

The Benefits of Drones in Eversource Inspections

Eversource is using drones to more efficiently inspect electric lines. The aerial devices allow the company to get a close look at energy infrastructure, without a line inspector ever leaving the ground.

Why Eversource Uses Drones for Routine Infrastructure Inspections

Eversource is using technology more than ever, and in ways that will help improve reliability of service to customers while reducing environmental impacts and costs. Sometimes, it can be challenging for crews to access lines and equipment in remote areas with steep or very wet terrain. That's why the company is using drones to inspect these areas.

This high-tech solution provides a critical, bird's-eye view so the company/operators can identify any potential issues to make sure that customers have energy for every moment of their life.

Some of the benefits of drones include:

- ***Drones reduce the need for helicopter inspections and foot patrols. This means lower emissions and lower costs.***
- ***Drones can share important information in real time, even on equipment that can be up to 200 feet above ground.***
- ***Drones provide a higher-quality inspection, which can help energy companies catch potential problems before they can affect safety and reliability.***

Emergency Inspections

During an emergency, Eversource can quickly launch a camera-equipped drone to provide timely and accurate power line damage assessments. The drone can send important data to restoration planners. Armed with that detailed information, system operators can more accurately dispatch repair crews and communicate more precise restoration information to customers.



Drones are flown by a two-person crew in rights of way — one person operates the drone (shown here) and the other keeps the drone operator informed of any special conditions or hazards during the inspections.

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[See back for FAQs >>>](#)

FAQs

How can you guarantee my privacy while you are flying a drone on or near my private property?

The people assigned to complete aerial utility inspections are certified professionals who are focused on putting the public first. Their only interest is within the right of way and making sure Eversource equipment is in the best condition to deliver safe, secure, reliable energy. These two-person crews are in the right of way for two reasons: one person operates the drone (*see photo on front*), and the other keeps the drone operator informed of any special conditions or hazards during the inspections.

Does Eversource have permission to use drones?

Yes. Eversource contracts with licensed drone operators who are specially trained by the Federal Aviation Administration to perform inspection work. As always, Eversource ensures that contractors abide by all federal, state and local requirements. They also always carry proper identification.

How often do you expect to be using drone technology?

Throughout the Eversource service territory, we operate and maintain thousands of miles of electric lines, thousands of structures, and related equipment so we can provide safe and reliable service. We are required to regularly inspect our equipment and a drone provides a practical solution to meet this need. This work happens throughout the year.

What types of work will require the use of drones?

Eversource uses drones to obtain images of equipment, particularly the equipment that is difficult to reach. These inspections supplement inspections by vehicle, helicopter, airplane and foot patrols. Drones can also be used to assess storm damage, sometimes more quickly and cost-effectively than helicopters or in-person inspections.

Can I refuse the use of a drone on my private property?

Eversource has an obligation to perform the work required to keep the electric delivery system safe and reliable. In areas where our rights of way cross private property, Eversource holds easements to support electric system operation and maintenance. This sometimes means using drones on rights of way that may be on or adjacent to your property.

Does this mean you will no longer need to use helicopters or airplanes?

There are some types of surveys and inspections that are best performed through helicopters or smaller airplanes. For example, the infrared surveys we conduct to inspect our lines to prepare for summer weather require an airplane or helicopter. Additionally, we will continue to use helicopters to help install certain equipment like wire or new structures.

How will I know that you will be using drones in my neighborhood?

Except for emergencies, Eversource plans to use a variety of notification methods, which may include a letter, door-hanger, use of local media, social media and Eversource.com.

Who can I contact for more information?

For questions about drone use on high-voltage lines in power line corridors, call 800-793-2202 or email TransmissionInfo@eversource.com.

For questions about drone use on power lines leading to homes or businesses, call 800-286-2000 in Connecticut; 800-592-2000 in Eastern Massachusetts; 877-659-6326 in Western Massachusetts; or 800-662-7764 in New Hampshire.

