

RELEASED

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Cooperative prepares for big push

LIVINGSTON –Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is continuing to assess the damage caused by Hurricane Rita as crews are arriving to assist with power restoration efforts.

Inspectors, Line Technicians, Operation Supervisors and Right-of-Way Foremen are riding the lines, looking for any trouble spots and noting all damage. This vital information is being used to fill out work orders and assign crews and equipment so that the system is brought back to normal as quickly and safely as possible.

As the Cooperative pours through its current damage assessment, more than 100 line and construction crews are on their way from places as far as Washington state.

Rita, the once mighty Category 5 storm that made landfall as a Category 3 storm just east of Sabine Pass, caused significant damage to the eastern portion of the Cooperative's service territory. Four of Sam Houston EC's 10 counties were declared major disaster areas by FEMA Saturday: Tyler, Liberty, Hardin and Jasper. Orange, Jefferson, Newton Chambers and Galveston counties also received this designation.

Residents in these counties are eligible to receive individual assistance from the federal government. For more information, please visit www.fema.gov or call (800) 621-FEMA (3362).

Sam Houston is committed to restoring power to all affected areas as quickly as possible in order to speed up the recovery process. However, it is possible that some members in areas east of U.S. 59 to the Neches River could be without power for weeks. Hurricane Rita damaged, and in some cases destroyed several of the Entergy transmission lines that feed electricity to parts of Sam Houston EC's system. Entergy is working around the clock as well to restore those transmission lines so that power will begin to flow to those Sam Houston EC members who are affected.

Our restoration process is a 24-hour a day, seven days a week operation. All Cooperative employees have been assigned to work extended shifts in order to speed up the recovery process and will continue to do so until the restoration process is complete.

Saturday, more than 50 right-of-way crews began the process of clearing debris from distribution and transmission lines. Entergy Texas is also working on energizing three transmission lines that feed the western portion of the Cooperative's service territory.

Most of the Cooperative's service territory west of U.S. 59 was spared the brunt of Rita's wrath. Upwards of 85 percent of these member could have their power restored within a week after Entergy resolves this issue.

At the height of the storm, more than 63,000 meters were without power. Late Saturday night, crews restored power to Feeder 402 near Huntsville. It is the first of many feeders to be energized in the coming weeks.



Right-of-way crews remove trees from lines near Coldspring Saturday.

