

**Storm Protection Plan
In Depth FAQ
UPDATED: Dec. 3, 2020**

This in-depth set of FAQ was created specifically for team members with high customer interaction – such as Customer Experience and our Contractor Partners field communication specialists. More general FAQs can be found on our external website at: www.TampaElectric.com/SPP

Q. How did you choose which lines should be converted to underground?

Tampa Electric partnered with an independent engineering firm to perform an extensive analysis of the power lines to determine which lines were the best candidates to be installed underground. The analysis considered many factors, such as wind zone, tree density and historical outages. The team identified each overhead line's vulnerability to extreme weather events. Then, we determined the cost and customer benefit of converting those lines to underground.

Tampa Electric has about 6,300 miles of overhead distribution power lines, and our work focuses on the distribution lines that can have the biggest improvement for reliability during extreme weather. In the first 10 years of this program, 1,000 to 1,500 miles of overhead distribution power lines will be converted to underground

Q. Why wasn't my neighborhood chosen?

The Storm Protection Plan is designed to shorten restoration time after extreme weather events. Tampa Electric has about 6,300 miles of overhead distribution power lines, and our current work focuses on those power lines that can best improve reliability during extreme weather.

Tampa Electric reviewed many factors to determine which power lines were the best candidates to be converted to underground. Although the data does not support converting your neighborhood's overhead distribution lines to underground at this time, it may be a good candidate for a future Storm Protection Plan project.

All Tampa Electric customers will feel the benefits of this program. The Storm Protection Plan will improve system reliability, which will mean fewer power outages for customers and shorter outages for all customers during extreme weather.

Q. How safe are pad-mount transformers to have on my property?

Safety is our No. 1 priority – not only for customers, but also employees. All of Tampa Electric's equipment meets or exceeds national electrical safety codes and regulations. If you have a transformer on your property and notice any unusual conditions, such as damage, please contact Tampa Electric as soon as possible.

Q. How will having an easement and/or a transformer on my property affect my home's property value?

Pad-mounted transformers are common equipment in neighborhoods, and they should have no measurable impact on a home's property value. Without this project, you would retain the overhead power lines, poles and transformers that exist today, which are comparable. In addition, many customers find it more aesthetically pleasing for a neighborhood's electrical lines to be underground.

Q. What am I allowed to do in the easement area?

Safety is our No. 1 priority. For safety reasons, it is important to call 811 any time you plan to dig in your yard. Property owners need to ensure that the easement area is accessible by Tampa Electric and our equipment in case we need to make repairs. Landscaping around our equipment is allowed, within guidelines. (Plants must be at least 3 feet from the back and sides of the equipment and 10 feet from the front.) Driveways and fences are generally allowed to cross or be outside the easement area, as long as we retain access to our equipment, and you call 811 before you dig. You should not attach anything to our equipment, such as fence posts.

Q. Does TECO plan to use this area for anything in the future after this project?

Easements allow Tampa Electric to replace, maintain, upgrade or repair its equipment. Any additional purpose would require an additional easement. If Tampa Electric needs to use this easement for any additional projects in the future, we will notify you in advance.

Q. Why would distribution lines go on my personal property and not in the right of way?

In some cases, rights of way can be occupied by other utilities, such as water or sewer lines. It may be difficult to safely add a power line to a crowded right of way. In some cases, there may be deep-rooted trees that would be difficult to safely avoid in the right of way. Under those and other circumstances, a power line may be installed on private property.

Q. Why are you putting the new underground equipment in the front of the people's property instead of the rear?

Power lines along rear lot lines are difficult to access, and we no longer install them. Back yards also contain more potential conflicts, such as pools, swing sets, fences or large trees. Front lot lines allow sufficient room for Tampa Electric's trucks to access, locate and repair our equipment.

Q. How will the directional boring process affect my trees and landscaping?

Respecting and restoring property are top priorities. We work with our customers during and after construction to minimize impact and inconvenience. To minimize disruption to landscaping, Tampa Electric plans to use directional drilling (also called directional boring) instead of open trenching or digging. We will work with property owners as we determine the acceptable path for underground lines. After we complete our work, Tampa Electric will restore any damaged property. Most landscaping, including large trees, can be avoided.

Q. How will TECO's construction team avoid hitting gas lines, water lines and other underground items that have been buried?

Tampa Electric uses the same process that customers use before digging in their own yard. The company calls Sunshine 811 three days before every underground construction project, as required by law. That allows sufficient time for utilities to mark their underground lines in the field before work begins. We also follow all safe digging guidelines. If you see small flags near a construction site, please don't remove them; they are an important part of our project. For your safety, remember to call 811 any time you plan to dig in your yard.

Q. Will you replace any landscaping that is affected by construction?

Respecting and restoring property are top priorities. We work with our customers during and after construction to minimize impact and inconvenience. After we complete our work, Tampa Electric will restore any damaged property.

Q. What happens if a customer refuses to participate in the program?

If a customer refuses to sign an easement, Tampa Electric would need to determine a different location for the equipment, which may include an alternate path for the power line. In some rare circumstances, the project may become unbuildable. If a customer refuses to allow undergrounding in front of their home, we may consider building the project with an overhead pole to serve that customer.