PPL Electric Utilities prepared for higher-than-usual hurricane activity

Hurricane Beryl kicks off anticipated busy storm season, which runs through Nov. 1.



ALLENTOWN, Pa. (July 9, 2024) – With weather scientists forecasting above-average hurricane activity across the Atlantic region this year, PPL Electric Utilities continues to be on high alert and prepared for any severe weather that may affect its 29-county service territory during storm season, which typically occurs between June 1 and Nov. 1.

On Monday, Hurricane Beryl made landfall in Texas after becoming the earliest hurricane to form in the Atlantic Ocean. It was the second named system to form this storm season; the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is forecasting 17 to 25 named storms with winds of 39 mph or higher over the summer and into the fall. Of those, eight to 13 are predicted to become hurricanes with winds of 74 mph or higher.

While hurricanes don't typically affect Pennsylvania directly, the remnants of those storms can bring severe winds and heavy rains to the state. So far this year, PPL Electric has responded to 17 storms.

"As we face frequent and severe storms, we want our customers to know that we are always ready to respond," said David Quier, vice president and chief operating officer of PPL Electric Utilities. "We are continually investing in our electric system and our team so that we can provide the most reliable service possible. The bottom line is sometimes severe weather causes damage that leads to outages. We are a 24/7/365 business, so no matter what we are ready to deliver."

Building a more resilient grid

PPL Electric makes year-round improvements to strengthen and modernize its energy grid to get ahead of issues. This includes continually monitoring the health of the electric system through helicopter and drone inspections, and the use of sensors and infrared technology to make upgrades and repairs before an outage occurs.

The development of industry-leading smart grid technology reduces the size of the area affected by an outage and automatically reroutes power around trouble spots. Since 2015, about 2 million outages have been avoided due to smart grid technology. And since trees are the leading cause of outages during storms, trees and vegetation are trimmed along thousands of miles of power lines each year.

When an outage does occur, PPL Electric Utilities' state-of-the-art operations software automatically identifies the location of the fault location and restores power faster. This automation often reduces the length of outages to just a few minutes.

Other reliability improvements include:

- Upgrading power lines and poles with stronger, more storm-resistant materials across our distribution and transmission systems.
- Adding more automated sensors for improved fault isolation and restoration.
- Deploying predictive sensors to identify issues before outages occur.
- Installing avian guards and lightning protection along transmission lines.

Storm preparation and response
PPL Electric monitors weather forecasts daily and looks days ahead to begin preparing and mobilizing resources as severe weather materializes. As storms near, storm teams are activated with additional personnel in the field, control centers and customer service across the 29-county service territory; 16-hour shifts may be implemented for around-the-clock coverage; and crews and resources are sent to the right locations to respond as safely and quickly as possible to any outages that may occur.

"Even when a storm isn't in the forecast, we regularly hold storm response exercises to test and refine our emergency response plans. This is another way we ensure that our team of 1,700 strong — from engineers to field personnel to customer service representatives — are prepared to respond at a moment's notice," said Quier.

When a storm does cause outages, PPL Electric understands it's never easy to be without power. An established restoration process is followed to get all customers back in service as quickly and safely as possible. While every customer is a priority, critical systems like hospitals come first. After the most critical systems are restored, workers move on to repairing lines that will bring back electricity for the largest number of customers and then smaller neighborhoods, individual homes and businesses.

How customers can prepare
Just as PPL Electric prepares for emergencies, the company encourages customers to get prepared, stay connected and stay safe – before, during and after a storm.

Get prepared:

- Prepare an emergency kit with food, water, medication, flashlights and pet supplies.
- Charge your phones and devices.
- Make alternate plans if you have a medical condition which requires electricity.
- Purchase power strips with lightning arresters or surge protectors for your appliances and electronics.
- Consider installing lightning rods on your property.

Stay connected:

- Report power outages online at pplelectric.com or text "Outage" to TXTPPL (898775).
- Sign up for alerts to stay connected and receive outage updates atpplelectric.com/alerts.
- Check the status of an outage and estimated restoration times online atpplelectric.com/outage.
- Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, where we will post the latest storm and restoration updates.

Stay safe during and after storms:

- Stay away from utility poles and metal conductors.
- If you encounter a downed wire at any time, assume it's energized and stay away. If you see one, report it immediately to PPL Electric.
- Electric and plumbing equipment may carry lightning current. Avoid using any appliances or electronics plugged into an electrical outlet.
- If using a portable generator during a power outage, never operate the generator in an enclosed area, like a garage, where deadly carbon monoxide fumes could accumulate.
- Remember that candles can start fires. Always use flashlights instead.
- If you lose power, turn off any appliances that were on when the power went off.

- For your safety and ours, please keep a safe distance from our crews.

About PPL Electric Utilities
PPL Electric Utilities delivers safe, reliable and affordable electricity to about 1.5 million homes and businesses in eastern and central Pennsylvania. It regularly ranks among the country's best utility companies for reliability and customer satisfaction. PPL Electric Utilities is a major employer and an active supporter of the communities it serves. It is a part of the PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL) family of companies. Visit pplelectric.com or connect on social media via Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for energy efficiency tips, bill help information, guidance on shopping for an electricity supplier, storm updates and more.

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For further information: Tracie Witter: tlwitter@pplweb.com

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