

Thursday, January 22, 2015 8:45 AM ET

FirstEnergy spends more than \$1B on electric system upgrades

By [Darren Sweeney](#)

[FirstEnergy Corp.](#) invested more than \$1 billion in electric system improvements in 2014, the company announced Jan. 21.

The company invested approximately \$690 million in the [Ohio Edison Co.](#) service territory on reliability infrastructure projects and other transmission and distribution improvements.

More than \$581 million was spent on transmission-related projects owned by subsidiary [American Transmission Systems Inc.](#)

Some of the key projects in Ohio Edison's service territory include:

- * Completing a 60-mile, 138-kV transmission line from Springfield, Ohio, to Delaware, Ohio, to help enhance redundancy and provide additional system flexibility for a growing area. The cost of the project was approximately \$36 million.
- * Continuing construction on a 100-mile, 345-kV transmission line from FirstEnergy's [Bruce Mansfield](#) power plant along the Ohio River to northeast Ohio to enhance system reliability. Approximately \$128 million was spent on this project in 2014, which is expected to be operational by the summer of 2015.
- * Continuing construction on a new transmission substation in the Massillon, Ohio, area. Nearly \$30 million was invested in this project in 2014, which is expected to be operational by this summer.
- * Expanding the electric system to serve customers in the eastern Ohio shale gas region, including a new \$3.6 million transmission line and \$3 million in substation upgrades.
- * Completing a new \$3.4 million modular substation in Bath Township, Ohio, and breaking ground on a similar facility in West Akron, Ohio, to serve additional load growth.
- * Installing remote-control equipment and breaker upgrades at substations in four counties at a cost of more than \$1.6 million.
- * Spending more than \$8 million inspecting and replacing distribution poles.
- * Trimming trees to maintain proper clearances along nearly 5,000 miles of power lines at a cost of more than \$19 million.

FirstEnergy said it invested approximately \$263 million in the [Cleveland Electric Illuminating Co.](#) service area in 2014, including more than \$161 million of transmission upgrades.

Some of the company's improvement projects in the Illumination Co.'s northeast Ohio service area include:

- * Constructing a new \$12 million substation as part of the 345-kV transmission line project from the Mansfield plant to the Cleveland area.
- * Installing synchronous condenser voltage regulating equipment in Eastlake, Ohio, at a cost of about \$25 million.
- * Spending more than \$16 million to continue work on new sub-transmission circuits in downtown Cleveland as part of a large-scale project designed to handle future load growth around the Cleveland Clinic.
- * Rebuilding portions of a major substation in Northfield, Ohio.
- * Trimming trees on the distribution system, removing trees that could fall on electrical equipment and inspecting and replacing distribution poles.
- * Inspecting, repairing or replacing nearly 100,000 feet of underground circuits and equipment.

FirstEnergy invested approximately \$152 million in the [Toledo Edison Co.](#) service territory, including more than \$116 million on transmission-related projects.

Some of the key projects in Toledo Edison's service territory include:

- * Continuing construction on a 48-mile, 345-kV transmission line between existing substations in Sylvania Township, Liberty Center and Troy Township to enhance grid reliability and support future growth. More than \$14 million was invested in this project in 2014, which is expected to be complete this summer.
- * Continuing construction on a new transmission substation to serve the Perrysburg area. More than \$18 million was spent on this project in 2014, which also is expected to be complete in summer 2015.
- * Installation of two 345-kV transformers at two substations to enhance service reliability at a cost of \$15 million.
- * Relocation of utility service around ongoing road construction projects in Toledo.

* Inspecting and replacing distribution poles and trimming trees on the distribution system.

In addition to the 2014 upgrades, FirstEnergy said planning is underway on several new projects, including new substations, transmission lines and circuit upgrades.