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Witness: John P. DiPaola-Tromba, Sean D. Redding and Jenna Turner
Request from: Office of Education, Outreach, and Enforcement

Question:

(VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM) Refer to Exhibit CLP-VMP-1, pp. 46-47. The Company discussed "hazard and risk trees." Respond to the following:

a. Explain where the referenced "hazard and risk trees" are located (i.e., on rights of way or on private property).

b. Identify if there are circumstances where the Company could provide an arborist report to the property owner of "hazard and risk trees" assigning responsibility for, or defer, the costs of vegetation removal. Identify if the Company has allocated or collected any damaged infrastructure costs associated with "hazard and risk trees" to the customers.

Response:

a. Hazard and risk trees are not confined to any specific locale. Rather, they are located within the fall zone on state, municipal, and private properties, including the town and state rights-of-ways, and pervasive through the Connecticut roadside forest.

b. The Company prioritizes hazard and risk tree removals across the electric distribution system and regularly assesses tree removal requests submitted by customers and property owners. When a tree removal request is determined to not be a risk to the electric distribution system, the tree removal and costs thereof fall under the responsibility of the property owner, and the determination is explained to the customer and/or property owner. Regarding whether the Company has "allocated or collected any damaged infrastructure costs associated with hazard and risk trees", per CT G.S. § 16-234, subsection (c)(1), stating (with emphasis:

> "In conducting vegetation management, no utility shall prune or remove any tree or shrub within the utility protection zone, or on or overhanging any public road, public highway or public ground, without delivering notice of the proposed vegetation management to the abutting property owner or private property owner. Such notice shall include the option for the abutting property owner or private property owner to consent, in writing, to such proposed pruning or removal, object to such proposed pruning or removal or modify such proposed pruning or removal. The notice shall include instructions regarding how the recipient may object in

accordance with subdivision (3) of this subsection. Such notice **shall also include a statement that if a person objects to the proposed pruning or removal, and such tree falls on any utility infrastructure, such person shall not be billed by the utility for any resulting damage**. If requested by an owner of private property, the utility, municipality or the Commissioner of Transportation, as appropriate, shall provide such owner with information regarding whether a tree or shrub to be pruned or removed is in the public right-of-way or whether such tree or shrub is on such owner's private property."