

§§ 1724.33–1724.39

7 CFR Ch. XVII (1–1–03 Edition)

by this inventory to give me reasonable assurance that the construction complies with applicable specifications and standards and meets appropriate code requirements as to strength and safety. This certification is in accordance with acceptable engineering practice.

(2) A certification must also include the name of the inspector, name of the firm, signature of the licensed engineer, the engineer's State license number, and the date of signature.

§§ 1724.33–1724.39 [Reserved]

Subpart D—Electric System Planning

§ 1724.40 General.

Borrowers shall have ongoing, integrated planning to determine their short-term and long-term needs for plant additions, improvements, replacements, and retirements for their electric systems. The primary components of the planning system consist of long-range engineering plans and construction work plans. Long-range engineering plans identify plant investments required over a long-range period, 10 years or more. Construction work plans specify and document plant requirements for a shorter term, 2 to 4 years. Long-range engineering plans and construction work plans shall be in accordance with part 1710, subpart F, of this chapter. See also RUS Bulletins 1724D–101A, Electric System Long-Range Planning Guide, and 1724D–101B, System Planning Guide, Construction Work Plans, for additional guidance. These bulletins are available from Program Development and Regulatory Analysis, Rural Utilities Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 1522, 1400 Independence Ave., SW., Washington, DC 20250–1522.

§§ 1724.41–1724.49 [Reserved]

Subpart E—Electric System Design

§ 1724.50 Compliance with National Electrical Safety Code (NESC).

The provisions of this section apply to all borrower electric system facilities regardless of the source of financing.

(a) A borrower shall ensure that its electric system, including all electric distribution, transmission, and generating facilities, is designed, constructed, operated, and maintained in accordance with all applicable provisions of the most current and accepted criteria of the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) and all applicable and current electrical and safety requirements of any State or local governmental entity. Copies of the NESC may be obtained from the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers, Inc., 445 Hoes Lane, Piscataway, NJ 08855. This requirement applies to the borrower's electric system regardless of the source of financing.

(b) Any electrical standard requirements established by RUS are in addition to, and not in substitution for or a modification of, the most current and accepted criteria of the NESC and any applicable electrical or safety requirements of any State or local governmental entity.

(c) Overhead distribution circuits shall be constructed with not less than the Grade C strength requirements as described in Section 26, Strength Requirements, of the NESC when subjected to the loads specified in NESC Section 25, Loadings for Grades B and C. Overhead transmission circuits shall be constructed with not less than the Grade B strength requirements as described in NESC Section 26.

§ 1724.51 Design requirements.

The provisions of this section apply to all borrower electric system facilities regardless of the source of financing.

(a) *Distribution.* All distribution facilities must conform to the applicable RUS construction standards and utilize RUS accepted materials.

(b) *Transmission lines.* (1) All transmission line design data must be approved by RUS.

(2) Design data consists of all significant design features, including, but not limited to, transmission line design data summary, general description of terrain, right-of-way calculations, discussion concerning conductor and structure selection, conductor sag and tension information, design clearances,

span limitations due to clearances, galloping or conductor separation, design loads, structure strength limitations, insulator selection and design, guying requirements, and vibration considerations. For lines composed of steel or concrete poles, or steel towers, in which load information will be used to purchase the structures, the design data shall also include loading trees, structure configuration and selection, and a discussion concerning foundation selection.

(3) Line design data for uprating transmission lines to higher voltage levels or capacity must be approved by RUS.

(4) Transmission line design data which has received RUS approval in connection with a previous transmission line construction project for a particular borrower is considered approved by RUS for that borrower, provided that:

(i) The conditions on the project fall within the design data previously approved; and

(ii) No significant NESC revisions have occurred.

(c) *Substations.* (1) All substation design data must be approved by RUS.

(2) Design data consists of all significant design features, including, but not limited to, a discussion of site considerations, oil spill prevention measures, design considerations covering voltage, capacity, shielding, clearances, number of low and high voltage phases, major equipment, foundation design parameters, design loads for line support structures and the control house, seismic considerations, corrosion, grounding, protective relaying, and AC and DC auxiliary systems. Reference to applicable safety codes and construction standards are also to be included.

(3) Substation design data which has received RUS approval in connection with a previous substation construction project for a particular borrower is considered approved by RUS for that borrower, provided that:

(i) The conditions on the project fall within the design data previously approved; and

(ii) No significant NESC revisions have occurred.

(d) *Generating facilities.* (1) This section covers all portions of a generating

plant including plant buildings, the generator step-up transformer, and the transmission switchyard at a generating plant. Warehouses and equipment service buildings not associated with generation plants are covered under paragraph (e) of this section. Generation plant buildings must meet the requirements of paragraph (e)(1) of this section.

(2) For all new generation units and for all repowering projects, the design outline shall be approved by RUS, unless RUS determines that a design outline is not needed for a particular project.

(3) The design outline will include all significant design criteria. During the early stages of the project, RUS will, in consultation with the borrower and its consulting engineer, identify the specific items which are to be included in the design outline.

(e) *Headquarters—(1) Applicable laws.* The design and construction of headquarters facilities shall comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations, including, but not limited to:

(i) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (29 U.S.C. 794), which states that no qualified individual with a handicap shall, solely by reason of their handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. The Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (41 CFR part 101-19, subpart 101-19.6, appendix A) are the applicable standards for all new or altered borrower buildings, regardless of the source of financing.

(ii) The Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4151), which requires that buildings financed with Federal funds are designed and constructed to be accessible to the physically handicapped.

(iii) The Earthquake Hazards Reduction Act of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 7701 *et seq.*), and Executive Order 12699, Seismic Safety of Federal and Federally Assisted or Regulated New Building Construction (3 CFR 1990 Comp., p. 269). Appropriate seismic safety provisions are required for new buildings for

which RUS provides financial assistance. (See part 1792, subpart C, of this chapter.)

(2) The borrower shall provide evidence, satisfactory in form and substance to the Administrator, that each building will be designed and built in compliance with all Federal, State, and local requirements.

(f) *Communications and control.* (1) This section covers microwave and powerline carrier communications systems, load control, and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems.

(2) The performance considerations for a new or replacement master system must be approved by RUS. A master system includes the main controller and related equipment at the main control point. Performance considerations include all major system features and their justification, including, but not limited to, the objectives of the system, the types of parameters to be controlled or monitored, the communication media, alternatives considered, and provisions for future needs.

§ 1724.52 Permitted deviations from RUS construction standards.

The provisions of this section apply to all borrower electric system facilities regardless of the source of financing.

(a) *Structures for raptor protection.* (1) RUS standard distribution line structures may not have the extra measure of protection needed in areas frequented by eagles and other large raptors to protect such birds from electric shock due to physical contact with energized wires. Where raptor protection in the design of overhead line structures is required by RUS; a Federal, State or local authority with permit or license authority over the proposed construction; or where the borrower voluntarily elects to comply with the recommendations of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or State wildlife agency, borrowers are permitted to deviate from RUS construction standards, provided:

(i) Structures are designed and constructed in accordance with “Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Powerlines: The State of the Art in

1996” (Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection); and,

(ii) Structures are in accordance with the NESC and applicable State and local regulations.

(2) Any deviation from the RUS construction standards for the purpose of raptor protection, which is not in accordance with the Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection, must be approved by RUS prior to construction. “Suggested Practices for Raptor Protection on Powerlines: The State of the Art in 1996,” published by the Edison Electric Institute/Raptor Research Foundation, is hereby incorporated by reference. This incorporation by reference is approved by the Director of the Office of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies of this publication may be obtained from the Raptor Research Foundation, Inc., c/o Jim Fitzpatrick, Treasurer, Carpenter Nature Center, 12805 St. Croix Trail South, Hastings, Minnesota 55033. It is also available for inspection during normal business hours at RUS, Electric Staff Division, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC, Room 1246-S, and at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., Suite 700, Washington, DC.

(b) *Transformer neutral connections.* Where it is necessary to separate the primary and secondary neutrals to provide the required electric service to a consumer, the RUS standard transformer secondary neutral connections may be modified in accordance with Rule 97D2 of the NESC.

(c) *Lowering of neutral conductor on overhead distribution lines.* (1) It is permissible to lower the neutral attachment on standard construction pole-top assemblies an additional distance not exceeding two feet (0.6 m) for the purpose of economically meeting the clearance requirements of the NESC.

(2) It is permissible to lower the transformer and associated neutral attachment up to two feet (0.6 m) to provide adequate clearance between the cutouts and single-phase, conventional distribution transformers.

(3) It is permissible to lower the neutral attachment on standard construction pole-top assemblies an additional distance of up to six feet (2 m) for the