

## ACCELERATING GRID EXPANSION: EFFECTIVE EMF COMMUNICATION

### P60 EMF/RF Health Assessment and Safety



#### PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Rapid modernization of the grid requires that utilities communicate effectively about EMF concerns to minimize project delays, opposition, or cancellations.
- Most utility experience with EMF risk communication dates back to the 1990s and institutional knowledge has not been transferred or updated to newer EMF leads.
- Current communication landscape is more complex than ever, shaped by:
  - Ongoing scientific debate
  - Increased reports of electric hypersensitivity
  - Rapid amplification of misinformation through social media,
  - Heightened expectation for transparency and dialogue
- Project aims to provide utilities with:
  - Current scientific knowledge
  - Accessible communication materials
  - Proven engagement strategies
  - Interactive learning forums

#### Background, Objectives, and New Learnings

As utilities continue to expand and modernize the transmission infrastructure around the world (e.g. 765 kV projects, HVDC, new substations), public concern about the health and safety of living near electrical infrastructure remains a persistent challenge.

Utility experience with EMF risk communication largely stems from the 1990s, when public concern around electric and magnetic fields was at its peak. Many of the professionals who led those efforts have since retired, and their institutional knowledge has not always been preserved or updated. As a result, utilities now responsible for major grid investments may lack both historical context and modern engagement strategies, potentially limiting the effectiveness of current outreach efforts.

Communicating about EMF issues today presents additional complexity. Scientific uncertainty remains despite decades of research, while increased attention to electromagnetic hypersensitivity and the rapid evolution of digital and social media have transformed how information and potential misinformation circulates. Stakeholders now expect timely access to information, transparency about uncertainty, and opportunities for two-way dialogue.

The primary objective of this project is to equip utilities with robust, science-based tools and framework for engaging the public and regulatory bodies on EMF health issues related to electrical installations. This includes synthesizing current scientific knowledge, creating accessible communication materials, documenting proven engagement strategies, and providing interactive forums for learning. By doing so, the project intends to help utilities proactively address concerns, foster trust, and support informed decision-making during rate cases and infrastructure planning and enables an atmosphere of transparency.

## Benefits

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- **Improve Communication Effectiveness:** Translates complex data into accessible formats and equips teams with engagement strategies and tools.
- **Build Trust and Reduce Opposition:** Proactively addresses EMF concerns with clear, science-based communication, fostering public confidence and minimizing project delays.
- **Support Regulatory and Strategic Goals:** Aligns with public expectations for transparency and infrastructure planning.

## Project Approach and Summary

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This section describes the potential scope for this project. Note that the specific scope will be based on funding and funder priorities.

1. **Facilitate a Utility Working Group:** Identify communication challenges and needs with funders to prioritize scope.
2. **Provide Training and Knowledge Transfer:** Webcasts and/or in-person meetings will be organized to facilitate peer exchange, identify best practices, and facilitate training and knowledge transfer.
3. **Develop Communication Tools:** Synthesize current scientific knowledge about EMF health and environmental impacts into accessible communication materials. Materials may include FAQs, public brochures/web content, or videos.
4. **Explore Application of AI Tools to Gain Insights:** Explore the use of AI-based tools to collect and analyze EMF concerns expressed in public rate case studies, public meeting transcripts, and public commentaries about electrical installations. Investigate trends or differences in concern by region, type of installation, and/or time.

## Deliverables

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- Technical Documents, such as FAQs, brochures, etc
- Webinars/Meetings

## Price of Project

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**\$60,000** for current P60 Members and funders of either the 765 kV OH line/substation design supplemental projects. Funding can be spread over 1, 2, or 3 years.

**\$90,000** for Non-P60 members. Funding can be spread over 1, 2, or 3 years.

## Project Status and Schedule

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24 months

## Who Should Join

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Utilities planning to build or considering construction of 765kV infrastructure, HVDC lines, battery storage, or infrastructure to support data centers.

Professionals in safety, environmental, and engineering with responsibility for EMF characterizations and assessments, mitigation, or risk communication.

## Contact Information

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For more information, contact the EPRI Customer Assistance Center at 800.313.3774 ([askepri@epri.com](mailto:askepri@epri.com)).

### Technical Contacts

Phung Tran at 650.575.1785 ([ptran@epri.com](mailto:ptran@epri.com))

### To Join Contact Your Regional Technical Advisor

#### Transmission Technical Advisors

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