

**PRESS RELEASE**

September 12, 2008

**Media Advisory: Hurricane Information Resources, FAQs****ERCOT PREPARING FOR HURRICANE IKE**

(Update 1: Corrected outage reporting number for AEP below)

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas, Inc., grid operator for most of the state, has been making preparations for Hurricane Ike's anticipated landfall Saturday, including frequent communications with energy and transmission providers and state and national regulators.

Extra engineering staff will be available during the weekend at ERCOT's Taylor control room which is built to withstand hurricane-force winds.

ERCOT has been in communication with energy schedulers regarding hurricane preparations.

The grid operator conducts an annual severe weather drill with energy schedulers and transmission providers, and this year's May drill scenario was a three-day hurricane drill.

**Additional Topics Below**

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**EMERGENCY NOTICES, GRID UPDATES**

News releases and grid updates will be distributed through the [self-subscribe](#) "News\_Bulletins" list and posted in the [news releases](#) section of [www.ercot.com](http://www.ercot.com).

**HURRICANE INFORMATION FOR CONSUMERS****To Report Power Outages**

The transmission and distribution service providers are responsible for repairing damage to the power lines. Check your electric bill for the number to report outages.

[American Electric Power \(AEP\)](#) 866-223-8508  
[Austin Energy](#)  
[Brazos Electric Power Cooperative](#)  
[Brownsville Public Utilities Board](#)  
[Bryan Texas Utilities](#)  
[CenterPoint Energy](#) 800-752-8036  
[College Station Utilities](#)  
[CPS Energy – San Antonio](#)  
[Denton Municipal Electric](#)  
[Entergy-Texas](#) 800-968-8243  
[Garland Power & Light](#)

[LCRA](#)  
[Agic Valley Electric Cooperative](#)  
[Oncor](#) 888-313-4747  
[Rayburn County Electric Cooperative](#)  
[Sharyland Utilities](#) 956-668-9551  
[South Texas Electric Cooperative](#)  
[Texas-New Mexico Power](#) 888-866-7456

## ADDITIONAL INDUSTRY CONTACTS

**Public Utility Commission Consumer Assistance Hotline**  
1-888-782-8477

**Community-Owned Electric Utilities**  
Texas Public Power Association, <http://www.tppa.com/>

**Utility Directories**  
<http://www.puc.state.tx.us/electric/directories/index.cfm>

**Electric Industry Links**  
<http://www.puc.state.tx.us/electric/links.cfm>

**ERCOT Market Participants**  
<http://www.ercot.com/mktparticipants/index.html>

## ERCOT REGION, MAPS

The ERCOT Region includes Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, San Antonio, Austin, Corpus Christi, Abilene and the Rio Grande Valley. It does not include the El Paso area, the Texas Panhandle, Northeast Texas (Longview, Marshall and Texarkana), and Southeast Texas (Beaumont, Port Arthur, and the Woodlands).

- ERCOT Region map: <http://www.ercot.com/news/mediakit/maps/index.html>
- Map of generating plants: <http://www.puc.state.tx.us/electric/maps/gentable.pdf>
- Map of transmission providers in competitive areas: <http://www.puc.state.tx.us/electric/maps/map.cfm>

## HURRICANE FAQs

### Who is responsible for getting my power back on?

Your electric distribution service provider has the responsibility to repair any damage and bring power back online. Check your electric bill to find the number for reporting outages.

### What is ERCOT's role?

ERCOT is the electric transmission grid operator. We ensure the reliability of the bulk transmission system, consisting of the high-voltage transmission network and the generators that feed that system.

ERCOT maintains grid reliability by ensuring that generation matches load at all times, that transmission lines do not become overloaded, and that adequate reserves are available in case of unexpected events. This can be especially challenging during an extreme weather event, when major transmission lines and generation facilities are subject to disruption from storm damage.

### What about neighborhood-wide outages?

Many local areas are likely to lose power due to high winds and resulting damage from trees and debris. This

does not necessarily mean that the transmission system has failed.

If any part of the high-voltage bulk transmission system has been disabled by the storm, ERCOT will work with the transmission/distribution providers and the generation owners to ensure that power is restored safely.

### **What is ERCOT's biggest challenge in a hurricane?**

Grid operators must be prepared to respond to sudden and dramatic losses of electric load, which can occur when electric lines are disabled by storm damage. They must also be prepared to respond to a sudden loss of a generating unit due to storm damage. In these cases, ERCOT's operators will instruct other generators to adjust their output to keep remaining generation and load balanced.

In a typical day, power companies in the ERCOT region rely on load forecasts, developed by ERCOT, which project variations in load with substantial accuracy. These forecasts are based on factors that are fairly predictable — such as normal weather patterns and business cycles. A hurricane poses much greater challenges because it can produce immediate and unpredictable drops in load.

Because of the evacuations on the Gulf Coast, the load in the affected areas will likely be significantly lower than normal — with many residences, businesses and industrial facilities shut down. This reduces the size of the challenge and the risk to overall ERCOT system reliability.

### **Is ERCOT the grid operator for the entire Gulf Coast?**

No. The ERCOT region includes 75 percent of the Texas land area, including all of the Gulf Coast except the Beaumont/Port Arthur/Orange area in East Texas, which is served by Entergy Gulf States, Inc., and is part of the eastern U.S. grid interconnection.

The ERCOT grid is a separate interconnection, entirely located within the state of Texas, and one of three nationally.

### **Does ERCOT own and maintain the power lines?**

No. Transmission lines are owned and maintained by the transmission operators. In most cases, the transmission owner also owns the local distribution lines in your neighborhood.

Some transmission operators (CenterPoint, AEP Texas, Texas New Mexico Power, and Oncor) are fully regulated entities that were unbundled from previously vertical utilities in the deregulated market. Customers living in these service areas receive their electricity and electric bills from separate companies known as "retail electric providers."

Other transmission operators are electric cooperatives or municipal-owned utilities. The South Texas Electric Cooperative (STEC) and its six distribution cooperative members (Karnes, Wharton County, Jackson, Victoria, San Patricio, and Nueces) serve a large section of the Gulf Coast.

### **Will the ERCOT markets continue to operate during the hurricane?**

Yes. ERCOT operates markets to provide balancing energy (to keep generation and load exactly balanced at all times) and to ensure adequate generating capacity reserves are available. We will continue to operate the markets unless we are overtaken by emergency events. We believe it is highly probable that the markets will continue to operate throughout the hurricane and its aftermath.

If the markets should have to be suspended, ERCOT will still have the authority to take steps to ensure the reliability of the system.

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) manages the flow of electric power to 21 million Texas customers – representing 85 percent of the state's electric load and 75 percent of the Texas land area. As the independent system

operator for the region, ERCOT schedules power on an electric grid that connects 38,000 miles of transmission lines and more than 550 generation units. ERCOT also manages financial settlement for the competitive wholesale bulk-power market and administers customer switching for 6 million Texans in competitive choice areas. ERCOT is a membership-based 501(c)(4) nonprofit corporation, governed by a board of directors and subject to oversight by the Public Utility Commission of Texas and the Texas Legislature. ERCOT's members include consumers, cooperatives, independent generators, independent power marketers, retail electric providers, investor-owned electric utilities (transmission and distribution providers), and municipal-owned electric utilities.

**CONTACT**

Dottie Roark 512-225-7024