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Request from: Office of Consumer Counsel

Question:

Refer to Exhibit CLP-TSP-1, p. 76. Table 1 reports Blue-Sky SAIDI of 70.7 minutes in 2021 and 77.5 minutes in 2025. Reconcile that performance with the reliability capital placed in service over the same period, and state the reliability performance the Company expected to achieve from that investment as documented at the time of authorization.

Response:

Please refer to OCC-804, Attachment 1 - CL&P Distribution Reliability Plant Inservice – 2021-2025 for the reliability capital placed in service between 2021 and 2025.

It is accurate that, between 2021 and 2023, the Company's plant additions placed in service increased from approximately $161M (in 2021) to $236M (in 2023) and that the Company's Blue-Sky SAIDI improved from 70.7 to 68.0 minutes, which is a reduction of approximately 3.8%, although Blue Sky SAIDI then increased in 2024 and 2025. This performance experience demonstrates that reliability-based capital additions are critical to system health, flexibility and overall system performance; however, the impacts of capital additions cannot necessarily be directly and instantaneous translated to SAIDI and SAIFI performance. Changes in plant additions do not necessarily have an immediate effect and, instead, more typically produce results that are experienced over a multi-year period and accrue over the life of the assets. This is why reliability investments are most successful with consistent and adequate investment combined with an analytical planning approach. The factors that impact reliability within a given year include the timing, location intensity of external impacts on the system, the circumstances of minor weather events, aging infrastructure failures outpacing the rate of replacement, changing surrounding tree conditions and other circumstances. Reliability is not a "set it and forget it" system property and this is the reason that consistent investment is required to maintain and improve reliability. For example, Eversource's ReBOT model shows that maintaining reliability comes at an increasing cost as opportunities that defer a lot of historical outages or predicted risk are gradually mitigated.

Consequently, one year's investment does not necessarily produce an immediate corresponding reduction in SAIDI.

In addition, many investments are targeted at infrastructure replacement versus driving SAIDI performance such as the replacement of underground PILC cable and direct buried cable.

Reliability investments made in reducing aging infrastructure primarily prevent further deterioration of an aging infrastructure versus year over year reliability improvements.

Lastly, many of the investments target resiliency as opposed to Blue Sky SAIDI, such as pole integrity, right-of-way rebuilds and enhanced tree removals. These programs are designed to reduce the impact of major storms and high-impact events that represent benefits that may not be fully reflected in Blue-Sky SAIDI.