

**Q. 2013-2014 General Rate Application, Company Evidence****Volume 2, Exhibit 2, line 26 - What vegetation management practices or policies are currently followed by Newfoundland Power?****A. General**

The goal of Newfoundland Power's vegetation management practices is to ensure safe and reliable operation of the electrical system by achieving and maintaining appropriate clearance between energized lines and trees, and providing clear access for Newfoundland Power crews along power line rights-of-way.

For each location, the Company's vegetation management practices must take the following factors into account:

- Public and employee safety;
- The criticality of the line (radial or loop, number and type of customers, load, etc.);
- Details of vegetation growth along the line, including the anticipated growth rate; and
- The location and surroundings of the line (populated or remote area, near roadways, etc.)

The two principal types of vegetation removal employed by Newfoundland Power are brush clearing and tree trimming.<sup>1</sup>

Brush clearing involves the removal of all trees, shrubs, and brush along the right-of-way. Brush clearing is used mostly on transmission lines, but is also employed along sections of distribution lines away from populated areas. The width of the right-of-way depends on the voltage of the line and the type of construction (single pole or two pole).<sup>2</sup>

Tree trimming is most commonly used on distribution lines in populated areas, where aesthetics is a consideration. Tree trimming work includes cutting back branches to specified clearances. The clearance depends on the voltage of the line.<sup>3</sup> Tree trimming is done by trained arborists who trim the tree to preserve the health and appearance of the tree, encouraging future growth away from power lines. Before trimming trees on private property, it is usual to discuss tree trimming requirements with the property owner.

<sup>1</sup> In recent years, Newfoundland Power has introduced the application of herbicides inside fenced areas at some substations, and has also completed 5 herbicide pilot projects on transmission lines outside populated areas.

<sup>2</sup> For 138 kV, the typical right-of-way width is 26m; for three-phase 12.5 kV the typical width is 7.4m.

<sup>3</sup> For primary voltages up to 25 kV, branches are cut back a minimum of 1.8m; for secondary voltages 120/240, branches are cut back a minimum of 0.9m.

1 All work is required to be performed in accordance with the requirements of the  
2 Company's OHSAS 18001 Safety Management System and its ISO 14001  
3 Environmental Management System.<sup>4</sup>  
4

5 *Specific Practices*

6 The following specific vegetation management practices apply to transmission lines,  
7 distribution lines and substation/hydro plants:  
8

9 *Transmission Lines*

10 The Company's asset management practices require one detailed inspection of  
11 transmission lines from the ground each year. As part of this process, vegetation along  
12 the right-of-way is inspected and the work necessary to address identified deficiencies is  
13 completed.  
14

15 *Distribution Lines*

16 One detailed inspection from the ground is required every seven years. In addition,  
17 drive-by distribution vegetation management inspections are completed every three and a  
18 half years. Based on these inspections, the work necessary to address identified  
19 deficiencies is completed.  
20

21 *Substations and Hydro Plants*

22 Vegetation control is typically conducted on an annual basis for substations, and on an  
23 as-needed basis at hydro plants. The type of vegetation control used depends on the  
24 characteristics of the specific location.

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<sup>4</sup> These systems assist Newfoundland Power in carrying out its work in accordance with detailed operational procedures designed to ensure the safety of workers and the public and protection of the environment.