

**Environmental Stewardship & Sustainability**  
**Avian Protection**

Avian (bird) protection is a critical issue for electric power lines. When birds interact with electric utility infrastructure, the result can be bird fatalities and outages due to damage to transmission facilities. Raptors (birds of prey) and other endangered and migratory birds use power line poles and towers as perches from which to establish territorial boundaries, hunt, rest, find shade and feed. Utility poles can benefit raptors by providing perching and/or nesting structures in areas where few natural perches or nest sites exist. However, utility structures also can pose a threat to raptors and other birds through electrocutions or collisions. Bird collisions with power lines are influenced by the configuration and location of the line due to proximity to high bird-use areas, vegetation that may attract the birds and topographical features.

**Avian Protection: The Basics**

**PHI is committed to protecting and preserving valuable wetland resources as part of its planning, design, construction, operation and maintenance activities.** We work closely with government agencies and stake-holders including community representatives in order to maintain a compliant and proactive approach to avoiding or minimizing impacts to wetlands while conducting essential business activities. We adhere to required project-specific and/or general wetland permit conditions; where feasible, we go beyond minimum compliance by employing best-available wetland protection measures and technologies.

- All migratory birds in North America are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Certain avian species are also protected under the Endangered Species Act. Eagles enjoy special protection under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.
- Electrocution can occur when a bird completes an electric circuit simultaneously touching two energized parts or an energized part and a grounded part of the electrical equipment.
- Most electrocutions occur on medium-voltage

- distribution lines, in which the spacing between conductors may be small enough to be bridged by birds. High-voltage lines are generally the least hazardous to birds.
- Poles with energized hardware, such as transformers, can be especially hazardous, even to small birds, because they contain numerous, closely spaced energized parts.
- Through the formation of the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee, the electric power industry and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have worked together to reduce avian electrocution and collision mortality.



## How Does PHI Protect Our Avian Visitors?

**PHI** has developed a number of strategies to protect avian species:

- **PHI** is a member of and participates in the **Avian Power Line Interaction Committee (APLIC)**.
- **PHI** conducts training to raise employee awareness on how to avoid adverse avian interactions with company facilities. This training includes familiarization with APLIC's *Suggested Practices for Avian Protection on Power Lines: The State of the Art 2006*.
- **PHI** is a member of the **Edison Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI)** and supports EPRI's research on effective technologies to minimize



adverse avian interactions with electrical equipment.

- **PHI's Avian Protection Policy** requires appropriate control mechanisms to protect birds of prey and migratory birds that could otherwise come in contact with the Company's equipment and/or be impacted by its operations or activities.
- **We** evaluate equipment, operations and activities that potentially could impact migratory fly zones and avian protected areas to identify risks and, as appropriate, institute effective avian protection and control plans that minimize the any potential impact on birds of prey or migratory birds.
- **PHI** integrates bird-safe design into its operations that minimize impacts within migratory fly zones and avian protection areas. Examples include installing larger than normal cross arms on power lines to avoid shock to birds; installing nesting platforms to provide an alternative to nesting on power line poles or towers; and installing protective covers on conductors; and minimizing construction noise and other disturbances during nesting seasons. When necessary, PHI also retrofits existing transmission, distribution and substation structures to reduce avian injuries and mortalities.
- **Whenever possible**, PHI takes birds injured by its facilities to approved rehabilitation centers.
- **When nests must be removed and relocated** to ensure the safety of nesting birds, PHI first secures all required approvals and works closely with state and federal agencies to address nest concerns.
- **Whenever possible**, PHI takes advantage of topography and fosters vegetation that naturally help birds avoid colliding with wires.

### **We Are Committed...**

**PHI** is committed to protecting avian species. We continually evaluate potential risks to bird safety and health and implement appropriate control mechanisms where appropriate to protect birds of prey and migratory birds from any effects of our essential operations and activities. PHI integrates bird-safe design and construction practices into its operations to minimize impacts within migratory fly zones and avian protection areas.

**For more information on Pepco Holdings, Inc.'s environmental programs, send your query to [enviroinfo@pepcoholdings.com](mailto:enviroinfo@pepcoholdings.com), or visit us at [www.pepcoholdings.com/services/environment/](http://www.pepcoholdings.com/services/environment/)**