



Wisconsin Office of Energy Innovation 2023 Grid Resilience Program

Grant Application Instructions November 29, 2023

This information is accurate as of November 29, 2023. Refer to [Grid Resilience program website](#) for any updates or clarifications.



Wisconsin Office of Energy Innovation

Agenda

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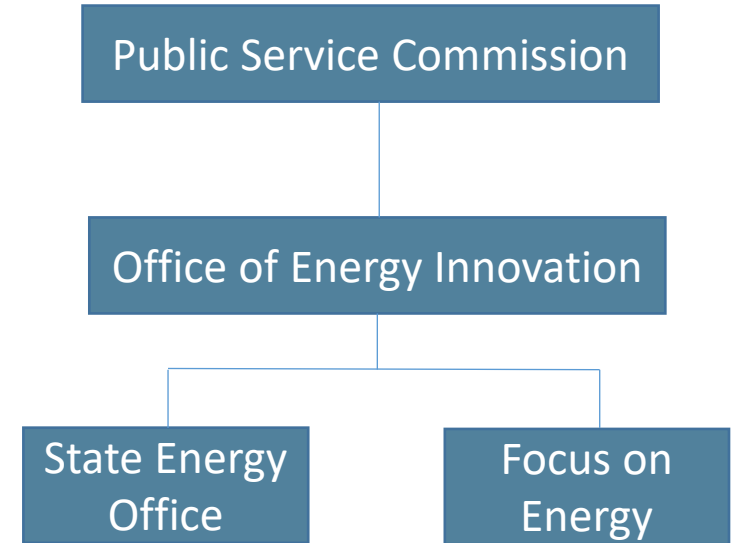
OEI Mission:

Developing Wisconsin's energy landscape to be secure, reliable, environmentally responsible, and growing the state's economy for all.

OEI Programs:

- [State Energy Office](#)
 - **Federally-funded:** Grants, Technical Assistance, Energy Statistics & Data, Energy Security
- [Focus on Energy](#)
 - **Utility ratepayer-funded:** Incentives, Technical Assistance, Training, Trade Ally Support

Contact OEI: OEI@Wisconsin.gov



Focus on Energy

- Wisconsin utilities' statewide program for energy efficiency and renewable energy
- 107 participating utilities- all investor-owned utilities and municipal utilities, 11 of 24 electric cooperatives
- Provides financial incentives, education, information, and other resources to encourage participation and project implementation

State Energy Office

- Implements the U.S. Department of Energy's State Energy Program
 - Federal formula and competitive energy grant funding
 - Energy-related planning
 - Technical assistance
- Implements the requirements of [Wis. Stat. § 196.025\(7\)\(a\)3](#)
 - State agency energy planning
 - Administer federal energy grants and programs
 - Maintain contingency plans for response to energy shortages
 - Provide energy efficiency and renewable technical assistance to local government
 - As needed, request public school utility data for technical assistance purposes

Quick Facts

- Docket [9713-FG-2022](#)
- \$9,732,295 in grant funds available
- Application Instructions, Program Metrics workbook on [program website](#)
 - Issued November 16
- Submit application through online [PSC Grants System](#)
 - Phase One applications **due February 16, 1:30 CT.**
 - Phase Two collects project-specific details, **due April 5, 1:30 CT.**
 - Late applications will not be accepted
- 24-month project performance period

Program Questions?

- Submit questions to OEI@wisconsin.gov
 - Subject line: Grid Resilience Program Application Question
- FAQ document on [program website](#)
 - Check back for updates
- Significant errors or deficiencies will result in reissuing the Program Application Instructions on ERF
 - Subscribe to Docket [9713-FG-2022](#) for automatic ERF updates



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Grid Resilience Program Office of Energy Innovation

This FAQ provides answers to common questions regarding the Grid Resilience Program – Round One grant. This document is intended to complement the application instructions and application issued on November 16, 2023.

Note: The responses below to FAQs are intended to provide useful information to individuals applying for the Grid Resilience Program – Round One grant. The responses below do not and cannot limit the discretion of the Commission when it meets to decide which Grid Resilience Program applications should receive funds. To the extent that the responses below suggest policy choices different from the course of action the Commission ultimately adopts, the Commission's grant decision is controlling in all circumstances. The Commission has the discretion to prioritize certain applications over others in order to best distribute the available funds among the eligible grant applicants.

Most recent update	Content updated
11.2023	v. 1 published



Grid Resilience Program Overview

Timeline

DATE	EVENT
November 16, 2023	Applications available, Program Application Instructions posted
February 16, 2024	Phase One Applications due by <u>1:30 pm CT on February 16, 2024</u>
March 8, 2024	PSC staff complete Application Phase One review and request additional, project-specific information from Applicant
April 5, 2024	Application Phase Two materials due from Applicant by <u>1:30 pm CT on April 5, 2024</u>
Spring 2024	Screening committee evaluation, Commission determination of Program awards
Summer 2024	U.S. DOE subawardee grant application review
Summer 2024	Grant Agreement review and execution
Various Project Start Dates – Summer, 2026	Project performance period
Ongoing	Quarterly reporting and reimbursements
Summer 2026	Final reports and reimbursements due

Background

- Federally Funded through U.S. Department of Energy by the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) (IIJA), section 40101(d), to enhance the reliability of the electric grid
 - \$2.5 billion to States and Tribes for subaward to eligible entities
 - Commission order dated September 20, 2023 ([PSC REF#: 479453](#), [PSC REF#: 481728](#).), established the inaugural round program design, includes funding from years one and two of a five-year formula grant program
- \$2.5 billion competitive grants direct to eligible entities also available under section 40101(c)
- Entities may not receive funding for the same project under both programs

Wisconsin Program Objectives

Objective One: Invest in the modernization and hardening of Wisconsin's electric grid, to protect the grid from current and future threats to infrastructure.

Objective Two: Reduce the frequency and duration of service disruptions in disadvantaged communities, such as those with rural, energy burdened, and/or racial minority populations.

Objective Three: Increase the skilled workforce able to support these and other resilience-related activities across Wisconsin.

Overall Requirements

- In-State Project: projects must be located exclusively within the state of Wisconsin
- Cost Match: subawardees must provide cash or in-kind cost match:
 - Small utility subawardee: 50 percent
 - All other subawardees: 116 percent
- Compliance with other IJA and applicable Federal Requirements, including
 - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
 - Buy American Requirements for Infrastructure Projects
 - Davis-Bacon Act and Related Acts
 - Foreign National Participation and Foreign Ownership
 - Quarterly/Annual Reporting

Eligible Applicants

Eligible subawardee types are defined in IIA 40101(a)(2) as:

- Electric grid operator
- Electricity storage operator
- Electricity generator
- Transmission owner or operator
- Distribution provider
- Fuel supplier

Eligible Activities

Priority activities

- Adaptive Protection Technologies
- Fire-Resistant Technologies and Fire Prevention Systems
- Hardening of Power Lines, Facilities, Substations, and Other Systems
- Monitoring and Control Technologies
- Training, Recruitment, Retention, And Reskilling of skilled and properly credentialled workers to perform the work required for resilience activities in this program
- Use or Construction of Distributed Energy Resources for Enhancing System Adaptive Capacity During Disruptive Events (including microgrids and battery-storage subcomponents)
- Weatherization Technologies and Equipment

Other IJJA-eligible activities

- Advanced Modeling Technologies
- Relocation of Power Lines or the Reconductoring of Power Lines with Low-Sag, Advanced Conductors
- Replacement of Old Overhead Conductors and Underground Cables
- Undergrounding of Electrical Equipment
- Utility Pole Management
- Vegetation and Fuel-Load Management

Small Utility Set-Aside

- At least 75 percent of grant budget will be set aside for projects within small utilities, defined under IJA Section 40101(d)(6) as utilities that sell no more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year
 - Based on the Energy Information Administration's [Table 10, Annual Retail Sales of Electricity](#)
- Four utilities in Wisconsin—Alliant, Xcel Energy, WPS, and WE Energies—exceed the small utility threshold

Accounts – Set up now

PSC Grants System and Electronic Records Filing (ERF) System Accounts

- Applicants must create an account with the **PSC Grants System**, where the electronic application is completed. (PSC Grants System Login page: [Online Grant System Login PSC Grants \(wi.gov\)](#))
- The PSC Grants System is connected to the **ERF system**; an account is required for both.
 - If you have an ERF account, from the PSC Grants System Login page, follow the link to validate your ERF Account.
 - If you do not have an ERF account, from the PSC Grants Login page, follow the link to create an ERF Account, then return to the login page and follow the link to validate your ERF Account.

Accounts – Set up now

System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration

- Applicants must register with SAM.gov and obtain a Universal Entity Identifier (UEID) prior to receiving a grant award and are encouraged to do so as soon as possible, to provide the UEID number with the application.
- A UEID number is a unique twelve-character alphanumeric ID used to identify your organization.
- SAM is a web-based, government-wide application that collects, validates, stores, and disseminates business information about intended federal grant recipients and other partners. Instructions for registering with SAM and obtaining a UEID are available here:

[SAM.gov](https://sam.gov)

Application Content Overview

- Reference documents: [Application Instructions](#) and [PSC Grants System User's Guide](#)
- All key information and narrative questions go into [PSC Grants System](#)
- Upload documents into PSC Grants System
 - [9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx](#) document (required)
 - Other supplemental materials (recommended)
 - Map
 - CVs or Resumes
 - Vendor proposals

Application Content - Details

Application Details

- Project Name: Identify the name of applicant project with the following: Applicant Legal Name, Technology Type, Project Site or Area (example: ABC company_ Substation Hardening_ Any City)
- Project Description field: Provide a brief (500 characters) description of the proposed project activities and outcomes.
- Technology Type: Identify the applicant's eligible activity technology type(s) as discussed in Section 1.2.3.9. Eligible Activity Types

Applicant Details

- Primary Contact Info
- Fields with * are required. If you are not able to obtain a UEID in time, use zeros

Application Content - Contacts

- Internal:
 - Primary: project lead, access to PSC Grants System
 - Secondary: backup to primary
 - Financial Manager: reimbursement requests and financial reporting
 - Grants Manager: progress reports (Primary if omitted)
 - Authorized Representative: other support staff
- External:
 - Contractor: prospective installation contractor or consultant
 - Partner: stakeholder or other outside organization providing project input

Application Content - Budget

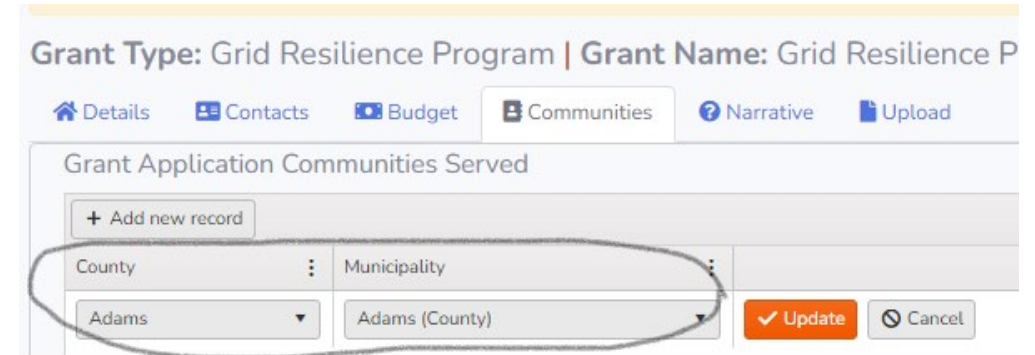
Order as shown in PSC Grants System

- Equipment: project component or item (DOE guidance: *with an acquisition cost greater than \$5,000 and a useful life expectancy of more than one year*)
- Labor (Salary): internal project labor
- Labor (Fringe): internal fringe benefits
- Other: Any direct cost items required for the project which do not fit clearly into other categories (e.g., printing costs); must not be duplicated in 'Indirect Charges' row.
- Supplies: consumables (DOE guidance: *Generally defined as an item with an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or less and a useful life expectancy of less than one year; generally consumed during the project performance*)
- Travel: travel costs necessary for meeting performance objectives (e.g., recipient/subrecipient site visits, DOE meetings, project management meetings).
- Indirect: costs that cannot be charged directly to the award (e.g., overhead costs).
- Construction: AVOID USING THIS LINE ITEM
- Contractual: Note that DOE will expect subcontracted services for \$25,000 or more to be listed as a separate row entry, and projects with a value below \$25,000 will be listed as a single entry.

Application Content - Communities

- Provide the site location in which project will be placed. (See [User's Guide page 7](#))
 - If county-wide, select the county option in both the “County” and “Municipality” dropdown menus
- This tab will not be reviewed for merit
- Applicants are also required to provide a complete list of all **zip codes and census tracts** benefitting from the project in the Excel document *9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx*

County-Wide Project Example:



Grant Type: Grid Resilience Program | Grant Name: Grid Resilience P

Details Contacts Budget Communities Narrative Upload

Grant Application Communities Served

+ Add new record

County	Municipality	
Adams	Adams (County)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Update Cancel

Application Content - Narrative

- Grants System Note:
 - Responses are limited to 3000 characters (about 1 page)
 - All questions require a response in order to move forward in system
 - Save your work before advancing to the next page of the Narrative
- Executive Summary
- Project detail questions

Application Content - Upload

- REQUIRED: a completed 9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx document in .xlsx format
- Recommended: visual, mapped representation, such as a screen image from the [CJEST](#) or [OEI map](#), of the project location and the areas that will benefit from the project.

Application Review

Applications will be reviewed to confirm:

- Project is located exclusively within the state of Wisconsin
- Applicant is an IJJA-defined Eligible Applicant Type
- Project falls exclusively within one or more of the IJJA-defined Eligible Activity Types
- Cost Match meets requirements by utility size
- Whether applicant is an IJJA-defined small utility, those that sell no more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year (Yes/No)

Grid Resilience Program Merit Review



Criterion	Description	Points
Eligibility and Experience	Applicant eligibility and experience, acknowledge IJJA and DOE requirements	10
Quality Jobs	Funds utilized to attract, train, and retain a skilled workforce	10
Disadvantaged Community Benefits	Extent to which project benefits fall within a disadvantaged community	10
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility	Connect the project with Wisconsin's historically underserved communities	10
Economic Impact and Effects on Annualized Cost	O&M cost savings including those associated with outages this project seeks to address, job creation (direct or potential for future), and stimulus to the local or state economy	10
Build and Deploy	Define the distribution, transmission, substation, generation, or other modifications to the system, identify implementation steps	10
Impact	How the project impacts energy resiliency	10
Greatest Community Benefit	Project ability to deliver "greatest community benefit (whether rural or urban) in reducing the likelihood and consequence of disruptive events" in the service area	10
Innovation	How the project is innovative in its use of technology, methodology, engagement of partners, impact to stakeholders, or some other element and whether it could be replicated by other, similar entities	10
Priority Activity Type	Project includes a Priority Activity Type	10 (Y = 10, N = 0)
Total		100

Measuring Reliability and Community Benefits

- U.S. DOE Grid Deployment Office (GDO) hosted webinar about how certain required metrics will be reported to U.S. DOE.
- Applicants are encouraged to review the webinar and guidance document for an understanding of many of the merit review criteria used in this application and to set expectations related to some of the data and metrics that grant subawardees will report to U.S. DOE via OEI.
- [GDO Grant Metrics Guidance Webinar](#)
- [Metrics Tracking Guidance Document](#)

Eligibility and Experience – 10 points

- Demonstrate how the Applicant's organizational and staff experience will assist them to achieve the objectives. Applicants may subcontract activities. Any subcontractors should be identified if known.
- Summarize eligibility and acknowledgement of IJA applicability to the project, including the Buy America provisions, the Davis-Bacon requirements, Foreign National Participation and Foreign Ownership requirements, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Quality Jobs – 10 points

- Identify job creation and training activities in *9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx*
- Describe how project may attract, train, and retain a skilled workforce supporting resilience-related activities in Wisconsin
- If applicable, describe how project pairs with curriculum development, process or operational improvement plans, or other educational or training components that would increase project success
- Discuss project's potential to serve as a model for other entities

Disadvantaged Community Benefits – 10 points

- Identify the extent to which the benefits of the proposed project fall within a disadvantaged community or communities.
- Applicants encouraged to use the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool ([CEJST](#)) map in their analysis, or other tools or data as appropriate. [OEI map](#) is additional resource that includes CEJST-defined Disadvantaged Community (DAC) identification, rural designations
 - Use tools to create narrative and visual representation of the project

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility – 10 points

- Identify community engagement activities in *9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx*
- Where applicable, identify job creation and training activities in *9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx*
- Describe the current/planned strategies to connect the project with Wisconsin’s historically underserved communities, such as:
 - Engaging communities in the project’s identification process
 - Engaging diverse suppliers and workforce
 - Selecting projects that improve resilience in underserved communities
 - Communicating how the project would impact resilience within communities
 - Building awareness of the new resources available to the community
- Impact may be demonstrated through response to a particular need, direct engagement, or other metric.

Economic Impact – 10 points

- Describe the economic impact of the project in terms of O&M cost savings including those associated with:
 - Outages this project seeks to address
 - Job creation (direct or potential for future)
 - Stimulus to the local or state economy
- If applicable, describe why Grid Resilience Program funding is needed for the project, including the likelihood of the project to move forward with and without it

Build and Deploy – 10 points

- Describe how you would plan and implement the project.
- Consider which part of the system and affected communities you plan to target and why.
- Clearly define the distribution, transmission, substation, generation, or other modifications to the system and capture any implementation steps.
- The information in this narrative should elaborate on the Build Metrics section in *9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx*, which is used to quantify the deployment scope of your project.

Impact – 10 points

- Describe how the project impacts resiliency in terms of preventing electricity outages or the capacity to recover more quickly during electricity outages.
- Supplement/elaborate across all potential outage, damages, and community benefits impacts, including those in your *9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx* document.
- Demonstrate how the impacts provide benefits as they relate to Wisconsin's Program objectives.
 - Reduction in the frequency of electricity outages lasting five minutes or more, or lasting one day or more.
 - Reduction in the total number of hours of electricity service disruptions per year.
 - Improvements in system reliability and resilience as measured by estimating improvements to SAIDI, SAIFI, or CAIDI, where possible.
 - Improvements in the transmission and distribution system to enhance system adaptive capacity during disruptive events, or, to prevent them.
- If the project aims to achieve resiliency improvements in disadvantaged communities, describe how these metrics will be measured at the community level.

Greatest Community Benefit – 10 points

- Identify how project delivers greatest impact to your specific service area
- Identify most impactful metrics in *9713-FG-2022 Applicant Metrics.xlsx*
- Substantiate/elaborate in Narrative with details like:
 - Community or customer groups benefitted by the project
 - Reason(s) for selecting this community, customer group, or project location
 - Number of customers by customer class affected by outages and benefiting from project
 - Percent of total service area customers benefiting from project
 - How project enhances asset management
 - Labor needs and workforce improvements

Innovation – 10 points

- Describe how project is innovative in its use of technology, methodology, engagement of partners, impact to stakeholders, or some other element
- Identify whether it could be replicated by other, similar entities.

Priority Activity Type – 10 points

Project includes a Priority Activity Type = 10 points

Adaptive Protection Technologies

Fire-Resistant Technologies and Fire Prevention Systems

Hardening of Power Lines, Facilities, Substations, and Other Systems

Monitoring and Control Technologies

Training, Recruitment, Retention, And Reskilling of skilled and properly credentialed workers to perform the work required for resilience activities in this program

Use or Construction of Distributed Energy Resources for Enhancing System Adaptive Capacity During Disruptive Events (including microgrids and battery-storage subcomponents)

NEPA

- Subawardees will complete and submit as part of the Federal subaward process an [Environmental Questionnaire](#) (EQ) for NEPA review and approval by the U.S. DOE.
- Applicants are encouraged to review the EQ in advance

Build America Buy America Provisions

[Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) Memorandum M-22-11 implementation guidance](#) (page 15):

None of the funds provided under this award may be used for a project unless:

1. All iron and steel used in the project are produced in the United States—this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States;
2. All manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States—this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation; and
3. All construction materials are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States.

Davis-Bacon Act and Related Acts

The Davis-Bacon provisions of IJA includes language requiring prevailing wage requirements, including:

- All laborers and mechanics employed by the recipient, subrecipients, contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction, alteration, or repair work in excess of \$2,000 on an award funded directly by or assisted in whole or in part by funds made available under this award shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on similar projects in the locality, as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code commonly referred to as the “Davis-Bacon Act” (DBA).
- The Federal government determines and sets the prevailing wage rates on SAM.gov. Wages for specific wage rates by county and construction type can be found on <https://sam.gov/content/wage-determinations>

For additional guidance on how to comply with the Davis-Bacon provisions and clauses, see:

- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction>
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/protections-for-workers-in-construction>

Foreign National Participation/Foreign Ownership

- As part of its review of subawardee applications, DOE Office of Research, Technology, and Economic Security (RTES) will conduct a review for Foreign National Participation and Foreign Ownership considerations
- Vetting process for federal awards to prevent potential national security risks

Quarterly/Annual Reporting

- Projects will be monitored via quarterly and annual reporting to DOE
- Excel-based Applicant Metrics document forms basis for community engagement and project impact reporting requirements
- Financial reporting for reimbursements

Resources and Demo

- Federal guidance on this program: [National Energy Technology Laboratory Grants Page](#)
- DOE [Grid Deployment Office \(GDO\) Grant Metrics Guidance Webinar](#) and [Metrics Tracking Guidance Document](#)
- DOE [Community Benefit Agreement \(CBA\) Toolkit](#) and [Community Benefits Plan Template](#)
- DEMO: [OEI Map](#)
- DEMO: [Applicant Metrics Excel workbook](#)

OEI Map Layer Sources

- **Disadvantaged Communities, including Tribal communities**, are identified from the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool \(CEJST\)](#) datasets. CEJST determines disadvantaged communities by census tract using the following indicators: climate change, energy, health, housing, legacy pollution, transportation, water and wastewater, and workforce development.
- **Wisconsin Rural Regions**
 - Rural zip codes are identified as those within “any area of a State not in a city or town that has a population of more than 50,000 inhabitants, not in the urbanized area contiguous and adjacent to a city or town that has a population of more than 50,000 inhabitants, and excluding certain populations pursuant to 7 U.S.C. 1991(a)(13)(H) and (I).” OEI has aligned its definition of rural with that use in USDA’s Rural Energy for America Program and the [Focus on Energy program’s rural bonus incentives](#).
 - Rural counties: U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) uses census data to establish a range of rural and urban classifications known as Rural-Urban Continuum (RUC) codes, with RUC of 4 to 9 considered rural. [USDA’s Economic Research Service](#) presents this information visually for Wisconsin by county.
- **FEMA National Risk Index:** this layer is based on FEMA’s All Natural Hazards dataset. See the [FEMA National Risk Index](#) mapping tool for hazard-specific data such as extreme cold (Cold Wave), Ice Storm, or Riverine Flooding. See the [Wisconsin Risk Profile](#) developed by the U.S. DOE’s Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response, which assessed the state’s energy use and infrastructure risk landscape and identified flooding and other severe weather incidents to have the highest frequency and property damage costs for the state.
- [PSC- Electric Service Territories](#): Service territory boundaries are approximate and based on information supplied by the utilities and companies. For utilities/companies without defined service territories, a rough boundary was drawn around their facilities and the properties they serve. Portions of the map in white represent areas where no electric service or service territory may have been extended. This map should be viewed as approximate and contains no guarantee of accuracy.
- **County and Municipal Boundaries:** The boundaries should be viewed as approximate and are no guarantee of accuracy.

Q&A