

199—25.3 (476,478) Inspection and maintenance plans.

25.3(1) *Filing of plan.* Each electric utility shall adopt and file with the board a written plan for inspecting and maintaining its electric supply lines and substations (excluding generating stations) in order to determine the necessity for replacement, maintenance, and repair, and for tree trimming or other vegetation management. If the plan is amended or altered, revised copies of the appropriate plan pages shall be filed.

25.3(2) *Annual report.* Each utility shall include as part of its annual report to the board, as required by 199—Chapter 23, certification of compliance with each area of the inspection plan or a detailed statement on areas of noncompliance.

25.3(3) *Contents of plan.* The inspection plan shall include the following elements:

a. General. A listing of all counties or parts of counties in which the utility has electric supply lines in Iowa. If the utility has district or regional offices responsible for implementation of a portion of the plan, the addresses of those offices and a description of the territory for which they are responsible shall also be included.

b. Inspection of lines, poles, and substations.

(1) Inspection schedules. The plan shall contain a schedule for the periodic inspection of the various units of the utility's electric plant. The period between inspections shall be based on accepted good practice in the industry, but for lines and substations shall not exceed ten years for any given line or piece of equipment. Lines operated at 34.5 kV or above shall be inspected at least annually for damage and to determine the condition of the overhead line insulators.

(2) Inspection coverage. The plan shall provide for the inspection of all supply line and substation units within the adopted inspection periods and shall include a complete listing of all categories of items to be checked during an inspection.

(3) Conduct of inspections. Inspections shall be conducted in a manner conducive to the identification of safety, maintenance, and reliability concerns or needs.

(4) Instructions to inspectors. Copies of instructions or guide materials used by utility inspectors in determining whether a facility is in acceptable condition or in need of corrective action or further investigation.

c. Tree trimming or vegetation management plan.

(1) Schedule. The plan shall contain a schedule for periodic tree trimming or other measures to control vegetation growth under or along the various units of the utility's electric plant. The period between inspections shall be based on accepted good practice in the industry and may vary depending on the nature of the vegetation at different locations.

(2) Procedures. The plan shall include written procedures for vegetation management. The procedures shall promote the safety and reliability of electric lines and facilities. Where tree trimming is employed, practices shall be adopted that will protect the health of the tree and reduce undesirable regrowth patterns.

d. Pole inspections. Pole inspections shall periodically include an examination of the poles that includes tests in addition to visual inspection in appropriate circumstances. These additional tests may include sounding, boring, groundline exposure, and, if applicable, pole treatment.

25.3(4) *Records.* Each utility shall keep sufficient records to demonstrate compliance with its inspection and vegetation management plans. For each inspection unit, the records of line and substation inspections and pole inspections shall include the inspection date(s), the findings of the inspection, and the disposition or scheduling of repairs or maintenance found necessary during the inspection. For each inspection unit, the records of vegetation management shall include the date(s) during which the work was conducted. The records shall be kept until two years after the next periodic inspection or vegetation management action is completed or until all necessary repairs and maintenance are completed, whichever is longer.

25.3(5) Guidelines. Applicable portions of Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Bulletins 1730-1, 1730B-121, and 1724E-300 and “The Lineman’s and Cableman’s Handbook” are suggested as guidelines for the development and implementation of an inspection plan. ANSI A300 (Part 1)-2013, “Pruning,” and Section 35 of “The Lineman’s and Cableman’s Handbook” are suggested as guides for tree trimming practices.

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