

# The steps to restoring power

**Step 1.** Transmission towers and lines supply power to one or more transmission substations. These lines seldom fail, but they can be damaged by a hurricane or tornado. Tens of thousands of people could be served by one high-voltage transmission line, so if there is damage here it gets attention first.

**Step 2.** A co-op may have several local distribution substations, each serving thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, the local distribution substations are checked first. A problem here could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation. If the problem can be corrected at the substation level, power may be restored to a large number of people.

**Step 3.** Main distribution supply lines are checked next if the problem cannot be isolated at the substation. These supply lines carry electricity away from the substation to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

**H**urricane Ike is sure to leave parts of East Texas' electrical distribution system in tatters. Electric cooperatives in the area are poised to begin the massive job of restoring power to their members as soon as the storm abates. After a hurricane passes, leaving thousands of downed trees in its wake, getting the lights back on is not as simple as throwing a switch.

Before any restoration work can begin, workers must remove trees and debris from systems that can involve thousands of customers and hundreds of miles of power lines often running through heavily forested areas. To access those lines, often power crews must themselves clear roads and rights of way. Despite the help of linemen from fellow co-ops across the state and nation working nearly around the clock, the task of rebuilding these lines is so big that it could well take weeks to complete.

Ike is nearly as big as the state of Texas itself, so damage will be widespread as well as severe. An electrical system that's taken years to build could be virtually destroyed in a matter of hours.

**Area enlarged:** Consumers themselves (not the co-op) are responsible for damage to the service installation on the building. Your co-op can't fix anything beyond this point. Call a licensed electrician.

**Step 5.** Sometimes, damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why you have no power when your neighbor does. Your co-op needs to know you have an outage here, so a service crew can repair it.

During a major outage, other cooperatives send line crews to assist with restoring power. These additional crews, as well as communications, equipment and supplies, are coordinated through the cooperatives' statewide organization.

Report your outage to the cooperative office. Employees or response services use every available phone line to receive your outage reports. Remember that a major outage can affect thousands of other members. Your cooperative appreciates your patience.

Individual households may receive special attention if loss of electricity affects life support systems or poses another immediate danger. If you or a family member depend on life support, call your cooperative before an emergency arises.

**DANGER!**  
Stay clear of fallen lines



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