

New national phone line launched for power cuts



WPD has joined forces with other regional networks to launch a new national power cut phone line – 105 – for power cut queries.

The number is free and available to electricity customers in England, Scotland and Wales. Callers in the Midlands, South West England or South Wales who dial 105 will be put straight through to WPD. This helps to avoid potential confusion or people contacting the wrong company.

Calling 105 will enable people to report or get information about power cuts, no matter who they choose to buy electricity from. People can also call 105 from most landlines and mobile phones, if they spot damage to electricity power lines and substations.

105 is funded and delivered by the electricity network operators, and is a first for the UK's energy industry.

The launch comes as figures reveal that 72 percent of people don't know who to contact if they have a power cut, with a further 43 percent indicating that they would incorrectly call the electricity supplier they pay their bill to, when in fact they should contact their local electricity network operator.

Electricity network operators are the companies that manage and maintain the power lines and substations that bring electricity into homes and businesses. The research, commissioned by the operators' trade body Energy Networks Association (ENA) found that 21percent of people would contact their electricity network operator in a power cut, yet, of these, only 11 percent could correctly name their local operator.

Robert Symons, Chief Executive of WPD said, "Significant network investment means power cuts are not a regular or widespread occurrence for people, however, if a power cut does happen, we want our customers to be able to contact us easily with a simple, memorable number. This is particularly important when there's bad weather, as severe storms can cause damage to power networks and disrupt the electricity supply into people's homes. This new, free number will make life easier for electricity customers.

"Electricity network operators across England, Scotland and Wales and ENA have worked in partnership to launch 105. We hope that our customers will welcome it as an important step forward in helping electricity customers know exactly what to do and who to contact if they have a power cut."

More information about 105 and electricity network operators can be found at www.powercut105.com. The new website also provides direct links and details of how to contact network operators online and via social media to get information and updates about a power cut.