



DREMC NEWS

APRIL 2023

March storms no match for DREMC team

What began as 6,000 Duck River Electric members losing power around noon on Friday, March 3, grew to more than 14,000 by mid-afternoon as sustained and damaging winds moved through Middle Tennessee.

These winds and resulting fallen tree limbs also impacted cooperatives along the southern Tennessee border from Mississippi to Georgia.

The 18 counties served by DREMC experienced widespread outages with the hardest hit areas being Bedford, Coffee, Franklin, and Marshall counties. In Bedford County, straight-line winds splintered five poles in a row near a river bottom, requiring new poles to be installed before power could be restored.

Efforts were complicated in Franklin County when TVA lost power to the Sewanee area, delaying DREMC's ability to address damage to the distribution system. Once TVA completed their repairs, DREMC crews jumped into action to restore

power to the impacted members.

Restoring power in situations like these takes time as crews must drive to each outage location, assess the damage, and then make repairs. All while being mindful of their safety and the safety of those around them.

As office team members worked to support crews and update those without power, the DREMC System Operations Center communicated with line workers to direct them to outages and operated devices remotely on the distribution system.

DREMC members were restored approximately 24 hours later, allowing DREMC crews to help neighboring cooperatives repair damage to their systems.

These events are often stressful, time-consuming, and tiring for line workers and the team members supporting them behind the scenes. However, storms often help us demonstrate the true nature of teamwork.

Whether it is a collaboration between DREMC team members to

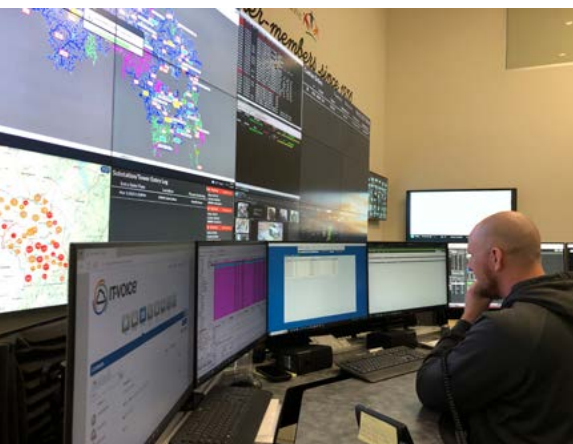


Scott Spence
Duck River EMC
President & CEO

restore power quickly, cooperative members reporting damage to help us identify work that needs to be done, or neighboring utilities extending or receiving assistance, it is an "all-hands-on-deck" approach to powering Middle Tennessee, especially during severe storms.

To the DREMC team members who worked long hours during and after the storm, thank you for your dedication to the membership. Your contributions to our community do not go unnoticed. The sacrifice of your weekend is appreciated.

And, to the impacted members, thank you for your patience, understanding and words of support.



Always be
PREPARED
when storms strike



You depend on Duck River Electric to deliver safe, reliable power 24/7/365, and storms can sometimes impact the delivery of that essential service. As your power provider, sharing information that helps members prepare for potential outages and staying safe when lines are down is important to us.

The DREMC distribution system is continually maintained to ensure that members receive the power they need, when they need it. Yet, even with advanced planning, circumstances beyond DREMC's control (such as ice, snow, thunderstorms, etc.) can sometimes cause outages.

Below are a few things to help you prepare and navigate the next outage:

REPORTING AN OUTAGE

The advanced technology of the electric meter at your location detects a loss of power and notifies DREMC through the outage management system. System operators, who work 24/7/365, are alerted to the outage and dispatch crews to locations where meters report the power being out.

Members are no longer required to call the office to report outages; however, they are encouraged to report information that may be helpful to crews in restoring power, including downed power lines, trees laying across a line and any visible damage to electrical equipment.

When the power is out, DREMC will restore service as quickly and safely as possible.

GETTING POWER RESTORATION UPDATES

During major power outages, members can get helpful information and connect with other emergency resources by visiting dremc.com and clicking on the OUTAGE CENTER tab at the top of the page. (*The Outage Center page is only activated during times of widespread outages affecting DREMC's service area.*)

The online Outage Center will include updates from DREMC on power restoration progress, access to the real-time outage map, and contact information for local emergency resources as well as helpful tips on what to do before, during and after a power outage.

In addition, members are encouraged to follow DREMC on social media: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Regular updates about major outages are posted on social media daily, mainly on Facebook, to keep members informed of the progress in restoring power.



Click the icon at left to view DREMC's Facebook page. Like our page and feel free to share the posts.

PREPARING FOR AN OUTAGE

Being prepared for a possible extended power outage means to be ready before one occurs. There is much information [online](#) to help you prepare for an outage.

In addition to this information and visiting DREMC's Outage Center, members can assist DREMC with providing a higher level of service during an outage by ensure that the contact information on your account is up to date. Not having this information updated could delay communications during an extended outage.

DURING AN OUTAGE

Remember that storms have the potential to bring trees down across power lines, resulting in dangerous conditions. Damaging winds can also be strong enough to pull electrical wires away from the house or structure. As a reminder, members should report such damage to DREMC; it may be necessary for an electrician to make repairs before power can be turned back on at your location.

During an outage, it is recommended to turn off electrical appliances and unplug major electronics, including computers and televisions, to prevent possible circuit overloads when power is restored. In some rare cases, overloaded circuits can result in additional outages at your location.

While appliances and electronics are turned off, leave a light on to indicate that power has been restored. Wait a few minutes and then turn on appliances and equipment—one at a time.

If you use a standby generator, take proper safety precautions. Always read and follow all manufacturer's operating instructions.

STAYING SAFE

Because power lines are damaged does not mean they are not energized. Every downed power line is potentially energized and dangerous until utility crews arrive on the scene to ensure power has been turned off.

Fallen trees and debris in contact with fallen power lines present a safety hazard as they can hide where the dangers lie. A downed power line can energize things around it, such as chain link fences and metal culverts. Stay far away, and keep others away from downed power lines.

If you are driving and come across a downed power line, do not drive over it. The car could snag the line, pulling a pole and other equipment to the ground.

It is best to turn around and avoid areas where lines are down.

FOLLOWING EXTENDED OUTAGES

When you've been without power for more than a day, especially in warmer weather, use your best judgment when it comes to deciding whether or not to dispose of food stored in the refrigerator or freezer.

Also consider the safety of medications that require refrigeration and consult with your doctor or pharmacist if you have concerns.

Sources: Ready.gov and SafeElectricity.org

Help ensure a higher level of assistance by updating your account information

With each passing year and with a more advanced outage management system, it becomes more important for Duck River Electric to have the most up-to-date information on your electric account.

Updated contact information assists the DREMC team in being able to communicate outage and energy use data and updates to you through text, email and phone. Also, when members report an outage, our outage management system needs to

be able to recognize your phone number to accurately associate it with your address, which helps our team in quickly locating and responding to power outages.

Please take a few minutes to [log in](#) to the DREMC member portal and update your account information. Members may also update account information by calling the local Duck River [office](#).

MEMBERS ARE ABLE TO EASILY UPDATE:



MAILING ADDRESS

to help avoid delays in your ability to receive special mailings and monthly billing statements



PHONE NUMBER(S)

to contact you in advance of planned power outages using DREMC's automated phone notifications



EMAIL ADDRESS

to ensure you receive timely updates regarding your electric account when you opt-in to receive email notifications

When you need assistance . . .

Project HELP is available

Duck River Electric's Project HELP program ensures that our neighbors facing financial difficulties are able to keep their power on - not just during the winter - but throughout the year.

The Project HELP emergency energy assistance program helps qualifying DREMC members with part or all of their electric bills, as long as funding is available. To apply for Project HELP assistance, contact the DREMC community partner in your area. A full list of partners is available at [dremc.com](#).

Donations from DREMC members and employees have made this program possible for more than 30 years.

We invite you to join us in donating to Project HELP. Your donations are appreciated and make a difference to those who receive assistance through the program.



HOW CAN I DONATE?

- ONLINE AT [DREMC.COM](#).
- CHECK THE BOX ON YOUR ELECTRIC BILL AND RETURN.
- AT ANY DREMC OFFICE.

5 faqs

FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS
ABOUT

ELECTRIC
SERVICE
CONSTRUCTION
FOR A NEW
HOME

Look for more
frequently asked
questions in future
editions of
DREMC News.

1

WHAT IS THE COST OF A NEW RESIDENTIAL ELECTRIC SERVICE ?

Duck River Electric will provide two poles, at no cost to the member when building a new residential electric service. Each of these poles can support a wire span of 800 feet on average, depending on terrain. Additional poles and related materials needed for the new constructions will be at the member's expense.

2

Does DREMC supply any other materials to assist with construction?

Yes, DREMC supplies the meter base and wire needed for the construction. The member/electrician is responsible for installing the temporary service, mounting the meter base and preparing for and completing the trench if going underground.

3

Can I choose under- ground service?

Yes, members have the option to choose an underground service. DREMC engineers will calculate the approximate cost (aid-in-construction), minus the cost of the pole(s) needed for the standard overhead service.

Underground service construction is more expensive and may not be feasible due to terrain. Each underground construction varies. Talk with your local DREMC engineer about the options and costs.

4

How far does a house need to be from an exist- ing power line?

Any structure should be constructed at least 20 feet from a power line to ensure safety.

5

There are trees where the power line is to be built. Who is responsible for re- moving the trees?

Members are responsible for removing trees, ground to sky, from the area where the new electric service is to be constructed. Trees should be removed to meet the 40-foot right-of-way clearance. After the initial tree removal, DREMC's right-of-way crews will maintain the line clearance on a set rotating schedule for the area.

A new membership application is needed for each new electric service. The application is available [here](#) and at any DREMC office.

Call your local DREMC office and speak with an engineer for more information about new electric construction.

Dusty indoor air?

Check the central air ducts for leaks

If the air inside your house seems more dusty than usual, it could mean that the central unit ducts need to be inspected for possible leaks.

Changing the unit's air filter regularly will help trap dust and pollutants that get into the indoor air so they don't make their way into the duct system or circulate back into the air inside.

However, if the ducts themselves have holes, cracks or gaps in the joints, dust and other particles can enter the ductwork. Once dust enters the duct system, it can then be blown through the vents and into the home.

As a good practice, inspect air ducts to ensure that they are properly sealed to prevent unwanted dust from entering the home and to further ensure efficient operation of the unit. Leaks in the air ducts can allow the conditioned air to escape into the basement, attic and other unconditioned areas of the home, causing the HVAC system to consume more energy and increasing heating and cooling costs.

Contact Duck River Electric's Residential Energy Advisor



Eventually, dust and debris from air duct leaks will make their way to the exterior vent covers, including the central return vent. This is a sign that the unit's ducts should be inspected, repaired or replaced.*

Pat Garrett at pgarrett@dremc.com or call 931-680-5886 with questions about energy programs available to assist members with making their homes more efficient.

** DREMC offers financing to assist with the cost of replacing existing HVAC ductwork. Contact your local [DREMC office](#) for details about the program and how to qualify.*

Right tree. Right place.

Planting the right tree in the right place not only ensures a lifetime of satisfaction, but it also keeps maintenance costs low for property owners.

As an added benefit, planting trees away from power lines will contribute to fewer outages, and this helps Duck River Electric with controlling system operations and maintenance costs that are passed along to the members through our rates.

Even more importantly, keeping trees, plants and vegetation away from the electric system is critical in order to keep you and your family safe and allow line workers safe access to electrical equipment during an outage.

Please remember that trees and wood conduct electricity, which, in many cases, is the leading cause of outages or momentary interruptions when branches touch overhead lines.

There are many benefits that come with having trees on your property - shade, windbreak, privacy and higher property values to name a few. But the key to these benefits is to select the right tree and plant it in the right place to join DREMC in providing safe and reliable electric service at the lowest possible cost.

Things to consider for ensuring safety and reliability

- Consider the mature height of trees. Large trees should be planted at least 40 to 60 feet away from power lines to reduce the need for future pruning.
- Avoid planting any type of tree near underground utility services. Tree roots can interfere with and cause damage to underground pipes, cables and wires. Repairs to these facilities are expensive and could also damage nearby plants and trees during the process.
- Keep areas around electric meters, transformers or other electrical equipment free of any vegetation that could limit utility service access.
- Before digging, call 811 or visit tenn811.com and request the utility locator service to mark the property where underground lines are buried. This is a free service offered by Tennessee One Call and helps to prevent accidental contact, damage and injuries.

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DREMCNews@dremc.com.