



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

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August 30, 2023

VIA Electronic Mail

The Honorable Jeannette A. McCarthy
Mayor of Waltham
610 Main Street
Waltham, MA 02452
mayor@city.waltham.ma.us

The Honorable Colleen Bradley-MacArthur, Councilor at Large
The Honorable Jonathan Paz, Ward 9 Councilor
Waltham City Council
610 Main Street
Waltham, MA 02452
cbmacarthur@city.waltham.ma.us
jpaz@city.waltham.ma.us

RE: Waltham Power Surge Incidents

Dear Mayor McCarthy and Councilors Bradley-Arthur and Paz:

Thank you for your letters regarding power surge incidents in the City of Waltham. The Department of Public Utilities ("Department") shares your concern about preventing future incidents and ensuring public safety.

On July 21, 2023, the Department met with Eversource for a briefing on the Waltham power surge incidents. The Department is satisfied with the Company's explanation of the

root cause for these power surge incidents being related to a rodent infestation inside of an electrical conduit, which led to damage of the Automated Bus Restoration (“ABR”) control cables, resulting in the misoperation of the related breakers, resulting in backfeed during the electric fault.

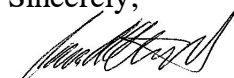
Also, the Department agrees with the Company’s proposed remedy. In response to the latest incident Eversource will take actions such as, but not limited to, animal mitigation; performing an engineering review of the substations involved; performing a redesign of the ABR scheme at Pine Street to a more secure design; the ABR at Pine Street will remain off until a solution is implemented that will prohibit backfeed to Station 282; install new breakers at the affected substation; fully functional test the new ABR scheme in a controlled environment prior to deployment; and implement a new ABR design by Q4 of 2023.

Based upon the meeting with Eversource and its planned actions, the Department will not launch a formal investigation. However, we issued a strong warning about the recurrence of such incidents and we will continue to monitor Eversource’s actions to remediate the cause.

As part of our ongoing involvement, the Department will attend a meeting hosted by the State Fire Marshal’s Office to discuss this issue. It is my understanding that the Waltham Fire Department is invited to this meeting. The Department receives timely notices of incidents such as the surges occurring in the Waltham incidents. Moreover, Electric Distribution Companies, including Eversource, perform routine inspections and maintenance in their substations in order to maintain integrity and safety of the electric power system.

It is a core mission of the Department to promote safe and reliable electric service. The Department is dedicated to this work and will continue to monitor occurrences such as the one in Waltham.

Sincerely,



James M. Van Nostrand
Chair

cc: Thomas M. Stanley, State Representative, 9th Middlesex
Rebecca L. Tepper, Secretary, Energy and Environmental Affairs
Cecile M. Fraser, Commissioner, Department of Public Utilities
Staci Rubin, Commissioner, Department of Public Utilities,
Johannes Buchanan, Assistant Secretary for Government Relations, Energy and
Environmental Affairs