

August 30, 2005

Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas send crews to Louisiana and Alabama

Little Rock, Ark. – Aug. 30, 2005 – The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas have dispatched 100 linemen and equipment to assist Washington-St. Tammany Electric Cooperative in Louisiana to assist in a major power restoration effort caused by Hurricane Katrina. In addition, the statewide association, Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., (AECI), has dispatched an additional 28 men and equipment to Black Warrior Electric Membership Corp. in southern Alabama and 13 men and equipment to Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association in Columbia, Miss.

The number of crews may increase as damage assessments are finalized by cooperatives in impacted areas.

Larry Harp, manager of the Safety and Loss Control Department of the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, said he has been working closely with cooperatives in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, and is coordinating the effort for Arkansas cooperative crews. The larger group of Arkansas crews will focus their efforts at Washington-St. Tammany Electric Cooperative, a 40,735-member electric cooperative located in Franklinton, La., north of New Orleans, Harp said. The 28-man team will work with Black Warrior Electric Cooperative in southern Alabama to reconstruct power line infrastructure and the 13-member crew will perform similar functions for Pearl River Valley Electric Power Association in southern Mississippi.

"The electric cooperatives across Arkansas are always ready and willing to assist electric cooperatives in times of need," Harp said, adding that the linemen began leaving from their locations around Arkansas on Tuesday morning.

Pat McClafferty, vice president of the Utility Sales Department for Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas, also expects requests for supplies and material in the aftermath of Katrina. AECI is preparing truckloads of wire, transformers and other material to the storm-damaged areas of the Gulf Coast. Initially, two truckloads of materials will be shipped to Mississippi. However, McClafferty said that based on previous storms, this is the beginning of a "long process" for the impacted cooperatives.

"We are being pro-active and placing large wholesale orders on the materials that will be needed to restore the systems damaged by Hurricane Katrina," McClafferty said.

Crews assisting in the restoration efforts are from Arkansas Electric Cooperatives, Inc., of Little Rock, Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative of Ozark, Ashley-Chicot Electric Cooperative of Hamburg, C&L Electric of Star City, Clay County Electric Cooperative of Corning, Craighead Electric Cooperative of Jonesboro, First Electric Cooperative of Jacksonville, Mississippi County Electric Cooperative of Blytheville, North Arkansas Electric Cooperative of Salem, Ouachita Electric Cooperative of Camden, Petit Jean

Electric Cooperative of Clinton, South Central Arkansas Electric Cooperative of Arkadelphia and Woodruff Electric Cooperative of Forrest City.

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Inc. (AECI), a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides various services to the distribution cooperatives; and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), a generation and transmission cooperative. The distribution cooperatives provide electricity to approximately 460,000 members, or customers, in Arkansas and surrounding states.

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