# Noblesville-Westfield Reliability Projects

## Frequently Asked Questions



**Q: Why is Duke Energy installing new transmission lines and a new substation in Noblesville and Westfield?**

**A:** Since 2000, the population of Westfield has nearly quadrupled and the population of Noblesville has grown 130%. This growth is expected to continue and is demanding more of our local electric transmission system.

**Q: Our service has been reliable so far. Do we really need these lines?**

**A:** Yes. To maintain reliable service, it is important to anticipate increased demand. To meet that expected demand as Noblesville and Westfield continue to grow, and to prepare for future growth, the system must be upgraded. The existing backbone of the area's electric system is a 230-kilovolt (kV) line that runs north to south, parallel to Moontown Road/ North Gray Road. This high-voltage power line is feeding the local 69-kV transmission grid, which powers area distribution substations that bring the electricity to homes and businesses. This line was built in 1984 when the area was less populated.

**Q: Have the transmission line routes been established?**

**A:** No. At this time, only preliminary route segments have been identified through an in-depth route study and siting process performed by a team of engineers and environmental specialists. These route segments, which represent possible portions of a route for the new line, will be shared on the project website and during open house meetings to be held in June. The preferred routes will consist of some of the route segments currently under consideration, but not all. There will be a public comment period following these meetings. Public input is an important part of the transmission line route selection process. You may provide input by entering a comment on the interactive map portion of the project website, calling the project hotline or emailing the project team. Contact information can be found on the back of this document.

**Q: When will the routes be finalized?**

**A:** The preferred routes will be announced this summer.

**Q: Where will the new substation be located?**

**A:** A new 69-kV substation will be built near the intersection of Westfield Road/Ind. 32 East and Moontown Road/North Gray Road on land that Duke Energy purchased in 2019.

**Q: Why do you have to build power lines in residential areas? Why can't they just be built along the side of the road?**

**A:** The new lines and poles will be built on privately owned land as well as within public right of way. It is often difficult to build only in the road right of way because local municipalities and departments of transportation like to keep these areas free of utilities to allow them to widen and maintain roads as needed.

**Q: When will the new station and power lines be built?**

**A:** Easements will first need to be acquired, and we estimate construction will begin in late 2023 for completion in 2024.

**Q: How will I know if my property is impacted?**

**A:** A land agent will contact you individually if an easement is needed on your property.

**Q: What is an easement?**

**A:** An easement is a legal agreement that gives Duke Energy the right to use, not own, specific portions of land for certain purposes. Easements get recorded on the property deed and remain in effect after properties are sold to a new owner.

**Q: How wide is this easement area?**

**A:** Easement area widths are expected to range from 70 feet if the transmission line is built along the road to 100 feet if the land is not roadside. We will work directly with property owners who are affected by easement acquisition.

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**Q: Will the new poles be steel or wood?**

**A:** The new poles will be made of self-supporting, galvanized steel that allow electric utilities to carry high-voltage power to homes, businesses, medical facilities and schools.

**Q: What is the benefit of installing steel poles?**

**A:** Steel poles are better able to withstand higher wind speeds than traditional wood poles, which can mean fewer power outages. The poles have an improved design for lightning protection and require less maintenance and fewer inspections (therefore less disturbance to neighborhoods).

**Q: How tall will the poles be and how many will be needed for the project?**

**A:** The final design will determine which poles are used, but these poles range from 80 feet to 100 feet tall. The number of poles required for each new line will depend on the length and final route selected.

**Q: What is the difference between a transmission line and a distribution line?**

**A:** Transmission lines carry energy over long distances, and distribution lines are the lower-voltage lines that carry energy to homes and businesses.

**Q: Why can't the transmission lines be installed underground rather than carried on poles?**

**A:** Transmission power lines are the major power lines that carry energy between substations and are much more difficult to place underground, requiring large open trenches, special vaults and other equipment that significantly drive up the costs of installation, which are paid for by our customers. The vast majority of the nation's transmission lines are placed above-ground. Power lines that are placed underground are typically lower-voltage lines. Underground lines can and do experience outages. When this happens, the outages are often longer due to the time it takes to locate the problem, excavate to reach equipment, and repair and rebury the line.

**Q: Will you need to trim or remove trees and conduct other landscaping measures?**

**A:** If there are trees that are close to power lines, we will need to trim or remove them so that they don't come in contact or interfere with the operation of the transmission line, or disrupt electric service to homes, businesses, schools and hospitals. Depending on the route that is chosen, vegetation may need to be removed.

**Q: What about electricity and magnetic field (EMF) concerns?**

**A:** While scientific study continues, decades of scientific research have examined low-frequency electromagnetic fields (EMF) from power lines, household appliances and other electrical devices. Unlike EMF from higher-frequency sources, such as ultraviolet light and X-rays, low-frequency EMF from power lines has not been found to have a link to adverse health conditions.

**Q: Will we be able to see the new substation from the Midland Trail?**

**A:** Duke Energy will take aesthetics into consideration as the new substation is designed and constructed.

**Q: What will happen to our electric system if the new substation and power lines are not built?**

**A:** If we do not upgrade the local energy grid that serves Noblesville and Westfield, we run the risk of not being able to reliably provide power and quickly restore power in the event of a power outage.

For more information, please visit us online at **duke-energy.com/Noblesville-Westfield,** email us at **Noblesville-WestReliabilityProjects@duke-energy.com** or call **866.302.2729.**

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