

Mutual Aid

New England Consumer-Owner Utilities Emergency Assistance Agreement (“Mutual Aid Agreement”)

What is Mutual Aid for?

During a storm event when a New England public power utility is in need of additional line crews to restore power.

How does Mutual Aid work?

When a utility is in need of assistance they call their Regional Coordinator. The following page details this process. This utility now becomes a “Requesting Utility.” The Requesting Utility must be a signatory of the Mutual Aid Agreement.

What does the Regional Coordinator do?

After receiving a call from a Requesting Utility the Regional Coordinator contacts all other Regional Coordinators and notifies them of the request for assistance. Then the Regional Coordinators contact the public power utilities in their region to inquire if they would like to assist. If a system volunteers to assist they become an “Assisting Utility”. The Assisting Utility must be a signatory of the Mutual Aid Agreement.

What does the Assisting Utility do?

When a utility notifies their Regional Coordinator that they are willing to become an Assisting Utility they will be given the contact information of the Requesting Utility. It is then the Assisting Utility responsibility to contact the Requesting Utility directly for details, such a location, type of safety equipment, numbers of crews and estimated duration of stay.

What are the responsibilities of the Requesting Utility?

The Requesting Utility must first provide the Assisting Utility with a system map and any applicable operating and safety procedures. The Requesting Utility must ensure that the Assisting Utility has all necessary safety equipment and is advised of all safety requirements. Also provided will be a contact person and communication information, meals, lodging and fuel and oil.

What happens after the storm?

When an Assisting Utility is released by the Requesting Utility they should contact their Regional Coordinator. Sometimes they may be asked to report to another system if they are willing.

Billing

Within 30 days after mutual aid is terminated the Assisting Utility must send a detailed invoice of expenses to the Requesting Utility. All time sheets and expenses must be included. Allowed expenses include all out-of-pocket expenses including wages, meals, lodging, fuel and oil and reasonable personal expenses. Not allowed are administrative and general expenses, depreciation and overhead expenses.

Question of disputes

The managers of the Requesting and Assisting Utilities should first try to work out any questions or disputes. If necessary the Regional Coordinators can assist in resolving the issue. Arbitration as a last resort is defined in the Mutual Aid Agreement.