



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1441

Resolution calling upon the New York State Public Safety Commission to require utilities to conduct stray voltage testing on all electric facilities accessible to the public every six months and inspection of all electric facilities every two years.

By Council Members Vallone, James, Koppell, Williams and Wills

Whereas, Stray voltage, also known as contact voltage, occurs when abnormal power conditions cause electric facilities, including objects such as lamp posts, sidewalk grates and manholes, to become energized; and

Whereas, According to the *New York Times*, pedestrians and animals that come into contact with electrified objects may experience electrical shocks, resulting in injury or even death; and

Whereas, Consolidated Edison (Con Edison) has acknowledged that the 2004 death of a Manhattan pedestrian was caused by stray voltage emanating from a metal sidewalk plate; and

Whereas, According to Con Edison, 79 shocks from stray voltage were reported in its service areas in 2011; and

Whereas, The New York Public Safety Commission (PSC) is empowered by state law to regulate utilities and insure safe service; and

Whereas, The PSC requires utilities to conduct annual testing for stray voltage on all electric facilities accessible to the public and perform inspection of all electric facilities once every five years; and

Whereas, According to Con Edison, approximately 778,000 facilities within New York City and Westchester County must be tested annually; and

Whereas, The large number of both facilities vulnerable to stray voltage and pedestrians in New York

City necessitate more frequent testing for dangerous voltage conditions; and

Whereas, Increased testing requirements for stray voltage may help to decrease the risk of potentially lethal electric shocks to New York City pedestrians and their pets; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Public Safety Commission to require utilities to conduct stray voltage testing on all electric facilities accessible to the public every six months and inspection of all electric facilities every two years.

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