



WESTERN MILWAUKEE COUNTY ELECTRIC RELIABILITY PROJECT

Q: Why is this project needed?

A: The Highway 45 corridor in western Milwaukee County is expected to continue to experience growth and development. Electric demand in this region is projected to double as soon as 2016 with commercial growth along Watertown Plank Road and increased electric use by businesses and homes. The existing distribution system that serves the area will not be adequate to meet forecasted long-term electric demand.

Q: Doesn't the power plant on site produce enough power needed for the area?

A: The major focus of the Milwaukee County Power Plant is to provide steam and chilled water with electricity as a by-product. This electric production is not adequate to accommodate the electric needs of the area.

Q: Will one transmission line come from the west and one from the south?

A: There are several combinations of routes from the west and south that are operationally viable. The route alternatives that ATC will propose in its application to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin will all include a southern route. Ultimately, the PSC will make the final determination.

Q: Why are two separate transmission lines being proposed?

A: The critical nature of the trauma centers at MRMC calls for a higher level of electric service reliability. There are only four Level 1 trauma centers in the state, and two of them are located at MRMC (an adult and a pediatric). The centers in Madison are fed by more than one transmission line, which provides backup should one transmission source fail. MRMC currently has no reserve transmission source. Given the critical nature of the services provided at MRMC and projected growth at the campus, it is important to have two separate transmission sources, each capable of carrying the entire electric load to minimize the potential of an extended outage.

Q: How large is the load on the present substation and what is its load demand projected to be over the next ten years?

A: The existing We Energies' Milwaukee County Substation serves approximately 17 MVA of load as observed in 2008. One MVA is the load for approximately 1,000 homes. Load at the MRMC campus is projected to reach 42 MVA by 2021. New transmission facilities are sized to accommodate the ultimate capacity of the substation.

Q: How does the UWM development or growth in Milwaukee County Research Park impact the growth of electricity use?

A: At the time the studies were conducted, there was still some uncertainty about the UWM proposal and other possible developments. Assumptions within the studies accommodate increases in electrical usage as a result of planned UWM developments.



Q: Will any of the power lines be placed underground?

A: ATC is required to explore low-cost options when proposing new transmission lines, which is typically overhead construction. However, ATC will consider underground power lines when there are no other viable options for placing the lines on overhead structures, such as in densely populated areas. There are a few areas within this project that may require ATC to consider undergrounding, and these have been carefully studied.

Q: What are the physical impacts of installing the transmission lines underground?

A: Although underground lines have aesthetic benefits, the construction of underground transmission lines is not without challenges. Unlike local distribution lines, which can be buried within minimal invasiveness, high-voltage transmission lines require significant trenching and space. Obstacles such as other utilities, streams, railroad crossings, embankments, bridges, major roads, traffic and soil conditions contribute to disruption at nearby homes, businesses and traffic.

Q: Does undergrounding reduce the EMF impacts?

A: Because the magnetic fields are not shielded by the ground, there is no expectation of reduced exposure to electric and magnetic fields by burying a transmission line. Magnetic fields do diminish dramatically with distance. For more information about EMF, please see the information about this topic on our website.

Q: How is ATC coordinating its routing decisions and construction plans with the Department of Transportation's Zoo Interchange and Hwy. 45 reconstruction proposal?

A: The need to work with the DOT and local municipalities is not unusual. We are meeting regularly with the DOT to ensure that our respective plans and schedule are well coordinated.

Q: Were other solutions and alternatives considered?

A: We Energies and ATC are required by the Public Service Commission to consider and document possible electric alternatives, and to demonstrate that the proposed solution is in the best interest of electric consumers from a cost and operational standpoint.

Q: What is the role of the Public Service Commission?

A: The PSC is the regulatory agency that reviews and approves major utility projects in Wisconsin. ATC must submit a construction application, which will generally include two or more route options along with all the documentation required for the PSC to review the project and render a decision. The PSC will notify affected individuals when the review process has started, and will schedule public hearings so that the public may offer formal comments on the project. This review can take up to a year depending on the type of project.

Q: What is the next step in the process?

A: ATC has identified the final route alternatives that will be recommended to the Public Service Commission for consideration. The PSC will review the proposal, hold hearings and render a decision.



ATC is a Green Tier company, selected by the Wisconsin DNR for demonstrating superior environmental performance and continual improvement.

Information current as of August 2011



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