



STATE OF CONNECTICUT



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Attorney General, Consumer Counsel Say CL&P Customers To Benefit From Safer, More Reliable Underground Distribution Systems

For immediate release

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HARTFORD -- Attorney General George Jepsen and Consumer Counsel Elin Swanson Katz said all Connecticut Light & Power Co. customers will benefit from a final decision today by state utility regulators following their safety investigation of an underground electric distribution system in Waterbury.

The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority agreed with the Attorney General and Consumer Counsel that CL&P customers should not have to pay for repairs and remediation to the Waterbury system that were the result of poor workmanship by contractors and inadequate supervision and inspection by the company.

The regulators also ordered CL&P to inspect all remaining underground electric distribution systems in its service territory; to report back to PURA any deficiencies discovered and to correct those problems. In addition, the company was ordered to review and improve its practices related to contractor oversight and to hire an independent consultant to review the quality of work performed on other underground electric distribution systems since the Waterbury repairs.

"This decision is good for CL&P customers because it means they will not have to pay for the company's repeated mistakes on the Waterbury system," Attorney General Jepsen said. "It also ensures safer and more reliable underground electric distribution systems throughout CL&P's service area."

Consumer Counsel Katz said "this positive result arose from the cooperative efforts of OCC, the Attorney General, and a whistleblower, former CL&P employee William Billings, who insisted that the issues in the long-troubled Waterbury underground electric system be investigated in full and resolved."

"CL&P's oversight practices over contractors and inspections must improve and we expect will improve with this decision," the Consumer Counsel said. "I am also pleased that PURA accepted the Attorney General/OCC suggestion to investigate the other CL&P underground systems under renovation to make sure the very troubling workmanship issues discovered in Waterbury will not exist elsewhere."



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PURA's final decision largely followed the recommendations of the Attorney General and Consumer Counsel in the case, which began in 2006 after three fires damaged the underground distribution system in Waterbury.

Assistant Attorney General Michael Wertheimer represented the Attorney General in this matter with Associate Attorney General Joseph Rubin. Attorney Joseph Rosenthal represented the Consumer Counsel.

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