

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 423  
Economic Matters

(Delegate Tarlau, *et al.*)

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Electric Companies - Vegetation Management - Notice to Municipal  
Corporations

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This bill requires an electric company to provide prior notice of vegetation management to the municipality where the vegetation management will be performed.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. The bill generally codifies existing requirements.

**Local Effect:** None. The bill generally codifies existing requirements.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** State regulations require electric companies or their contractors to provide written notice of any cyclical, planned vegetation management activities to a primary contact for each county and municipality affected at least two months prior to commencing the activities unless the county or municipality notifies the electric company that written notification is not required (COMAR 20.50.12.09D).

**Background:** Due to several major outage events in recent years, there has been an enhanced and sustained focus on improving electric reliability in the State. Chapters 167 and 168 of 2011 required the Public Service Commission (PSC) to adopt regulations implementing service quality and reliability standards for the delivery of electricity to retail customers by electric companies. The resulting regulations set minimum reliability standards for each electric company based on past performance, established a mandatory

annual performance reporting system, and mandated vegetation management, among other requirements.

A recent PSC workgroup [report](#) contains a thorough review of the vegetation management practices of the State's electric companies, including a discussion related to the benefits of notifying local jurisdictions of upcoming vegetation management. According to the report, the workgroup participants are in consensus that the notification process from the electric companies to the counties regarding planned vegetation management on county-owned and -managed lands has been working well, and there were no objections from the participating municipalities.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Public Service Commission; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 29, 2018  
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