

Guidelines for Activating Canadian Utility Contractor Assistance During Extended Power Outage Events

March 2018

New England utility companies, such as National Grid, Ensource, Green Mountain Power, Vermont Electric, CMP and Emera, routinely contract for additional workers and equipment assets from Canadian companies when weather conditions indicate a possible large-scale or long duration, power outage. This is done on a contractual basis between private entities, however state and federal agencies are notified and take steps to help facilitate the deployment of Canadian resources into New England.

When a specific utility company recognizes the need for supplemental crews and requests assistance from Canadian contractors, the process for providing advance notice of Canadian utility crews coming into the United States should be as follows:

1. The utility company requesting Canadian crews sends a request to the State Emergency Management Director (EMA) and the Port of Entry, in which they will be processed, for foreign utility workers to pre-stage personnel and equipment in the United States for a specific period of time.
2. The request should include at least the following information (ex: Word.doc form)
 - a. Name of Contractor
 - b. First and Last names of individuals
 - c. Cell Phone number
 - d. Dates of Birth
 - e. Gender
 - f. Country of Citizenship
 - g. Passport number (if available)
 - h. Country Issuing Passport
 - i. Driver's License Number
 - j. Previous State/Province
 - k. Final Destination/Rally Point
 - l. Event Reason
 - m. Utility Company Contact and Phone Number
 - n. **Port of Entry and Approximate arrival time at US Port(s) of Entry – Staggered arrival times are recommended/preferred. Once the vetting is complete the Port of Entry will contact the individual listed on the form for specific arrival times to the Port.**

3. The request should be sent via email to the following CBP officials: **Requests should be sent to the respective Port of Entry State:**

State of Maine:

BOSCAN-UW-Maine@cbp.dhs.gov

State of New Hampshire and Vermont:

BOSCAN-UW-Vermont@cbp.dhs.gov

4. The Area Port Director or respective Port Director will make a determination on the request to allow foreign workers to operate in the US for the specified length of time. In order to provide sufficient time for this determination, the United States utility company is encouraged to make the request with as much advance notice to CBP as possible.

Canadian utility workers and vehicles must carry appropriate documentation when they arrive at the US Port of Entry.

1. For **individuals**, a passport, NEXUS card or other Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative compliant travel document is required.
2. The POE may make exceptions in unique circumstances; however this should not be expected and will also delay the crossing of people and equipment through the border.
3. For **vehicles**, it is strongly recommended that vehicles be registered with the International Registration Plan (IRP) and carry appropriate International Fuel Tax Agreement (IFTA) licensing.
4. Other arrangements for temporary permitting of vehicles may be made through the specific State Police Commercial Vehicle Unit and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, however this is time consuming and more difficult to procure outside of normal business hours or on holidays.

The Governor of the State requesting Canadian utility workers may or may not have declared a State of Emergency (SOE) for the impending weather/event.

1. If declared, the SOE may only waive the US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration rules on Hours of Service, or may waive additional restrictions if explicitly noted in the SOE text.
2. The SOE will never waive regulations on issues such as CDL requirements, drug/alcohol, hazardous materials, size/weight limitations, federal registration/taxes, etc.
3. If a SOE has been declared in a specific state, the contractor is generally required to keep a copy of the SOE text in the vehicle at all times to prove the vehicle/personnel are responding in direct support to the State's declared emergency.
4. If the contractor is responding to assist a State for which they are being processed, then it is recommended that each vehicle keep a copy of the requesting State's SOE to prove the vehicle/personnel are responding in direct support to that State's declared emergency
5. This SOE does not negate any Federal Laws or Regulations enforced by CBP.
6. **A SOE must be enacted in order for these utility companies and contractors to in compliance with federal immigration laws.**
7. **If a Canadian Utility Crew that was originally requested by a US utility company is released and then reassigned to another State or to another US utility company located in another State, then an additional letter of support must be obtained from that receiving states Emergency Management Director or a declaration of a SOE from that state.**
8. **CBP will also accept a letter from the respective State's Emergency Management Director on behalf of the Governor. This letter will indicate that the U.S. utility company requesting the Canadian utility workers is unable to locate US workers to support within a reasonable area to support their backfill requirements.**

Helpful Reference Information:

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| 1. MEMA: | 207-624-4400
800-452-8735 toll free (in-state) |
| 2. Maine SP Commercial Vehicle Unit: | 207-624-8939 |

3. Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles: 207-624-9000 ext 52151
4. New Hampshire HSEM: 603-271-2231
5. New Hampshire SP Commercial Vehicle Unit: 603-223-8778
6. New Hampshire Bureau of Motor Vehicles: 603-227-4000
7. Vermont EMA: 800-347-0488
8. Vermont Bureau of Motor Vehicles: 888-998-3766
9. CBP Boston Field Office: 617-565-6208