



Electricity Subsector
Coordinating Council

Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Hurricane Helene: An Ongoing, Powerful Response to Devastating Storm

WASHINGTON (October 1, 2024) – Hurricane Helene caused catastrophic damage across 10 states, impacting nearly 6 million electricity customers in total.* Impacted investor-owned electric companies, electric cooperatives, and public power utilities continue to work around the clock to restore power safely and as quickly as possible to customers and communities impacted by this devastating storm. In areas where access is not a challenge, crews continue to make significant restoration progress. As of 2:00 p.m. EDT, power has been restored to approximately 4.42 million—or 73.6 percent—of customers impacted by Helene.

In the hardest-hit areas, historic flooding, fallen trees and debris, and road and bridge closures are still limiting the ability to assess damage and provide customers with estimates for when power is likely to be restored. In some communities, the damage is so catastrophic that energy infrastructure needs to be completely rebuilt before power can be restored to those customers who are able to receive it.

An army of nearly 50,000 workers from at least 40 states, the District of Columbia, and Canada is dedicated to the Helene response and restoration effort, making this one of the largest mutual assistance mobilizations ever.

The CEO-led Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council (ESCC) is coordinating at the highest levels and tonight will convene its fourth call to discuss the restoration effort with senior government officials and executives from all segments of the electric power industry.

“We appreciate the ongoing leadership from our federal government partners in helping to support the industry’s response to Hurricane Helene,” said Dan Brouillette, president and CEO of the Edison Electric Institute (EEI). “It is heartbreaking to see the utter devastation Helene caused in so many communities, and we know that restoring electricity is critical to their recovery. Right now, the same challenges that are impeding search and rescue are also impeding restoration efforts. Crews will continue to work day and night to restore power and hope to the customers we are so privileged to serve. We appreciate everyone’s patience and support.”

“It is devastating to see the catastrophic damage this hurricane has wrought in communities across the Southeast,” said Scott Corwin, president and CEO of the American Public Power Association (APPA). “Working with our industry and government partners, public power has sprung into action – activating our mutual aid network with a goal of getting the power back on as quickly and safely as possible. While it will be a long road to recovery – requiring significant rebuilding in many places – we will persist until the job is done.”

“Electric cooperatives across the southeast continue working on the herculean tasks of assessing their systems and rebuilding their infrastructure,” said NRECA CEO Jim Matheson. “Despite these heroic efforts, Hurricane Helene was a historic storm, and a full recovery is still weeks away. The resilience and reliability of the cooperative mutual aid network continues and has been essential as thousands of

electric cooperative line workers and support crews work to get the lights back on as quickly and safely as possible.”

**The aggregate number of outages fluctuated as the storm progressed through the Gulf of Mexico and into Florida and other states. It is important to remember that outages measure customer meters impacted, not the number of individuals without power. Due to the nature of the storm, customers may have experienced more than one outage.*

About the Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council

The ESCC serves as the principal liaison between leadership in the federal government and in the electric power sector, with the mission of coordinating efforts to prepare for national-level incidents or threats to critical infrastructure. Protecting the energy grid from threats that could impact national security and public safety is a responsibility shared by both the government and the electric power sector. The ESCC facilitates and supports policy- and public affairs-related activities and initiatives designed to enhance the reliability and resilience of the energy grid. These activities include all hazards, steady-state preparation, and emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for the nation’s electricity sector.

More information is available at: <http://www.electricitysubsector.org/>
