

Resolution Supporting the Sperry-Piltz Ice Accumulation Index (SPIA Index)

WHEREAS, Damaging ice storms have impacted critical electric utility infrastructures in many States, causing thousands of outages and delays in restoration of vital service for consumers; *and*

WHEREAS, A domino effect may occur with the loss of electric utility service for telecommunications, natural gas, water and waste-water facilities due to ice storms; *and*

WHEREAS, Mr. Sid Sperry, representing the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives, and Mr. Steve Piltz, meteorologist-in-charge of the National Weather Service office in Tulsa, Oklahoma, have monitored the effects and impacts of ice storms for more than ten years; *and*

WHEREAS, These gentlemen formed a research alliance with the Oklahoma Climatological Survey in Norman, Oklahoma, to prepare a guide using the various weather parameters involved in the formation of ice storms and have called it the “Sperry-Piltz Ice Accumulation Index” or “SPIA Index;” *and*

WHEREAS, Unlike other post-event, weather-related disaster indices, such as the Enhanced Fujita Scale for tornados, the SPIA Index can accurately predict – days in advance – the location, timing and severity of ice storm impacts on aerial utility conductors and telecommunications cables; *and*

WHEREAS, After extensive testing of the SPIA Index, it was used by the National Weather Service office in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to give advance warnings of up to seventy-two and ninety-six hours and to accurately predict footprint areas for the January 26-29, 2009, ice storm that heavily impacted parts of eastern Oklahoma and northwestern Arkansas; *and*

WHEREAS, Other National Weather Service offices across the United States have existing digital forecasting and extended forecast modeling software to enable implementation of the SPIA Index into their forecasting databases and could thus provide accurate predictions of oncoming ice storms and allow utility companies to pre-position both disaster-response manpower and repair equipment to more quickly restore damaged infrastructure caused by ice storms; *now, therefore be it*

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, convened at its 2009 Summer Committee Meetings in Seattle, Washington, supports the consideration of adoption and implementation of the “Sperry-Piltz Ice Accumulation Index,” or “SPIA Index” by all offices of the National Weather Service across the United States that could possibly be affected by devastating ice storms, and encourages the use of the SPIA Index by disaster preparedness and emergency response agencies to better prepare for future ice storms.

*Sponsored by the Committee on Critical Infrastructure
Adopted by the NARUC Board of Directors, July 22, 2009*