



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Robin McAlester
Corporate Communications
417-625-5180
rmcalester@empiredistrict.com

THE EMPIRE DISTRICT ELECTRIC COMPANY USES INFRARED TECHNOLOGY FOR ANNUAL TRANSMISSION LINE INSPECTION PROCESS

JOPLIN, MO – August 1, 2016 – Empire District will begin its annual aerial inspection of Company transmission lines and substations on Monday, August 8. The inspection is expected to continue through August 19; however the length of the program is dependent upon weather and wind conditions.

The aerial inspection process uses a low-flying helicopter to survey 1,280 miles of transmission line throughout Empire's service territory. The survey focuses on identifying potential problems with transmission structures, hardware, conductors and vegetation. The process uses a high resolution infrared imaging system to detect potential equipment issues that may go undetected in a typical visual inspection.

According to Brent Baker, Vice President of Customer Service, Transmission and Engineering, "Annual aerial inspection is an important part of our routine maintenance program designed to ensure safe and reliable operation of the transmission system. The high resolution infrared system will allow us to detect additional issues and further enhance the reliable delivery of energy to our customers."

Based in Joplin, Missouri, The Empire District Electric Company (NYSE: EDE) is an investor-owned, regulated utility providing electric, natural gas (through its wholly owned subsidiary The Empire District Gas Company), and water service, with approximately 218,000 customers in Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. A subsidiary of the company provides fiber optic services. For more information regarding Empire, visit www.empiredistrict.com.

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