

Land and easement acquisition Q's and A's

Questions and answers

1. What is the PEP form I'm receiving in the mail?

BPA sends the Permission to Enter Property (PEP) form to all property owners along a prospective transmission line right-of-way or at a potential substation site. This is BPA's formal request for permission for BPA employees and contractors to enter a person's property. Because BPA sends PEP forms covering land for all possible rights-of-way, the agency will not build on most of the land for which it requests access.

2. Why would BPA need access to my property?

In order to make an informed decision about a proposed project, we need information about features that would make it difficult to site a transmission line or substation on your property. Those features include homes and outbuildings, business property, wetlands, cultural resources, threatened and endangered species, unstable soils and slopes, wells and septic systems. The signed PEP helps protect you and any tenants and animals on your property.

3. If I sign the form, who will be allowed on my land?

The PEP form grants BPA permission to send siting and design engineers, environmental specialists, surveyors and others to see if there are buildings on the land, to check for archeological sites, to conduct tests for soil stability, to review access road locations, to look for environmentally sensitive areas and to check the legal description of the land.

4. What kinds of things are people entering my land likely to do? Will they cut down trees or dig holes?

We are just beginning the environmental process for this project. At this stage of the project, most access will be for reconnaissance. Later, as the process continues, an archeologist or historian may inspect the proposed project area as part of a cultural resource analysis, or a wetland specialist may need access to assess a wet area. These people may need to dig holes with shovels or drill auger holes (about 6 inches in diameter). All test holes and excavations will be refilled promptly after examination.

If BPA determines that your property needs to be surveyed, surveyors may place wooden stakes and what are termed "survey monuments." In agricultural areas, the monuments will be buried so they will not interfere with farming. In wooded areas, some trees and brush may be trimmed or cut to facilitate a line-of-sight or straight-line survey. Trimming and cutting is minimized as much as possible; surveyors may cut trees up to 6 inches in diameter.

5. Will all the activities listed on the form occur on my property?

That depends on the location of your property and the progress of our analysis. All or only some of the activities listed on the form may occur on your property. It is also possible that, as the project progresses, areas will be identified where no access would be necessary. When these areas are identified, BPA will provide written notice that it is releasing rights of access the landowners have granted in these areas.

6. If I sign the form, does that mean I have given permission for BPA to build on the land?

No. You are just giving temporary permission for BPA employees and contractors to enter the land. At this point, we have not made any decision to build on any parcel.

7. Can I change my mind later and revoke my permission?

Yes. You always have that option.

8. Can I alter the form to make it more acceptable to me?

If you do not want some activities to occur on your property, please either cross out those activities or make a note in the Special Instructions section of the form. Special instructions may be that you want us to call you before we access your property or note that a gate needs to remain closed. You may also note that animals are on the property or point out special features, wells, septic systems and the like. These instructions are important to protect you and anyone accessing your property.

9. Will I be reimbursed for any damages?

Yes. BPA will either restore the land to its original condition or pay for any damage caused by a BPA representative. For example, if you own crop land and crops are damaged, BPA would pay the value of the damaged crops. Damages would be paid no later than six months after the damage occurred. If a professional is needed to assess the damage, BPA will provide one.

10. What happens if I don't sign the form?

We encourage you to sign and submit your form. If we do not hear from you soon after we send you a PEP form, we will call you to discuss the form and any concerns you may have about signing it.