

Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas continue ice storm restoration efforts

Little Rock, Ark. – Jan. 29, 2009 – 10:30 a.m. – Ten of Arkansas’ electric cooperatives continue to work today to restore power to more than 178,000 members. This number is down from a peak of approximately 198,000 members on Wednesday.

Damage to the cooperatives’ distribution systems is extensive, with more than 7,800 poles down. Collectively, it is the most catastrophic damage to the cooperatives’ systems in their history.

Originally, 12 cooperatives were impacted by the ice storm. However, two cooperatives have fully restored power to members.

“While progress is being made, many of the cooperatives are facing a long rebuilding process,” said Doug White, vice president of systems services for the Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas. “It takes about one and one-half an hour to reset a pole. This does not include time needed to clear trees and mangled lines.”

More than 2,000 linemen from electric cooperatives in Arkansas and surrounding states are working to restore power.

The hardest hit systems are in northern Arkansas. The cooperatives with outages include: Arkansas Valley Electric Cooperative, Ozark; Carroll Electric Cooperative, Berryville; Clay County Electric Cooperative, Corning; Craighead Electric Cooperative, Jonesboro; Farmers Electric Cooperative, Newport; First Electric Cooperative, Jacksonville; Mississippi County Electric Cooperative, Blytheville; North Arkansas Electric Cooperative, Salem; Ozarks Electric Cooperative, Fayetteville; and Petit Jean Electric Cooperative, Clinton. ***(A chart is attached for outages by cooperative; cooperative service territory map is also attached)***

<i>Updated 10 a.m. January 29, 2009</i>		
Cooperative	Outages (est.)	Broken Poles (est.)
Arkansas Valley	2,000	35
Carroll	60,000	600
Clay	12,500	1,000
Craighead	15,000	3,000
Farmers	3,500	100
First	3,000	100
Mississippi County	3,000	500
North Arkansas	27,000	1,500
Ozarks	45,500	500
Petit Jean	6,500	500
Rich Mountain	0	0
Woodruff	40	0
Totals	178,040	7,835

The public is cautioned to avoid any downed power lines and to report them immediately to local authorities.

The Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas comprise 17 electric distribution cooperatives; Arkansas Electric Cooperatives Inc. (AECI), a Little Rock-based cooperative that provides various services to the distribution cooperatives; and Arkansas Electric Cooperative Corp. (AECC), a generation and transmission cooperative. The distribution cooperatives provide electricity to approximately 490,000 members, or customers, in Arkansas and surrounding states.