



Empire Electric Association, Inc.

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September 15, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC FILING

Utah Public Service Commission
Heber M. Wells Building, 4th Floor
160 East 300 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Attention: Gary Widerburg
Commission Administrator

RE: **Docket No. 23-025-02 – Empire Electric Association’s 2023 Wildland Fire Protection Compliance Report**

Pursuant to Utah Code Utah Code §§ 54-24-203 (4) and 54-24-203 (2), Empire Electric Association, (“the Company”) hereby submits its 2023 Wildland Fire Protection Compliance Report.

The Company respectfully requests that all formal correspondence and requests for additional information regarding this filing be addressed to the following:

By E-mail (preferred): engineering@eea.coop
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By regular mail: Engineering
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Informal inquiries may be directed to Dalton Randolph at (970) 564-4418.

Sincerely,

Dalton Randolph

Dalton Randolph
System Engineer

2023 EEA WILDLAND FIRE PROTECTION PLAN COMPLIANCE REPORT

Approved on September 8, 2023, by the Empire Electric Association, Inc. Board of Directors.

INTRODUCTION

Consistent with Utah Code §§ 54-24-203 (4) and 54-24-203 (2), Empire Electric Association, Inc. (EEA) submitted the annual Wildland Fire Protection Plan (WFPP) compliance report to the EEA Board of Directors (Board) on September 8, 2023, providing plan implementation (completed and scheduled) for high-risk areas of Utah served by EEA.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

1. Regulator maintenance is on a five-year cycle. The line regulator that feeds Squaw Point had maintenance completed in May 2021. Monticello Rural (MU) substation regulators are not due until March 2024 and Dove Creek (DC) substation regulators are not due until December 2023. However, the B-phase regulator at the MU substation was replaced 8/24/22 due to damage discovered during substation inspections.
2. The three substations that serve areas within the state of Utah, Monticello Rural, Blue Door and Dove Creek, were inspected (including substation protection devices) in 2023 as follows:
 - a. Dove Creek: 1/9, 2/1, 3/2, 4/5, 5/1, 6/1, 7/6, 8/1
 - b. Monticello Rural: 1/5, 2/1, 3/2, 4/5, 5/1, 6/1, 7/6, 8/1
 - c. Blue Door: 1/3, 2/1, 3/1, 4/5, 5/1, 6/5, 7/5, 7/31
3. Line patrols are scheduled for every five years. All feeders from MU substation and DC substation were patrolled in May 2022.
4. Substation circuit breaker maintenance occurs every three years or 70 operations, whichever occurs first. The G&W Viper recloser on MU circuit 3 was replaced due to nuisance tripping in spring 2023. It was determined that the voltage, current and control cable was faulty, so cables were replaced for all the Viper reclosers on the DC and MU substations.
5. Poles are tested on a 12-year cycle and the poles in the high-risk fire danger areas were last tested in 2020 for Monticello Rural, and 2022 for Dove Creek. They are due to be tested again in 2032 and 2034 respectively. Poles may also be identified for replacement during line patrols or routine line work. Two poles on MU 3 were replaced in summer 2022.
6. Tree-trimming in the EEA right-of-way was done on all of the MU 3 circuit in 2023.
7. EEA WFPP Paragraph 4.a. specifies that all substation feeder protection devices in the

Monticello Rural substation and one substation feeder protection device in the Dove Creek substation will be upgraded to Arc Sensing Technology recloser controls by June 2023. We have installed the SEL 651R's with high impedance fault detection (HIFD)/arc sense technology at the Monticello Rural substation. There is not enough load current on Monticello Rural Circuit 2 (MU2) even with external current transformers (CT's) to have arc sense implemented. MU1 and MU3 have arc sense active now.

Due to supply chain issues, external CT's have still not arrived to implement arc sense on the Dove Creek substation. Load currents are too low for the SEL651R relays to complete their learn mode to activate HIFD. As soon as the CT's arrive, they will be installed and arc sense, will be activated.

8. All the system protection devices that were determined to serve high-risk fire danger areas were put on the "summer" settings (non-reclose) as of 7/18/23. These devices were identified in paragraph 4.b. of the EEA WFPP. The devices identified in the EEA WFPP are still currently on the summer settings.
9. Since there were no wildland fires in our Utah service territory in 2023, we did not have to implement emergency outage or electrical power restoration procedures.

WFPP CHANGES

A new WFPP was submitted to the Utah PSC in August. Minor changes were made, with the biggest difference being the time extension to have HIFD implemented at the Dove Creek substation.

CONCLUSION

EEA will continue to comply with the present WFPP for the next year. In 2023 EEA submitted a new plan to follow for the next three years, according to the statutes. EEA will continue to submit an annual compliance report as required.