

TRANSMISSION OF POWER

The increasing demand for and the consumption of electric energy in our society raises many questions that need to be considered before a new transmission line for more electric power is planned. One of them is how the power should be transported from the power plant to the consumer.

How is power transported from the supplier to the local area where you live and then into your house?

Transport of electric power is a question of method and procedure seen in relation to other concerns, such as cost and protection of the environment. Check the related link, “Power to the People” where some of the main considerations are mentioned in the last paragraph of that article. The issue can also in some ways be related to the advantages and disadvantages of concealed or open methods of house wiring (“House Wiring”).

Overhead Systems



Overhead Power Lines – USA

Overhead cable systems are very dominating and visible in nature. The towering pylons of the grid are seen as an eyesore by many. Most people will agree that they are a violation of untouched nature. In residential and densely populated areas, underground transmission is usual, at least in Norway. That is mainly to reduce the risk of electromagnetic radiation from the cables, but also to avoid the ugly web of overhead cables above the streets. However, in the USA it is usual to see overhead cable systems also in towns and cities. Look for this the next time you see a picture or a movie from small-town America.



Underground Power Line

Whenever a new transmission line is planned, it will initiate a debate raising questions of environmental protection vs. economic considerations. An overhead cable system is cheaper to construct and it is easier to maintain and troubleshoot. Thus, the distribution companies primarily prefer to put up overhead transmission lines to save money.

New Power Lines in Norway

In Norway, there is currently a controversy concerning transmission of power to parts of Western Norway and the arguments follow the same pattern. The environmentalists claim that the overhead cables will spoil the beauty of the fjords and mountains, and want the cables to go subsea across the fjords. They even say that overhead lines will be bad for tourism in the area. However, the companies and many politicians seem to focus on the financial aspects and prefer to go for an overhead solution.

Dependence on Electric Power

We are totally dependent on electric power in our modern society. Imagine what would happen if there was a worldwide power cut and no emergency generators would work. It would mean total chaos. The least of your problems would be cold water in the tap and a black TV screen... So the next time you switch on the light or enjoy a hot shower, you should stop a minute and think about the benefits of electric power and how it is transported to your home.

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