



Drone Inspections - Frequently Asked Questions

Central Virginia Electric Cooperative

Who is Altitude Imaging?

Altitude Imaging is a growing and innovative small Virginia business that uses drones to provide aerial images and quantifiable inspection data for a variety of industries nationwide through a connected team of certified pilots and resources.

What are you taking pictures of?

CVEC and its authorized contractors will be taking high quality pictures of our utility poles, conductor, rights-of-way (ROWs), substations, and other CVEC infrastructure.

What will you do with these pictures?

As part of CVEC's commitment to operating and maintaining safe and reliable electric service, we utilize these pictures to see utility poles, connections, hardware and vegetation near lines to proactively identify items that could be a problem in the future.



*Drone photo of utility equipment
Photo credit: Altitude Imaging*

Why are you using drones to inspect the electrical infrastructure?

CVEC conducts some of its inspections from the ground, using linemen on foot or in trucks. However, many areas of CVEC's 4,682 miles of line cut through areas where the terrain is difficult and unsafe to access. Drones allow CVEC to conduct these inspections more efficiently, covering larger areas and maximizing the reliability and integrity of its distribution and transmission system. As one of the first utility cooperatives in the state to embrace this safe and innovative option, CVEC looks forward to using drones to boost reliability and better serve its members.

Previously, CVEC relied on helicopters to conduct aerial inspections. However, drones are smaller and move much slower than helicopters. Drones provide clearer, closer photos of our electrical infrastructure, and have a considerably smaller impact on the environment.

Will CVEC or their authorized contractor require access to my property?

While most lines can be accessed by ROW crossings at main or side roads, there is a possibility that our employees or contractor will cross your property in the ROW of the power line to complete our inspections.

Will you be taking pictures of my property?

In short, no; however, we may be taking pictures of the pole near your service drop or adjacent to your home. This is important information for us to ensure your transformer and lines up to your house or property are in proper working order and not a danger to you, your family, or your property. All pictures taken, are focused on our equipment not your property.

Will you be keeping these images?

CVEC does not store these images permanently. They are only stored between the time they are taken and when an authorized inspector is available to view the image. Once the pictures are analyzed, they are permanently deleted.

Is your authorized contractor insured and licensed as a drone pilot?

Yes, we approve the credentials of any authorized contractor before a company is permitted to work with us. All our contractors will have an "authorized contractor" signage displayed on their vehicle(s).

May I speak with the CVEC employee or authorized contractor while they are flying and inspecting? ?

Yes, but please use caution when they are flying. This type of work requires a tremendous amount of concentration. However, we are always happy to speak with you and our contractor(s) are always happy to do the same. For your safety and the safety of our employees and contractors, please abide by the 6ft social distancing guideline at all times.