

HOUSE BILL 520

C5

EMERGENCY BILL

2lr2470
CF SB 929

By: **Delegates Nathan–Pulliam, Barkley, Braveboy, Burns, Davis, Feldman, Harrison, Impallaria, Jameson, Jones, Kramer, Love, McHale, Minnick, Oaks, Olszewski, B. Robinson, Schuh, Stukes, Tarrant, and Vaughn**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2012

Assigned to: Economic Matters

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: March 29, 2012

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Electric Companies – Contact Voltage – Surveys and Mitigation – The Deanna**
3 **Camille Green Act of 2012**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring certain electric companies to file with the Public Service
5 Commission for approval a certain list or voltage survey plan on or before a
6 certain date; requiring an electric company to file a certain voltage survey plan
7 for Commission approval within a certain period of time; requiring an electric
8 company to conduct certain surveys of certain objects and surfaces within
9 certain contact voltage risk zones at certain times and under certain
10 circumstances; requiring an electric company to conduct certain surveys of
11 certain objects and surfaces that are not within a certain contact voltage risk
12 zone at certain times; specifying how an electric company shall test street
13 lights; requiring an electric company to file for Commission approval a certain
14 amended voltage survey plan within a certain time period before implementing
15 a material change to a voltage survey plan; authorizing the Commission to
16 modify certain contact voltage survey requirements under certain
17 circumstances; requiring that certain equipment must be certified by an
18 independent laboratory for certain purposes; requiring an electric company to
19 include certain certification when filing a certain voltage survey plan; requiring
20 an electric company to confirm and document all contact voltage detected in a
21 contact voltage survey in a certain manner; requiring an electric company to
22 make an area safe after detecting a potential contact voltage condition until the
23 condition can be confirmed; requiring that, when an electric company detects a

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



1 certain contact voltage measurement, the electric company shall maintain
 2 certain records, perform a certain contact voltage survey, make a certain area
 3 safe, and use best efforts to make a certain permanent repair within a certain
 4 time period if the property is electric distribution plant or a certain street light
 5 or notify a certain person associated with a property that is not owned by the
 6 electric company of the condition and the need for the owner to make a certain
 7 repair; requiring an electric company to file a certain compliance report with the
 8 Commission on or before a certain date each year; providing for the contents of
 9 the compliance report; authorizing the Commission to impose a certain civil
 10 penalty under certain circumstances; ~~requiring the Commission to adopt certain~~
 11 ~~regulations; authorizing the Commission under certain circumstances to waive~~
 12 ~~or modify a certain provision or impose certain requirements under certain~~
 13 ~~circumstances; requiring the Commission to submit a certain report on or before~~
 14 ~~a certain date on the progress of the implementation of this Act and certain~~
 15 ~~regulations; defining certain terms; making this Act an emergency measure;~~
 16 and generally relating to contact voltage plans and surveys.

17 BY adding to
 18 Article – Public Utilities
 19 Section 7–214
 20 Annotated Code of Maryland
 21 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2011 Supplement)

22 Preamble

23 WHEREAS, On May 5, 2006, Deanna Camille Green, at the age of fourteen, was
 24 electrocuted by 277 volts on a fence in Baltimore City; and

25 WHEREAS, Contact voltage is a voltage present on a publicly accessible
 26 structure or surface due to faults in buried or internal wiring that poses a safety risk
 27 to pedestrians and pets; and

28 WHEREAS, Deteriorated and damaged utility electric distribution cables may
 29 energize a variety of structures and surfaces in the public right-of-way, including
 30 utility assets such as manhole covers, light poles, and transformer boxes, as well as
 31 nonutility structures and surfaces such as fences, sidewalks, and storm drains; and

32 WHEREAS, On October 28, 2011, the Maryland Public Service Commission
 33 approved the adoption of COMAR 20.50.11 Contact Voltage Survey Requirement and
 34 Reporting (In Memory of Deanna Camille Green); ~~and~~

35 ~~WHEREAS, The regulations, with the exception of parks, do not account for the~~
 36 ~~propensity of electric company owned cables and equipment to energize publicly~~
 37 ~~accessible conductive structures and surfaces not owned by the electric company; and~~

1 ~~WHEREAS, The regulations do not require testing of those structures and~~
2 ~~surfaces not owned by the electric company, exposing the public to unnecessary and~~
3 ~~significant risk;~~ now, therefore,

4 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
5 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

6 **Article – Public Utilities**

7 **7-214.**

8 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE**
9 **MEANINGS INDICATED.**

10 **(2) “CONTACT VOLTAGE” MEANS A VOLTAGE CONDITION THAT**
11 **MAY RESULT IN AN OBJECT OR SURFACE BEING INADVERTENTLY ENERGIZED.**

12 **(3) “CONTACT VOLTAGE RISK ZONE” OR “CVRZ” MEANS THE**
13 **PORTIONS OF EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY’S SERVICE TERRITORY THAT:**

14 **(I) ARE SERVED BY UNDERGROUND ELECTRIC**
15 **DISTRIBUTION PLANT; AND**

16 **(II) HAVE SUBSTANTIAL PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC OR**
17 **POPULATION DENSITY, WHETHER PERMANENT, SEASONAL, OR VARYING BY**
18 **TIME OF DAY.**

19 **(4) “CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY” MEANS A SURVEY PERFORMED**
20 **BY AN ELECTRIC COMPANY TO DETECT CONTACT VOLTAGE CONSISTENT WITH**
21 **THE ELECTRIC COMPANY’S VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN.**

22 **(5) (I) “ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION PLANT” MEANS ALL**
23 **ELECTRIC COMPANY PLANT USED TO DISTRIBUTE ELECTRICITY TO ITS**
24 **CUSTOMERS.**

25 **(II) “ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION PLANT” INCLUDES COVERS**
26 **AND PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES.**

27 **(III) “ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION PLANT” DOES NOT INCLUDE**
28 **CUSTOMER METERS AND METER ENCLOSURES.**

29 **(6) “VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN” MEANS A PLAN, SUBMITTED BY AN**
30 **ELECTRIC COMPANY AND APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION, THAT GOVERNS THE**
31 **ELECTRIC COMPANY’S CONTACT VOLTAGE DETECTION AND TESTING**

1 EQUIPMENT AND VOLTAGE DETECTION AND TESTING PROCEDURES TO BE USED
2 WHEN CONDUCTING CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEYS.

3 (B) (1) ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2012, EACH ELECTRIC
4 COMPANY SHALL FILE WITH THE COMMISSION FOR APPROVAL:

5 (I) A LIST AND LOCATION MAP FOR ALL CVRZS WITHIN ITS
6 SERVICE TERRITORY, IF APPLICABLE; OR

7 (II) IF NO CVRZS ARE DESIGNATED IN ITS SERVICE
8 TERRITORY, A VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN.

9 (2) WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER THE COMMISSION APPROVES A CVRZ
10 WITHIN AN ELECTRIC COMPANY'S SERVICE TERRITORY, THE ELECTRIC
11 COMPANY SHALL FILE ITS VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN FOR COMMISSION
12 APPROVAL.

13 (3) EACH ON COMMISSION APPROVAL OF ITS VOLTAGE SURVEY
14 PLAN, EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL CONDUCT:

15 (I) AN INITIAL CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY OF EACH CVRZ
16 WITHIN 1 YEAR AFTER THE COMMISSION APPROVES AN ELECTRIC COMPANY'S
17 VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN; AND

18 (II) SUBSEQUENT SURVEYS OF EACH CVRZ AS SET FORTH
19 IN ITS VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN.

20 (4) EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL CONDUCT AN INITIAL AND
21 EACH SUBSEQUENT CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY WITHIN EACH CVRZ OF ALL
22 OBJECTS AND SURFACES THAT ARE:

23 (I) PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE;

24 (II) CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING ELECTRICITY; AND

25 (III) 1. ~~PROXIMATE TO UNDERGROUND~~ ELECTRIC
26 DISTRIBUTION PLANT;

27 2. STREETLIGHTS OWNED OR MAINTAINED BY THE
28 ELECTRIC COMPANY;

29 3. STREETLIGHTS AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS OWNED BY
30 A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OR OTHER UNIT OF GOVERNMENT, WITH THE
31 CONSENT OF THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY; AND

1 **4. PUBLIC PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS, WITH THE**
2 **CONSENT OF THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY.**

3 **(5) (I) FOR AREAS IN EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY'S SERVICE**
4 **TERRITORY NOT LOCATED IN A CVRZ, EXCEPT FOR WOODEN POLES, THE**
5 **ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL CONDUCT A CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY ON ALL**
6 **PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION PLANT AND PUBLICLY**
7 **ACCESSIBLE STREET LIGHTS THAT THE ELECTRIC COMPANY OWNS OR**
8 **MAINTAINS THAT ARE CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING ELECTRICITY:**

9 **1. WITHIN 3 YEARS AFTER THE INITIAL APPROVAL**
10 **OF THE VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN; AND**

11 **2. SUBSEQUENTLY AS SET FORTH IN ITS VOLTAGE**
12 **SURVEY PLAN.**

13 **(II) AN ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL TEST EACH STREET**
14 **LIGHT FOR CONTACT VOLTAGE AFTER DARK OR WHEN THE LIGHT IS**
15 **ILLUMINATED.**

16 **(6) AT LEAST 60 DAYS BEFORE IMPLEMENTING A MATERIAL**
17 **CHANGE TO A VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN, AN ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL FILE AN**
18 **AMENDED VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN FOR COMMISSION APPROVAL.**

19 **(7) THE COMMISSION MAY MODIFY THE FREQUENCY OR SCOPE**
20 **OF ANY CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY REQUIREMENT ON A SHOWING OF GOOD**
21 **CAUSE.**

22 **(C) (1) EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL INCLUDE IN ITS VOLTAGE**
23 **SURVEY PLAN ALL EQUIPMENT USED FOR DETECTING CONTACT VOLTAGE.**

24 **(2) (I) THE TYPE OF EACH EQUIPMENT MUST BE CERTIFIED BY**
25 **AN INDEPENDENT TEST LABORATORY AS BEING ABLE TO RELIABLY DETECT**
26 **VOLTAGES OF 6 TO 600 VOLTS.**

27 **(II) EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL INCLUDE THE**
28 **CERTIFICATION WHEN FILING THE VOLTAGE SURVEY PLAN.**

29 **(D) (1) EACH ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL CONFIRM AND DOCUMENT**
30 **ALL CONTACT VOLTAGE DETECTED IN ITS CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY USING A**
31 **VOLTMETER AND A 500 OHM SHUNT RESISTOR.**

1 **(2) UNTIL A POTENTIAL CONTACT VOLTAGE CONDITION CAN BE**
2 **CONFIRMED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, EACH ELECTRIC**
3 **COMPANY SHALL MAKE AN AREA SAFE AFTER DETECTING A POTENTIAL**
4 **CONTACT VOLTAGE CONDITION DURING ITS CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY.**

5 **(3) IF AN ELECTRIC COMPANY DETECTS A CONTACT VOLTAGE**
6 **MEASUREMENT UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION THAT IS AT LEAST**
7 **1 VOLT OF ALTERNATING CURRENT, THE ELECTRIC COMPANY SHALL:**

8 **(I) PERFORM A CONTACT VOLTAGE SURVEY ON ALL**
9 **OBJECTS AND SURFACES THAT ARE CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING ELECTRICITY**
10 **AND ARE PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE WITHIN AT LEAST 30 FEET OF THE LOCATION**
11 **OF THE MEASURED CONTACT VOLTAGE;**

12 **(II) WHEN ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION PLANT OR A STREET**
13 **LIGHT THAT THE ELECTRIC COMPANY OWNS OR MAINTAINS IS INDICATING**
14 **CONTACT VOLTAGE:**

15 **1. IMMEDIATELY AND CONTINUOUSLY MAKE THE**
16 **AREA SAFE; AND**

17 **2. USE BEST EFFORTS TO MAKE A PERMANENT**
18 **REPAIR TO MITIGATE THE CONTACT VOLTAGE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT NOT**
19 **LATER THAN 45 DAYS ~~EXCEPT AS OTHERWISE APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION~~**
20 **IN, UNLESS EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES ~~IF~~ EXIST AND THE AREA**
21 **CONTINUES TO BE MADE SAFE THROUGH A TEMPORARY MEASURE TO MITIGATE**
22 **THE CONTACT VOLTAGE;**

23 **(III) WHEN PROPERTY THAT IS NOT OWNED BY THE**
24 **ELECTRIC COMPANY IS INDICATING CONTACT VOLTAGE, IMMEDIATELY USE**
25 **BEST EFFORTS TO:**

26 **1. MAKE THE AREA SAFE; AND**

27 **2. NOTIFY THE CUSTOMER OR RESPONSIBLE PERSON**
28 **ASSOCIATED WITH THE PREMISES OR CUSTOMER-OWNED FACILITY OF THE**
29 **UNSAFE CONDITION AND THE NEED FOR THE CUSTOMER TO MAKE A**
30 **PERMANENT REPAIR TO MITIGATE CONTACT VOLTAGE; AND**

31 **(IV) MAINTAIN WRITTEN RECORDS OF ITS ACTIONS TO MAKE**
32 **THE AREA SAFE AND MITIGATE THE CONTACT VOLTAGE.**

33 **(E) (1) ON OR BEFORE APRIL 1 OF EACH YEAR, EACH ELECTRIC**
34 **COMPANY SHALL FILE A COMPLIANCE REPORT WITH THE COMMISSION:**

1 (I) DESCRIBING THE RESULTS OF ITS CONTACT VOLTAGE
2 SURVEYS; AND

3 (II) SUMMARIZING EACH KNOWN CONTACT VOLTAGE
4 ELECTRIC SHOCK AND EACH CONTACT VOLTAGE ELECTRIC SHOCK COMPLAINT
5 RECEIVED FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC, WHETHER THE SHOCK AFFECTED
6 AN INDIVIDUAL OR AN ANIMAL.

7 (2) THE COMMISSION SHALL APPROVE THE FORM OF THE
8 REPORT.

9 (F) THE COMMISSION MAY IMPOSE A CIVIL PENALTY UNDER THIS
10 DIVISION FOR A VIOLATION OF THIS SUBSECTION.

11 ~~(G) THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT~~
12 ~~THIS SECTION.~~

13 (G) THE COMMISSION MAY, IN ITS DISCRETION, THROUGH ORDER OR
14 REGULATION:

15 (1) WAIVE OR MODIFY ANY PROVISION OF THIS SECTION; OR

16 (2) IMPOSE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS AS CIRCUMSTANCES
17 REQUIRE.

18 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, on or before January 1,
19 2013, the Public Service Commission shall submit a report to the General Assembly, in
20 accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, on the progress of the
21 implementation of this Act and the regulations under COMAR 20.50.11: Deanna
22 Camille Green Rule – Contact Voltage Survey Requirement and Reporting Authority,
23 including the status and availability of contact voltage technology in the State.

24 SECTION ~~2~~ 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an
25 emergency measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health
26 or safety, has been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the
27 members elected to each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take
28 effect from the date it is enacted.