

PPL's Use of Helicopters to Repair Live Power Lines Featured In Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum Film

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ALLENTOWN, Pa.

PPL Corporation's use of helicopters to repair 500,000-volt power lines is featured in a new IMAX film about unusual uses for helicopters around the world. It will premier Wednesday (9/18) at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/19981015/PHTH025>)

The film, entitled "Straight Up! Helicopters in Action," is narrated by actor Martin Sheen, who currently plays President Bartlet in the television series "The West Wing."

"We're pleased that the prestigious Smithsonian Institution has recognized our innovative use of helicopters to provide reliable electric service for our customers," said Mike Bray, president of PPL Electric Utilities. "Helicopters provide a cost-effective and safe way to maintain our thousands of miles of high-voltage power lines."

In the movie, a helicopter flies up to a PPL power line with 500,000 volts of electricity running through it. An aerial lineman sitting on the skid of the helicopter reaches out with a steel wand and touches the wire, drawing a large electrical arc. This action electrically "bonds" the helicopter to the wire, allowing the lineman to step onto the wire and safely perform maintenance work.

Other segments in the film include a reconnaissance mission with the U.S. Marine Corps, an air-sea rescue by the U.S. Coast Guard, relocation of endangered black rhinos in South Africa, United Nations food deliveries in Sierra Leone, and a U.S. Customs Service helicopter drug bust off the coast of Florida.

The film will be shown for the next several years at the National Air and Space Museum's current location on The Mall in Washington, D.C., and will be shown at the museum's new location when it opens at Dulles International Airport. The film also will be marketed to IMAX theaters around the world.

PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL), headquartered in Allentown, Pa., controls about 11,500 megawatts of generating capacity in the United States, sells energy in key U.S. markets, and delivers electricity to customers in Pennsylvania, the United Kingdom and Latin America.

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