



Understanding VELCO's Transmission Rights-of-Way

A Guide for Property Owners

As Vermont's electric transmission provider, VELCO has worked for over 65 years to deliver safe, reliable, and cost-effective power across the state. A key part of our job is keeping our transmission corridors, called rights-of-way, clear of anything that could interfere with the system. This ensures we can do our work safely and maintain the grid that serves all Vermonters.

What is a right-of-way?

A transmission right-of-way is a corridor of land that VELCO uses to build, access, and maintain high-voltage electric lines and related equipment. Within these corridors, you may see tall wooden or metal structures carrying wires. In most cases, these rights-of-way were established decades ago through legal agreements called permanent easements. At the time, property owners received compensation and granted VELCO long-term access. These easements remain valid today, even if the land changes ownership. Permanent easements are recorded in local land records and are typically identified during a title search. While title searches are only required to go back 40 years, many easement records date back more than 100 years.

VELCO's mission is to serve as a trusted partner.

Although the land remains privately owned, the easement gives VELCO the legal right to operate within it and often includes the right to access and maintain the area—or, when necessary, adjacent areas—to ensure the reliability of the electric system.

What does this mean for landowners?

Property owners may continue to use their land, but those uses must not interfere with VELCO's access, safety requirements, construction or maintenance work. National electric safety standards mandate adequate distance, or clearances, from energized lines to prevent accidents and to ensure electric system reliability.

Certain installations—such as but not limited to buildings, fences, pools, landscaping, playgrounds, signs, or ground grade changes—can pose serious safety risks or make it more challenging for crews to do their work. Even seemingly small changes could lead to power outages or, in rare cases, injury or electrocution.



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For these reasons, such uses are generally not allowed within the right-of-way. We ask that you reach out to us before making any changes or additions in these areas. Any proposed changes or installations are subject to review and require written approval.

Can a right-of-way be used at all?

Sometimes, yes. While non-permitted uses are not allowed, VELCO may consider certain conditional uses that don't compromise safety or accessibility. If you're interested in using the right-of-way for something specific, the first step is to contact a member of our Real Estate & Right-of-Way team. We're happy to discuss your idea and explain what might be possible.

After that conversation, you'll be asked to submit a formal request using our application process, which is guided by VELCO's Electric Transmission Right-of-Way Usage Policy. If the proposal warrants further discussion, we will contact you. Both the policy and application form are available on our website at: www.velco.com/rowuse

Our team will review your request and may ask for additional information or adjustments. Once the review is complete, we'll let you know if your proposal is approved and if so, you'll be provided with written approval outlining any certain conditions.

Let's work together

VELCO's commitment to safety, reliability, and partnership with the communities we serve guides everything we do. Thank you for helping us keep Vermont's transmission system strong. If you have questions or would like to speak with our team, please contact us at (802) 770-6292 or email row@velco.com.

About VELCO

Formed in 1956, Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO) was the first "transmission-only" electric utility in the United States. Local electric companies came together to create a shared system that could deliver clean hydro power and maintain Vermont's growing transmission network.

Today, VELCO operates over 730 miles of high-voltage transmission lines and manages approximately 13,000 acres of rights-of-way across the state. Our system also includes over 50 substations that connect Vermont's energy supply to local utilities and to the regional grid. From line workers to engineers to field specialists, VELCO team members work every day to ensure the electric system remains safe, reliable, and ready to serve Vermont—now and into the future.

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**Please scan the QR code to
learn more about us!**

