Unit 9: Records and Information

Slide 1

Each electric utility company is required to maintain numerous records and reports as part of their normal business practices. Many, if not all of these manuals, records, reports, and logs will be available either through general written requests for your investigation, and if necessary, through administrative subpoenas, warrants, or through discovery requests during litigation.

Slide 2

Objective

Describe the types of records that can be requested and obtained from the electric utility and regulators.

There are a lot of records that will be available and any one of them may help you show that the company can be held liable for the damages and suppression costs.
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Slide 3

Information

General Information:
- Circuit Maps
- High Wind Area Maps and Construction Standards
- Circuit Construction Records
- Operations and Maintenance Manuals
- Patrol Manuals
- Operation & Maintenance Policy and Procedures
- Use Permits
- Easements

Make the following key points:

- Each utility may use different terminology for all of these types of items, but they will have something similar.
- Do not hesitate to find out what each of the electric utilities within your jurisdiction uses and if you can obtain copies prior to an incident – do so.
- You may have access to these items through the area’s Public Utility Commission or Authority.

Slide 4

Information

General Information (con’t):
- Line and Pole Clearance Operations Manuals
- Line Clearance Supervisor’s Manual
- Accident Prevention Manual
- Hazard Reduction Guides
- Fire Reporting & Response Manual
- Training Programs and Records
- Annual Reports
- Annual Budget and Expenditure by Program
- Reports to Stockholders
- Reports to Public Utility Commission or Authority

Make the following key points:

- A lot of these items are available and may help with the initial investigation.
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Records

Line Crews:
- Grid and Circuit Records
- Outage Reports
- Automatic Recloser Reports
- Daily Crew Logs
- Patrol Records and Reports
- Individual Line or Patrol Member Daily Activity Reports

Make the following key points:

- Line crews are an important source of general and specific information.
- They may have direct knowledge of the circuit that was involved in the incident and may provide insight as to specific issues regarding the incident.

Slide 6

Records

Maintenance Crews:
- Maintenance Records
- Maintenance Schedules
- Trouble Notification Records and Reports
- Daily Crew Logs
- Individual Crew Member Daily Activity Reports
- Maintenance Budgets and Expenditures

Make the following key points:

- Very similar to all agencies, maintenance and replacement cycles may have been “extended” due to budget shortfalls or even budget shifts, in some cases to allow for payment of “incentive bonuses” for management and executive staff.
- In a previous California case, it was shown that several million dollars was shifted from the Vegetation Management Program. The jury found the utility guilty of over 700 misdemeanor violations of clearance statutes.
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**Records**

**Inspection and Clearance Crews:**
- Weed Abatement Manuals
- Planned Tree Trimming and Clearance Cycles
- Inspection Records, Reports, and Referrals
- Individual Tree Identification Records – Daily Tree Logs
- Patrol Records and Reports
- Specific Tree Trimming Records
- Specific Clearance Records
- Clearance Budget and Expenditures

**Make the following key points:**

- A lot of these records can assist you in setting up a “Time Line” leading up to the incident that shows a history of problems that were not addressed.
- See the “Time Line” in the Appendices File, Example Folder.

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**Records**

**Tree Trimming Contractors:**
- Vegetation Clearance Contracts
- Inspection Reports
- Clearing Inspector Referrals
- Clearance Work Orders
- Specific Tree Trimming Records
- Specific Clearance Records

**Make the following key points:**

- In some cases, the tree trimming contractors may be on the hook for the incident and may have information regarding the utility directing them NOT to trim on the established cycle or in the area where the incident occurred.
- They may be willing to shift the issue of non-compliance back to the utility.
Prior to having fire incidents regarding the electric utility in your area you should:

A. Establish Fire Agency/Electric Utility protocols for response and investigations
B. Obtain available Electric Utility Operation and Maintenance Manuals
C. Obtain the names and contact information for those utility employees that you will be working with during a response
D. Schedule and participate in annual or bi-annual meetings with all of the electric utility companies in your area, especially prior to fire seasons

This was another one of those Thought Questions. All of the answers are equally correct and important for you activities.
Unit 9: Records and Information

Knowledge Check

The first step in obtaining any needed documents or records regarding a specific incident should be:

A. Provide a written request
B. Go to the corporate headquarters and ask the clerk
C. Issue an Administrative Subpoena for Records and Things
D. Complete an Affidavit and submit to the court for a warrant

The correct answer is: A.

Try the simple method first and if that doesn’t work within a 30 day period, go on to the next step - Move on to the “Official Processes”.

TRANSITION to Unit 10: Deposition and Trial.