



Stray Voltage Shocks Drop Nearly 80 Percent; New Technology and More Testing Make New Yorkers Safer

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NEW YORK, NY, Jan 18, 2008 (MARKET WIRE via COMTEX News Network) -- Con Edison's comprehensive stray voltage testing and prevention programs are working.

In a report posted today on the company's Web site (www.conEd.com/publicissues/safety.asp), Con Edison reported a 78-percent decline in the number of electric shocks since 2004, when its safety efforts began. Forty-six electric shocks on company-owned equipment were reported in 2007 compared with 210 in 2004.

The core of Con Edison's \$100 million stray voltage mitigation initiative is a fleet of 15 mobile stray voltage detectors developed by the company's Research and Development department. The high-tech vehicles are dispatched throughout the company's service territory year-round and use sensors to detect stray voltage as low as one volt on manhole covers, gratings, service boxes, light poles, neon signs and other structures.

"Our new technologies and aggressive program have netted very encouraging results," said John Miksad, senior vice president, Electric Operations. "We are devoting every bit of our engineering expertise, scientific ingenuity and field force determination to prevent shock incidents. We will use every existing technology -- or invent the technology we need -- to ensure public safety."

The mobile stray voltage detectors enable Con Edison to perform multiple scans of geographic areas in a much shorter time frame than manual testing. The vehicles have the advantage of not needing to make direct contact with a structure to test it for stray voltage. In fact, the vehicles have found stray voltage on objects, such as scaffolding, that would not be tested in the manual testing program.

The manual testing program, involving crews with hand-held voltage detection equipment, surveys 730,000 structures in New York City and Westchester County once a year. The vehicles, however, are able to conduct system-wide surveys far more frequently.

In 2006, in addition to the yearly manual test, Con Edison conducted an additional survey of the system with five newly-developed mobile stray voltage detectors. Last year, the company completed six surveys (one manual test and five system sweeps with an expanded fleet of 15 vehicles). This year, Con Edison will conduct nine complete surveys of the system, including the annual manual test.

Most stray voltage conditions found in the service area last year did not involve Con Edison equipment. In 2007, Con Edison facilities were involved in 40% of the total stray voltages found in New York City and Westchester County, the lowest percentage since records were kept. Last year, combining the six surveys taken during the manual test and by the vehicles, the company found and eliminated 5,427 cases of stray voltage; 3,224, or 60 percent, were on non-Con Edison equipment and 2,203, or 40 percent, were on Con Edison structures.

"Whenever stray voltage is found, the condition is made safe by our employees regardless of whether or not it involves company equipment," said Miksad.

Con Edison is working with government agencies to address the problem of stray voltage on non-company equipment, such as fencing and sidewalk bridges or scaffolding.

In addition to the vehicles, Con Edison has developed and tested composite service box and manhole covers, and plans to install 1,000 of the new insulating covers in its system this year. The company also developed isolation transformers that help eliminate electric currents from the outside of streetlight posts.

The company encourages customers to call 1-800-75CONED to report a suspected stray voltage condition.

Con Edison is a subsidiary of Consolidated Edison, Inc. (NYSE: ED), one of the nation's largest investor-owned energy companies, with approximately \$12 billion in annual revenues and \$28 billion in assets. The utility provides electric, gas and steam service to more than 3 million customers in New York City and Westchester County, New York. For additional financial, operations and customer service information, visit Con Edison's Web site at www.conEd.com.

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