Date Filed: August 13, 2026

Witness: David L. Gladey and Steven Lamontagne
Request from: Office of Consumer Counsel

Question:

(Poles) Does the Company perform routine inspections on poles? If so, how often and what is the cost of a routine inspection per pole?

Response:

The Company has performed routine inspection to its custodial wooden poles following a 15-year inspection cycle which ended in 2025. This cycle ensured that every custodial pole across 157 towns in Connecticut was evaluated at least once within the timeframe. Approximately 29,000 to 32,000 poles were inspected using the 15-year cycle.

In 2025, the Company reviewed its wood-pole inspection standards and decided to shorten the inspection cycle from 15 years to 10 years. By adopting a more frequent inspection schedule, the Company aims to evaluate each custodial pole every 10 years, allowing issues to be identified earlier and addressing them more proactively. Under the revised 10-year cycle, approximately 41,000 to 42,500 poles will be inspected starting in 2026 and moving forward. To manage the pole inspection cost, the Company renegotiates its inspection contract every three years through a competitive bidding process.

The inspection costs per pole are determined by several factors, including the pole's age, its observed condition during the field inspection, and the type of treatment "maintenance" required to maintain the structural integrity and ensure continued serviceability until the next inspection interval. For instance, a wooden pole in service up to 19 years requires only a visual inspection, whereas a 20-year-old pole and older will need a visual inspection, resistance testing for remaining strength (IML testing), and groundline treatment.

Ultimately, field conditions dictate the specific treatments required to maintain a pole's structural integrity and serviceability. Please refer to Table 1 for the average cost to inspect a pole.

Table 1

Year	**CL&P Average Cost Per Pole Inspection**
2025	$45.14
2026	$44.75