

News Release



Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas

Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas Battle Outages from Severe Weather/Tornadoes

Little Rock, Ark. — April 27, 2011 — The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas are working to restore outages throughout the state due to the continuous rounds of severe weather and tornados. A peak of 65,000 outages was reported earlier this week.

Although some assessments are still ongoing, the cooperatives have approximately 15,000 outages in central, north central and southeastern portions of Arkansas.

Cooperatives currently correcting outages include: Ashley-Chicot Electric of Hamburg; C&L Electric of Star City; First Electric of Jacksonville; North Arkansas Electric of Salem; South Central Arkansas Electric of Arkadelphia; and Woodruff Electric of Forrest City. Arkansas' 17 distribution cooperatives serve consumers in all 75 Arkansas counties.

"The multiple rounds of severe weather have caused outages across the cooperatives' service areas," said Doug White, vice president of systems services for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas. "The hardest hit area has been central Arkansas. Crews have worked tirelessly to reestablish electric service to members in harsh conditions."

According to White, the cooperatives serve some of the most remote areas of the state. Restoration efforts to those areas are often a challenge due to rough terrain and sparse population. "Cooperatives serve an average of six members per mile of distribution line, while other utilities have a higher level of meter density," White said. "Our crews might have to replace many poles to restore power to a small number of members."

White said that despite the conditions, the cooperatives hope to restore power to all members that can accept service today, with the exception of an area in Saline County that was slammed by the storms.

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 490,000 members, or customers, in Arkansas and surrounding states.

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