

Rhode Island Energy prepares for Hurricane Lee impacts

Hundreds of additional line and forestry workers secured to assist with restoration efforts; Company encourages customers to stay connected and be prepared for potential outages.

PROVIDENCE, RI (*September 14, 2023*) – Rhode Island Energy (RIE) has been closely monitoring the path of Hurricane Lee this week and is prepared for its potential impacts. The storm is likely to arrive in the area Friday afternoon and continue throughout the day into Saturday. Lee is expected to bring tropical force winds, heavy rains, and the potential for coastal flooding. Current forecasts indicate the storm could cause damage to the electrical system, with winds potentially gusting anywhere from 40 to 60 mph.

“This storm could have a major impact on Rhode Island, which is why we’ve been tracking it for days and putting our plans in place,” said Dave Bonenberger, president of Rhode Island Energy. “Most of the trees across the state haven’t lost any leaves yet, and with the ground already saturated from significant rainfall this summer, these tropical force winds could create outages. Fortunately, we have secured additional line and tree workers to assist us in our restoration efforts, as well as resources from Pennsylvania. We will also be coordinating our response with state agencies and municipalities across Rhode Island to address potential outages in a safe and efficient manner.”

RIE will be ready to respond to outages with over 2,000 personnel providing both field-based and back-office emergency response operations across the region. This includes overhead line, forestry, contractors, underground, damage assessment, wires-down, transmission, substation, municipal liaisons, and call center staff. Crews will be staged across the state and ready to respond once the storm arrives on Friday afternoon.

As Rhode Island Energy continues to prepare for the storm, we are offering the following tips and reminders to our customers:

Customers Should Stay Connected:

- Report power outages at RIEnergy.com or call 855-743-1102.
- Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), where we will post the latest storm and restoration updates.
- Track outages and estimated restoration times online at: www.rienergy.com/RI-Home/outage-central/.
- Sign up for alerts. To stay connected and receive outage updates text REG to 743688.
 - Once registered, to report an outage, text OUT to 743688
 - To check the status of your outage, text STAT to 743688

Stay Safe:

- If you encounter a downed wire at any time, assume it’s energized and stay away. If you see one, report it immediately to RIE or your local emergency response organization.
- Power problems can sometimes interrupt public water supply systems or disable well pumps, so it’s an especially good idea to keep a supply of bottled drinking water handy, as well as some canned food.
- People who depend on electric-powered life support equipment, such as a respirator, should let us know. To register as a life support customer, call the company’s Customer Service Center at 1-855-743-1101.
- Check on elderly family members, neighbors and others who may need assistance during an outage period.
- Make sure your mobile devices are fully charged.

Electric Safety:

- If you use a generator to supply power during an outage, be sure to operate it outdoors.
- Before operating generators, disconnect from RIE’s system by shutting off the main breaker located in the electric service panel. Failure to do this could jeopardize the safety of line crews and the public.
- If you lose power, turn off any appliances that were on when the power went off, but leave one light on so you will know when power is restored.

- Just in case you lose power, it's good to have an emergency kit on hand with food, water, medication, and any pet supplies you may need.
- Remember that candles can start fires. If you lose power, use flashlights instead.
- Avoid opening your refrigerator and freezer as much as possible. Most foods in the fridge and freezer should last between 12-24 hours.
- For your safety and ours, please keep a safe distance from our crews.

Gas Safety:

If you suspect a natural gas leak:

- Get Out - All occupants should leave the house immediately. Do not use the telephone or light switches for any reason.
- Call Us - After leaving the house and reaching a safe environment, call 911. RIE has a 24-hour gas emergency number: 1-800-640-1595.
- Stay Out - Do not return to your home until Rhode Island Energy tells you it is safe. Customers are encouraged to learn more by visiting <https://www.rienergy.com/RI-Home/>.

About Rhode Island Energy

Rhode Island Energy provides essential energy services to over 770,000 customers across Rhode Island through the delivery of electricity or natural gas. Our team of 1,300 employees is dedicated to helping Rhode Island customers and communities thrive, while supporting the transition to a cleaner energy future. Rhode Island Energy is part of the PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL) family of companies addressing energy challenges head-on by building smarter, more resilient and more dynamic power grids and advancing sustainable energy solutions. For more information visit www.RIEnergy.com and stay connected on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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For further information: Ted Kresse, 401.799.7000

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