We work on keeping you informed.

As construction of the Greater Springfield Reliability Project (GSRP) continues, Western Massachusetts Electric Company (WMECo) is preparing to install overhead wires on the transmission structures.

You will be notified by our field Community Relations Team prior to helicopter use near your property. The helicopter flights are scheduled to begin in September and will be used as needed until the completion of the Project, estimated to be late 2013.

Learn more about helicopter wire stringing by reading the enclosed information.

If you have further questions, please call 1.866.99.NEEWS (63397) or visit our website at www.NEEWSprojects.com.
With the new steel structures in place, the next step in the construction process is to install the wire ("conductor"). The wire stringing operation requires equipment at each end of the section being strung. Wire is pulled between these “pulling sites” through stringing blocks (pulleys) at each structure. These pulling sites are set up at various intervals along the right-of-way, typically one to three miles apart. Specific pulling sites are determined close to the time the stringing activity takes place. WMECo’s Community Relations Team notifies property owners about the sites chosen at that time. Once the wire is strung, the stringing blocks are removed and the wire clipped into its final hardware attachment. Helicopters may be used to facilitate wire stringing operations. You will be notified by our field Community Relations Team prior to helicopter use near your property. Note that alternate ground methods will still need to be employed in some areas where helicopters cannot be used. Provided below are some commonly asked questions about this process:

**What are the advantages of using a helicopter?**

Helicopters provide a safe and less intrusive way to string transmission wire which has been widely used for many years in the United States and around the world. Reduced ground-level activities equates to fewer impacts to property owners and environmentally sensitive areas. Also, using helicopters dramatically decreases the amount of time needed for the wire stringing operations.

**How will this affect my home or property?**

Some noise is expected as the helicopter flies over the right-of-way. Water trucks may be used to control dust that could be generated when the helicopter accesses the lower arms of shorter transmission structures. For safety reasons, access to the right-of-way will be restricted when the helicopter is flying over the right-of-way and during the pulling operation.

**What exactly will the helicopter carry?**

The helicopter will transport workers, tools and materials used during the wire stringing process. It will also be used to fly out a guide rope which serves as a lead line for the pulling wire that pulls the conductor on to the transmission structure.

**What type of helicopter will be used?**

In most cases, a Hughes MD500D will be used. This helicopter, approximately 20 feet long, can accommodate a pilot and three passengers.

**What will the helicopter land?**

Westover Metropolitan Air Force Base in Chicopee, MA. is the primary location where the helicopter will take off from at the beginning of the work day and land at the end of the work day; however, there will be multiple landing and re-fueling zones in other local areas as well. Nearby residents and businesses located near these alternate sites will be notified by our Community Relations Team.

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