



Tunxis Substation Decommissioning Project

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Tunxis Substation Decommissioning Project?

United Illuminating has an ongoing program to upgrade aging infrastructure to provide a modern electric grid that is resilient against storms and delivers the safe, reliable service that customers expect.

As part of this effort, UI will begin work to decommission the 67-year-old Tunxis Substation in Fairfield in May of 2019.

In addition to removing the substation from service, this project will upgrade the circuits it serves from the current 4,160 volts to 13,800 volts, which is a standard voltage for modern electric distribution circuits. The will require UI to replace or modify electric lines, poles and other infrastructure in the neighborhoods currently served by Tunxis Substation.

What are the benefits of this project?

This project will help improve storm resiliency and reliability in the neighborhoods currently served by Tunxis Hill substation. The modern, upgraded infrastructure will meet current industry standards, and it will better connect with neighboring circuits, which can facilitate outage restoration. The project will also improve power quality, meaning customers are less likely to experience flickering lights and dimming due to voltage drops.

What areas will be affected?

The project will affect circuits that serve approximately 2,000 customers in the Tunxis Hill area of Fairfield.

What is a substation?

Briefly, a distribution substation is the link connecting the transmission system, which transmits high-voltage electricity across distances from power plants, to the distribution system that brings electricity to individual homes and businesses. Its main function is to “step down” the transmission voltages to lower distribution voltages that are useful for powering homes and businesses.

Why is this project necessary?

The Tunxis Substation is 67 years old and is reaching the end of its effective service life. By upgrading the electric infrastructure it currently serves, and re-connecting the customers to a more modern station, UI will help ensure that customers in the Tunxis area will continue to receive safe, reliable power. This project will also help UI to better prepare the area for extraordinary weather events.

Why is this neighborhood being singled out?

It's not. Our crews have completed similar projects in Bridgeport, Fairfield, Hamden, Milford, New Haven, North Haven, Stratford and West Haven. This project is part of a larger effort to replace 22 aging, low-voltage substations throughout UI's territory. These improvements will help UI to accommodate future growth while maintaining the high standard of reliability that our customers expect.

Will work be done on private property?

Construction will be done on the utility right-of-way. Any work on private property must be authorized by the property owners in advance. Any equipment placed on private property requires either customer permission or an easement. However, in some cases we may perform maintenance on existing equipment in the utility right-of-way without customer involvement.

What will the project involve?

In order to support the higher voltage, UI will need to rebuild the connecting infrastructure — 450 poles, more than 131 transformers and more than 62,000 linear feet of primary and secondary wire — and redistribute the electric load from the old station to a more modern station. That means work crews will be active in the entire area the current station serves.

When will work begin and how long will it continue?

Work will begin in May 2019 and will continue through the completion of the project in 2020.

How will the work proceed?

There are four key steps in the process:

- 1. Neighborhood Assessment:** This includes a review of existing utility poles, equipment and wires, as well as any trees that may inhibit the installation of taller poles and higher voltage wires. This survey will also determine if tree work is necessary to facilitate construction. A tree-by-tree evaluation will be performed by UI's tree contractor and the Fairfield Tree Warden. Following their review, abutting property owners will be contacted directly for their consent for the proposed tree work, and the Tree Warden will provide a permit for agreed upon work.
- 2. Vegetation Management:** UI's contractor will perform tree pruning and removal. This work will be overseen by UI's Arborist and the Tree Warden, and will be performed using standards established by the American National Standards Institute and the International Society of Arboriculture.
- 3. Construction:** During this phase, line crews will install new poles, transformers and electrical conductors where needed to upgrade the Tunxis neighborhood to 13,800 volts.
- 4. Conversion:** During this final phase, crews will methodically and sequentially transfer homes and businesses to the upgraded system.

Performing this work safely will require one or more planned outages. Affected customers will be notified about this work in advance by direct mail and other means.

Why is it necessary to trim trees?

Vegetation management is sometimes necessary in order to accommodate construction of the new facilities, to protect the safety of work crews, and also to protect the electric system from tree limbs that could damage it, particularly during severe

weather events. When vegetation management work is necessary, we'll notify abutting property owners and provide them an opportunity to consent to the work, object to it, or propose a modification.

What will the work hours be?

With the exception of rare emergency situations and planned outages, our construction and vegetation management crews generally work only between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Will there be construction noise?

Some of our trucks and equipment may cause noise in the neighborhood. This will be limited to work hours, except for emergencies and planned outages.

Will I be notified about construction near my house or business?

We do not usually notify customers directly about nearby construction. However, we do reach out directly to customers about tree trimming and planned outages.

Will I lose power?

Performing this work safely will require one or more planned outages. Affected customers will be notified about this work in advance by direct mail and other means.

Where should I direct questions?

If you have questions about the project, call **888.848.3697 (888-UITENYR)**. If you have questions about tree work, you may also e-mail trees@uinet.com. Information is also available online, at theplanahead.uinet.com.