks and maintain all required employment records as specified in their contracts.

FITNESS FOR DUTY- Contractor shall be responsible for its personnel's compliance with Duke Energy's hygiene and substance abuse requirements. Contractor's employees, agents or other personnel shall begin each day in clean, neat clothing, and shall observe all Duke Energy hygiene regulations and rules in effect while at the locations. Duke Energy has an Alcohol/Drug Abuse Procedure included in its Fitness For Duty Policy. Copies of said Fitness For Duty Policy and Alcohol Drug Abuse Procedure shall be supplied to Contractor by Duke Energy. Under said Alcohol/Drug Abuse Procedure, Contractor shall be considered to be a supplier performing sensitive services for Duke Energy. Contractor shall therefore implement and administer an alcohol/drug abuse policy acceptable to Duke Energy and at least as stringent as that of Duke Energy. Contractor agrees that Duke Energy and/or its agents shall be permitted access to Contractor's documentation of Contractor's alcohol/drug abuse policy as necessary for Duke Energy to evaluate conformity with the policy.

PUBLIC REPRESENTATION- Contractor acknowledges and agrees that the personnel it retains or hires to perform the work give the impression to the public that they represent Duke Energy. Accordingly, such personnel must be respectful, professional and courteous. Contractor will provide and maintain vehicles, equipment and tools that are safe to operate and present a positive public image. All Contractors' vehicles shall have a standard decal identifying the contract company. Contractor shall provide its employees with cards to distribute to customers/property owners on request. Cards should provide the name and telephone number of a supervisor or general foreman who can be reached about service, inquiries or claims. All contractor employees shall carry identification and provide it for inspections upon request.

SOLICITATION- Neither Contractor, nor Contractor's personnel, shall during hours worked pursuant to the contract, solicit work from, or propose sales to customers of Duke Energy or its affiliated utilities.

CUSTOMER NOTIFICATION- Contractor shall comply with State notice requirements. Contractor shall notify the property owner or the owner's agent of upcoming work by means of oral communication, notification letters, brochures, and/or door hangers. This communication shall occur within a minimum of fourteen calendar days prior to commencement of the work. If notification is done orally, the door hanger materials and information shall be given to the property owner or the owner's agent. Duke Energy will provide the door hangers and associated materials, which will describe the work. Contractor shall attach as part of the door hanger and associated materials a telephone number for the Contractor's supervisor or general foreman.

CONTRACTOR SAFETY- Accidents, injuries, near misses, and Contractor caused interruptions, involving the public or Contractor personnel must be reported to appropriate Duke Energy personnel. In case of power interruption or damage, the Contractor shall notify the Owner immediately. The Contractor shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of such incidents. Contractor and/or its



liability or other insurance carrier shall conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of such incidents and provide Duke Energy's VM Specialist with an accident investigation report within five business days of the occurrence.