

PPL Electric Utilities Crews Continue to Repair Damage Caused by Wind; 56,000 Customers Restored Since Saturday

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PPL Electric Utilities line crews and support personnel have worked throughout the weekend to restore service to customers after gusty March winds brought down tree limbs, power lines and some utility poles.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/19981015/PHTH025>)

As of 5 p.m. Sunday (3/10), crews had restored service to more than 56,000 customers since the winds picked up Saturday afternoon (3/9). The hardest hit areas have been the Scranton-Wilkes-Barre area and the central Susquehanna Valley.

"The outage calls have been constant since late Saturday afternoon," said Ray Stoudt, manager of Engineering & Design for PPL Electric Utilities. "All available crews have been working around the clock to repair the damage and will continue to do so until we restore service to all customers."

A problem the crews have been battling is the persistence of the strong winds. As problems are repaired in one location, the wind causes damage in another.

As long as there is no additional wind damage, Stoudt said, the company expects all customers to be back in service by midnight.

About 5,800 customers were without power as of 5 p.m. Sunday. Most of the remaining power outages are in areas of central Pennsylvania north of Harrisburg, including Sunbury, Newport, Williamsport and Bloomsburg.

PPL Electric Utilities has moved crews from the Lehigh Valley, Lancaster County, Schuylkill County and Hazleton to help in the hardest hit areas. The company also has the support of crews from outside contractors.

Much of the damage yet to be repaired is in rural areas. More than 150 repair jobs remain to be completed. More than 300 repair jobs have been done already.

PPL Electric Utilities customers without power should call the company's toll-free customer service phone number, 1-800-342-5775 (1-800 DIAL PPL) to report the outage. Information from customers helps pinpoint the source of problems and speeds the restoration effort.

Because of the strong winds, power lines may be lying on the ground in some areas. Anyone who sees a wire on the ground should stay away and report the problem immediately to PPL Electric Utilities.

PPL Electric Utilities Corporation is a subsidiary of PPL Corporation. Headquartered in Allentown, Pa., PPL Corporation controls or owns more than 10,000 megawatts of generating capacity in the United States, markets energy in select U.S. states and Canada, and delivers electricity to nearly 6 million customers in Pennsylvania, the United Kingdom and Latin America.

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