

# 69 kV Reliability Enhancement/ Central Avenue Project



**Q: Can you explain the impact of the 69 kV Reliability Enhancement/Central Avenue Project on the community?**

**A:** At Pepco, our purpose is to deliver safe, reliable and affordable energy to our valued customers in Maryland and in the District of Columbia. As part of our pledge to continuously improve our service reliability, we are committed to managing, maintaining and updating the existing electric system and planning for the future needs of our customers.

Beginning in spring 2018 and continuing throughout the year, Pepco will replace wood poles along 5.9 miles on Central Avenue between Shady Glen Drive and Watkins Park Drive with new, more resilient steel poles on Pepco-owned property and in public spaces. **This work does not extend into residential neighborhoods and is expected to have minimal traffic and noise impact on residential communities in the vicinity of the work.** The work is expected to be performed during daytime operational hours and in compliance with approvals from the Maryland State Highway Administration.

Pepco will adhere to all applicable state, county and local laws, regulations and permitting requirements, including traffic, safety and noise. When completed, the project will benefit customers by increasing the resiliency of Pepco's distribution line along Central Avenue, reducing the response time for outages, and increasing the reliability of the overall system.

**Q: Will steel poles be placed within residential communities?**

**A:** No. The project is limited to replacing existing poles on Pepco-owned property and in public spaces along a 5.9-mile stretch of Central Avenue between Shady Glen Drive and Watkins Park Drive.

**Q: Is there a reason that the Capitol Heights and Seat Pleasant areas are the first jurisdictions in Prince George's County to receive these new steel poles?**

**A:** Pepco takes a proactive approach in maintaining its infrastructure by periodically assessing the system and determining where upgrades and improvements are needed. In 2013, Pepco performed an assessment of the overhead 69 kV infrastructures in both Prince George's and Montgomery Counties. That assessment, which took two years to complete, included an inspection of poles, wires, insulation and equipment among other infrastructure requirements to continue to provide quality electric service.

Specifically, Pepco's 69 kV lines were assessed based on criteria such as number of outages and the condition of poles and equipment. Pepco's Operations & Engineering group reviewed the data, and the company compiled a priority list based on this study and allocated costs of projects and the timeliness of completing projects during specific periods.

Based on these factors, Pepco determined that the 69 kV Reliability Enhancement Project along Central Avenue, which includes both the Capitol Heights and Seat Pleasant areas, met the criteria as one of the first areas in the lineup to be upgraded.

**Q: Does Pepco have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement with other agencies/utilities in relation to this 69 kV Reliability Enhancement/Central Avenue Project? If so, does the MOU require other agencies/utilities to remove/replace their equipment on these new steel poles to avoid the issue of "double poles"?**

**A:** Pepco recognizes that "double poles" are not aesthetically pleasing, and we collaborate on an ongoing basis with third parties to relocate their attachments to new poles so that we can remove the old poles as quickly as

possible. Under the terms of an existing Agreement in Principle for the Removal of Poles (AIP), Pepco continues to require third parties to relocate their attachments within 90 days. Our goal is to remove the older poles as quickly as possible.

**Q: Will this project cause levels of Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF) to increase? What is the status of research on EMF and Health?**

**A:** This project will have a minimal effect on EMF levels; raising the conductors higher above ground will lower EMF levels.

Electric and magnetic fields (EMF) are created by the flow of electricity and occur near any device or wire on which electricity is moving, including lighting, heating and cooling systems in our homes, our refrigerators and computers. Over the past 40 years, a large amount of scientific research has been conducted on EMF and health. Many hundreds of studies have been conducted by scientists around the world. This large body of scientific research has been reviewed by many leading public health agencies such as the U.S. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) and the World Health Organization (WHO), among others. These agencies have concluded that exposure to electric power EMF has not been shown to cause or contribute to any adverse health effects in adults or children. The WHO, which conducted the most recent major review of research on EMF and health, says that, "despite extensive research, to date there is no evidence to conclude that exposure to low level electromagnetic fields is harmful to human health."

For more information about EMF, please go to [pepco.com/electric-and-magnetic-fields/](http://pepco.com/electric-and-magnetic-fields/) to find out more about EMF and assessments by health and scientific agencies.

**Q: Do you have any available data on reliability studies of the feeder system associated with the 69 kV Reliability Enhancement/Central Avenue Project?**

**A:** Pepco works to make informed decisions about its electric system based on proactive assessments; therefore, the 69 kV Reliability Enhancement/Central Avenue project was assessed based on multiple factors, including a review of the reliability of the feeder system along Central Avenue. While this 69 kV high voltage power line does not supply residential or small business customers directly, this line supplies power to substations which, in turn, supply power to the communities.

In order to proactively improve overall reliability, Pepco has determined that it is necessary to harden the high voltage power line along the Central Avenue corridor. The project is designed to reduce future interruptions on the system and minimize impacts on customers during major storm events.

**Q: Would it be possible for Pepco to paint and/or place artwork on the new steel poles to mask their appearance and help them better blend into the community?**

**A:** The purpose of installing these more resilient steel poles is to continue Pepco's ongoing efforts to provide our customers with safe and reliable service. We do not recommend placing any artwork on the poles for various reasons, including the need for maintenance to ensure that the artwork remains intact. Pepco also would caution against the placement of artwork on these poles for safety reasons.