Crisis Communications Procedures

Sensitivity: ERCOT Limited

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Document Revisions			
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3/8/11	4.02	Added SOC and Board to all ENS notifications; inserted "redlined" matrix; edited news release templates	D. Roark

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1 Introduction

ERCOT is the organization responsible for ensuring the reliability and adequacy of the regional bulk electric power grid for the majority of Texas. The ERCOT power grid encompasses approximately 85 percent of the state's electric load and about 75 percent of the Texas land area. The ERCOT region covers most of Texas, including 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 (including Longview, Marshall, and Texarkana), and Southeast Texas (including Beaumont, Port Arthur, and the Woodlands).

As the independent system operator for its region, ERCOT manages the scheduling of power on an electric grid consisting of more than 550 generation units and more than 40,327 miles of high-voltage transmission lines. ERCOT is a non-profit corporation regulated by the Public Utility Commission of Texas and subject to oversight by the Texas Legislature.

2 Purpose

The purpose of the Crisis Communications Procedures is to ensure orderly and timely communication of information in the event of an unexpected, abnormal, or critical situation that threatens the reliability of the regional electric grid; the operations of the ERCOT markets; or the safety, health, or security of ERCOT's employees or property. These procedures establish the crisis communications framework for ERCOT to collect, coordinate, and share emergency information and system status with the Texas Legislature, the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC), other Texas state government entities, local government, federal government, market participants and stakeholders, and the media and public.

Due to the complexity of communications among these diverse groups, this document should be expected to change periodically.

3 Scope

The Crisis Communications Procedures will be implemented for incidents affecting large segments of the bulk electric power grid; normal market operations; significant public health, safety or economic disruptions affecting ERCOT staff, property, or constituencies; and any event that requires high-level management participation by government and the electric industry to effectively and swiftly accomplish a return of the bulk electric power grid to normal operation.

The Crisis Communications Procedures deal only with crisis communications between ERCOT and appropriate regulatory, governmental, and public-safety contacts. Other ERCOT documents address broader crisis management procedures and policies, emergency response, disaster recovery, and business continuity. For example, the set-up and operation of a crisis phone bank, if other ERCOT departments determine that one is necessary, would be beyond the scope of this document. Please refer to the Emergency Response Plan for additional information.

Except as noted, the steps outlined in these procedures are not governed by the ERCOT Protocols, but rather are internal ERCOT procedures for communications. The procedures should be used in conjunction with the normal decision-making hierarchy of ERCOT and will not supplant that decision-making process.

4 Policies/Principles

- ERCOT communicates in a regular and timely manner during a crisis.
- All communications are truthful and include appropriately detailed information to each constituency.
- ERCOT keeps the PUC and the Legislature, as appropriate, informed of important developments, including system outages and potential electric shortages in keeping with PUC rules.
- All communications to the news media, including but not limited to interviews, are made through the Crisis Communications Team and designated spokespersons.
- ERCOT will generally communicate only about crises directly affecting ERCOT, the ERCOT markets, or the ERCOT regional grid.
- ERCOT may offer help to market participants experiencing crises on a case-by-case basis.
- The Crisis Communications Team will coordinate information with other teams, such as the Emergency Response Team and/or the Corporate Security Incident Response Team.
- ERCOT is not the first point-of-contact to the public for the majority of electricity-related crises. In many cases, ERCOT communicators refer information seekers to other sources, such as their electricity providers (load serving entities).

5 Communications Constituencies

- ERCOT Employees
  - Executives
  - All Staff
- ERCOT Board of Directors
- Governor's Office
- Legislature
  - Senate Business and Commerce Committee
  - House State Affairs Committee
  - Lieutenant Governor
  - Speaker of the House
  - All Legislators
- Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC)
- State Division of Emergency Management (Governor's Office) including the State Operations Center (SOC). ERCOT will usually rely on the SOC notification system to reach:
  - City Emergency Management Departments
  - Mayors
  - Local Law Enforcement Agencies
  - Fire Departments
  - Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS)
  - County Commissioners and County Judges
  - State agencies other than the PUC
  - Texas Reliability Entity -- notification re: emergency grid event procedures
  - North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) -- notification re: emergency grid event procedures
  - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) -- notification re: emergency grid event procedures
- News Media/Public
- Market Participants and Stakeholders

System Operations' communications with the following federal constituencies are beyond the scope of this document. Please see Section 10 for more information.

- Federal Agencies
  - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
  - Federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF)
  - North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), Electricity Sector Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ESISAC)
  - Other federal agencies, such as the Nuclear Regulatory Commission or the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), as appropriate

6 Crisis Communications Team and Responsibilities

CEO – Shares primary responsibility with the General Counsel and the Director of External Affairs for communicating with PUC Commissioners, members of the Legislature, and the Governor's Office, as appropriate; approves overall messaging

General Counsel – Serves as backup to the CEO; ensures legal soundness of messages; develops and ensures accuracy and consistency of messages to be communicated by all parties; shares primary responsibility with the CEO and the Director of External Affairs for communicating with PUC Commissioners, members of the Legislature, and the Governor's Office, as appropriate

Director of External Affairs – Serves as backup to the CEO; develops and ensures accuracy and consistency of messages to be communicated by all parties; shares primary responsibility with the CEO and General Counsel for communicating with PUC Commissioners, members of the Legislature, and the Governor's Office, as appropriate; and ensures that all appropriate governmental and news media receive complete, timely, and appropriate information

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS STAFF

Communications Manager – Helps develop messaging; has primary responsibility for communicating with the news media; and backstops the Director of External Affairs and Government Relations Manager as needed

Government Relations Manager – Helps develop messaging; has primary responsibility for communicating with appropriate staff contacts at the Legislature; and backstops the Director of External Affairs and Communications Manager as needed

Communications Specialist – Helps develop messaging; has primary responsibility for communicating with ERCOT employees on non-human-resources-related issues and coordinating with the Core Web Team; and backstops all functions listed above as needed

CLIENT SERVICES STAFF

Client Services Staff – Communicate with market participants

Client Services Representative – Wholesale: helps develop messaging; has primary responsibility for communicating with wholesale clients

Client Services Representative – Retail: helps develop messaging; has primary responsibility for communicating with retail clients

Backups
Client Services Representatives have assigned back-ups.

7 Crisis Communications Procedures

7.1 Activate Crisis Communications Procedures

- Member(s) of the Crisis Communications Team is notified that a crisis or potential crisis has been identified; the Crisis Communications Team notifies the ERCOT officers if not already informed.

- The Crisis Communications Team makes the decision to activate the Crisis Communications Procedures, except as otherwise specified. An Energy Emergency Alert (EEA), which is activated by Operations, is an example of such an exception. In an EEA event, Operations initiates first communications via the Emergency Notification System which includes automated emails and phone calls to predetermined lists, based on the EEA level or grid status. The phone calls continue until a person responds to ensure notification is made outside regular working hours. Crisis Communications Team is briefed on the situation by relevant operations/technical/security staff; in the event of a grid emergency, this will be the Control Room Liaison.

- If the Crisis Communications Team cannot convene at ERCOT facilities, refer to the ERCOT Business Continuity Plan for alternative location or convene via telephone communication.

7.2 Take Immediate Action

- Key messages are developed by the Crisis Communications Team.

- External Affairs staff approves key messages for the PUC, legislature, media, other governmental bodies, and SOC.

- Client Services representatives approve key messages for stakeholders and Market Participants.

- Crisis Communications Team identifies and notifies media spokesperson(s).

- Crisis Communications Team identifies and tailors appropriate standard press releases and media advisories for the specific crisis.

- Core Web Team deploys the emergency Web page (see *Appendix D*) at the request of Crisis Communications Team.

- Telecommunications staff transfers main line phone numbers to emergency phone line for call treatment (see *Appendix E*) at request of Crisis Communications Team.

- Crisis Communications Team records appropriate voice messages.

7.3 Communicate Information about the Crisis

- External Affairs staff sends follow-up notifications to governmental agencies, employees, and media as appropriate.

- Client Services staff send notifications to market participants as appropriate.

- Communications used:
  - First communication is an automated email and phone calls initiated by the shift supervisor. The phone calls continue (up to four attempts) until a person responds.
    - External Affairs staff follow up with ~~:P~~personal calls to key governmental contacts
    - Distribution of e-mail messages
    - Recorded updates put in place for public's inbound calls and media hotline

- Core Web Team and Crisis Communications Team periodically update the website with appropriate information.

7.4 Bring Closure to Crisis

- An ERCOT officer declares that the crisis is over.

- The Crisis Communications Team issues an "all clear" notification as appropriate. Crisis Communications Team coordinates documentation of the crisis and response with input from all team members and others.

- Crisis Communications Team monitors the situation.

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7.5 Incorporate Learning

- Crisis Communications Team participates in a "Lessons Learned" discussion.
- Crisis Communications Team makes amendments to the Crisis Communications Procedures document, if needed.
- Changes to procedures, roles, responsibilities, etc., are implemented, if needed.

7.6 Energy Emergency Alert

- In the case of a shortage of electrical supply requiring deployment of the Energy Emergency Alert (EEA), as described in Section 5.6.7 of the ERCOT Protocols, ERCOT will communicate according to the procedures described in *Appendix A*. Primary communications to operating personnel at qualified scheduling entities and transmission operators will be made by system operators according to protocol.
- First communication is an automated email and phone calls initiated by the Operations staff. The phone calls continue until a person responds to ensure notification is made outside regular working hours.
- This Emergency Notification System will include:
    - The PUC ~~Commissioners~~on all EEA Levels, Watch, and Local Firm Load Shed
    - Texas Reliability Entity and FERC on all EEA Levels, Watch, and Local Firm Load Shed
    - ~~o~~
    - The Independent Market Monitor on all EEA Levels, Watch, and Local Firm Load Shed
    - ~~o~~
    - The Office of Public Utility Counsel on all EEA Levels
    - ~~o Board Chair and Vice Chair~~
    - Board Members ~~(beginning at~~on all EEA Level~~s 2A)~~
    - The State Operations Center on~~(beginning at~~ all EEA Level~~s 2B)~~
    - Statewide m~~M~~edia ~~(beginning~~ at EEA Level 2B and Level 3~~)~~
    - Market Participant communications/media contacts at EEA 2B and 3
- The Crisis Communications Team will have responsibility for follow-up communications to the automated messages to include additional information. ~~Crisis Communications Team will issue follow-up news releases containing more information than the automated public media appeal for electric energy conservation.~~ The Crisis Communications Team will also follow up with other

constituents, including government entities and the SOC hotline to confirm the correct message has been sent to first responders, county officials, and state agencies. See *Appendix A* for detailed EEA communication responsibilities.

8 Long-term Crisis Communications Procedures

In the event of a long-term crisis (usually defined as lasting longer than 72 hours) the same crisis communications procedures will be used with the following additions:

- Crisis Communications Team monitors the situation and continues to make communications to appropriate constituencies as needed throughout the duration of the crisis.
- Crisis Communications Team and Core Web Team periodically update the website with appropriate information throughout the duration of the crisis.

9 Procedures for Crises with Lead-time

In the event that ERCOT becomes aware of an impending situation that could lead to a crisis (as in the event of a forecasted hurricane), the same basic crisis communications principles and steps detailed in these procedures will be followed, but with advance planning carried out as possible.

- A spokesperson(s) will be identified in advance.
- Appropriate media advisories and press releases will be identified and tailored as much as possible to the specific situation and kept ready for release.
- All constituencies will be contacted with warning messages if appropriate, particularly if the integrity of the grid is threatened.
- Approved messages will be communicated to the Core Web Team and the 1 ERCOT Staff email list in advance of the crisis.
- Crisis Communications Team will develop appropriate messaging for inbound phone lines, including public and news media.
- Emergency Web page set up and readied in advance.
- In the event of an impending crisis that may strike ERCOT facilities, Crisis Communications Team staff may assist Human Resources staff in communicating with employees, but Human Resources has the primary responsibility. See the ERCOT Inclement Weather Policy for further information.

10 Procedures for Communicating with Federal Agencies

Certain reporting to federal agencies is done by the Control Room operators without involvement from the Crisis Communications Team. This reporting must be done in a timely manner and falls outside the scope of these procedures in accordance with relevant laws and rules. Relevant information will be shared with the Crisis Communications Team as soon as possible after timely reporting to federal authorities.

11 Definitions

- Crisis

  ERCOT defines a crisis as any unexpected, abnormal, or critical situation that threatens the reliability of the regional electric grid, market operations, or the safety or security of ERCOT's employees or property.

- Emergency

  ERCOT Protocols define an emergency condition as "that operating condition where the safety or reliability of the ERCOT System is compromised or threatened, as determined by ERCOT." All emergencies are crises, but not all crises are emergencies.

- Energy Emergency Alert (EEA)

  A plan defined in the ERCOT Protocols and Operating Guides that provides an orderly, predetermined procedure for addressing a shortfall in electric supply by calling upon all available resources and, if necessary, shedding load during electric system emergencies.

  Level 2B of the EEA states that in the event that load curtailment is needed, ERCOT will seek voluntary load curtailment from consumers by issuing an appeal through the public media. Communication steps for this contingency are included in *Appendix A.*

- Triggering Event

  A triggering event is an event that causes ERCOT to declare a crisis.

12 Maintaining the Procedures

The Crisis Communications Procedures shall be reviewed and, if needed, updated by ERCOT staff at least once per year in February. The procedures shall be updated any time a major change is made to the way that ERCOT plans to communicate. Contacts lists shall be updated as needed.

13 Training and Exercises

The External Affairs Department will determine training requirements for the Crisis Communications Team, ERCOT support staff, and Crisis Communications Team back-up staff, and will establish a training schedule.

External Affairs will participate each year in the System Operations annual storm drill and contact the PUC, the Texas State Operations Center, and other market participant communications and public information ~~officers to~~officers to invite them to participate in the crisis communications exercise.

Appendix A: Energy Emergency Alert
External Communications Procedures

Energy Emergency Alert External Communications Procedures

This document describes how the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) meets its communications obligations when an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) event is possible, expected, or underway. These communications obligations are required by a combination of Public Utility Commission (PUC) Rule, ERCOT Protocol, and ERCOT internal procedures, as follows:

1. PUC Subst. R. 25.362(h)(3) requires that ERCOT immediately communicate with the PUC if "ERCOT becomes aware of any event or situation that could reasonably be anticipated to adversely affect the reliability of the regional electric network;"
2. ERCOT Protocols Sec. 5.6.7 (EEA) and Operating Guides Sec. 4 lay out the basic framework for emergency communications; and
3. ERCOT internal procedures relating to communications with government officials, market participants, ERCOT Staff, and the general public are described in this document and in the Crisis Communications Procedures document, to which this EEA Procedure document is attached as Appendix A.

Introduction

The EEA is a set of emergency procedures to be implemented when there is insufficient generating capacity available to meet customer demand. The EEA authorizes ERCOT to order increases in the supply of electricity in the region or to order or request decreases in customer consumption in order to maintain the reliability of the grid. The EEA consists of a sequence of specific actions that ERCOT can undertake, or can order others to undertake, in order to preserve the reliability of the grid. Level 1 of the EEA provides for ERCOT to increase the supply of electricity generation capacity by utilizing available DC tie capability. Level 2A of the EEA seeks to reduce demand on the electricity grid by directing large industrial consumers who have contractually agreed to have power interrupted in an emergency – known as Load Resources,– to shut down. When all available Load Resources have been deployed, EEA Level 2B provides for

deployment of Emergency Interruptible Load Service (EILS), if available.[1] At levels 1, 2A, 2B or 3 or possibly even before entering the EEA, ERCOT will attempt to reduce demand on the electricity grid by asking customers to voluntarily reduce their consumption.

The EEA culminates with Level 3, at which time ERCOT orders local utilities to institute mandatory rotating outages of customers in order to reduce demand on the system. Implementation of Level 3 will create a need for local officials, law enforcement, and emergency service personnel to respond to situations caused by the rotating outages that have the potential to create public safety or health concerns, such as traffic signal outages, increased calls to the 9-1-1 emergency systems, and the potential need to assist persons with health conditions that require medical equipment powered by electricity.
The EEA is described in detail in Section 4 of the ERCOT Operating Guides at http://www.ercot.com/content/mktrules/guides/operating/current/04-070110.doc

Communications Responsibilities
ERCOT's role as the system operator means that ERCOT has the best, most timely, and most complete information on the status of the electrical grid. As a result, ERCOT has the primary responsibility for providing initial notification of governmental officials, including the PUC and State Operations Center (SOC), electricity market participants, and the general public of emergency conditions.

When emergency procedures are or may be needed, ERCOT will first communicate this information to the PUC and SOC via the automated Emergency Notification System. Additionally, when the first notice is issued by ERCOT for an event, ERCOT will also make personal contact via telephone with the SOC, and the Executive Director of the PUC or the Executive Director's designee. With each subsequent notice issued as ERCOT proceeds through the EEA, ERCOT will make personal contact with the Executive Director of the PUC, or the Executive Director's Designee. If the Executive Director cannot be reached, ERCOT will proceed down a contact list of senior agency management until personal contact is established.

[1] EILS is a market-based program that relies on having at least 500 MW of eligible demand being bid into the program in order for it to be available for emergency deployment in any given four-month period.

ERCOT will also provide notice to legislative leaders, the ERCOT Board of Directors, and others as needed, using an appropriate form of notice.

ERCOT will use the Web site and news releases to help communications with the public in a crisis, when possible.

Appendix A-2 provides a summary of the communications and the triggering events leading up to and during an EEA event. However, ERCOT's need and ability to issue all levels of EEA communications will depend on the specifics of the event, including the severity of the immediate and anticipated capacity shortfall, how far in advance ERCOT staff is able to predict the likelihood of an EEA event, and the amount of time available between the various levels of the EEA.

The frst notification to the State Operations Center (SOC) will be an automated email and phone call in order to provide the greatest amount of time for the SOC to issue a situation report (SITREP) via email through the state's emergency communications network, thereby informing local and statewide governmental leaders, local law enforcement, and emergency services personnel of the event.

The Crisis Communications Team will follow-up with additional information using the templates included as Appendix A- 3, with appropriate modifications based on actual conditions.

EEA Communications Content and Triggering Events

The EEA communications are as follows:

A. Pre-EEA Notices

Throughout each day, ERCOT system operators continuously assess the ability of available electric generation capacity to meet electricity consumption for current and future hours, with particular attention paid to available capacity during the projected peak demand hours of the day, which vary seasonally. If ERCOT determines at any point that there may be insufficient generation available to serve customers, it can issue a series of

notices, advisories, or watches to power plant owners to inform them of the situation. In many cases, this will result in power plant owners revising their plans for the day, which may include starting additional powers plants so that they are available. If the situation is not resolved through these voluntary actions, and the adjusted responsive reserves fall below 3,000 megawatts (MW), then ERCOT Operations will issue an Advisory which serves as an informational notice to the generation owners that additional capacity may be needed. If reserves drop below 2j500 MW, ERCOT Operations will issue a Watch which allows ERCOT to purchase additional reserve capacity from the market and take other actions to bring on extra capacity.

If ERCOT Operations issues a Watch for adjusted responsive reserves below 2500 MW, and External Affairs staff learns there is a potential for development of an emergency situation, External Affairs staff will send an early advisory to key PUC staff and has discretion to also notify other governmental contacts.

Further, ERCOT Operations issues twice-daily notices to PUC staff that include measures of the likelihood that ERCOT will need to issue a directive to shed firm load (EEA Level 3). The likelihood for each day is described as being low, medium, or high. If ERCOT Operations issues an ENS notification advising that the likelihood of firm load shed for the day is high, Crisis Communications staff will follow up with key PUC staff, the SOC hotline, and other governmental contacts, and issue a media appeal for conservation if one has not already been issued.

If ERCOT Operations issues a Watch due to reserves below 2,500 MW, they will initiate the automated Emergency Notification System email and phone calls to the PUC, TRE, FERC, OPC, IMM and Board leadership. Crisis Communications staff will follow up with additional information if there is a potential for an emergency situation. For example, there may be times in winter or shoulder months that a Watch is required because of Protocol, even though reserves are expected to recover quickly. However, if

Operations indicates that there is a potential for an emergency situation, the Crisis Communications Team will follow up the automated ENS message with additional information.

B. Firm-load Shed Events

If a transmission overload or other grid situation requires ERCOT Operations to request a utility drop firm load, this event will be treated like an EEA Level 1 Notice. An automated ENS notification will go out to the PUC, IMM, Texas RE, and OPC.. External Affairs staff will endeavor to quickly gather situational details and will provide follow up information to the ENS list, as well as government officials, market participant PIOs and media in the local area affected by the event.

C. EEA Level 1 Notice – Additional Electricity Procured

If reserves fall below required levels, or ERCOT has difficulty maintaining the frequency of the electric grid, ERCOT will declare an emergency and take actions to restore adequate reserves. This includes ordering all power plant owners to start and fully deploy additional plants if possible, and arranging for emergency power from neighboring electrical grids.

Following declaration of EEA Level 1, Crisis Communications staff will provide follow up phone calls and emails following the automated ENS notification that emergency procedures have been implemented and that further actions will be required if reserves are not adequately restored. Depending on conditions at the time, ERCOT may also issue a public media appeal for conservation if it appears that electricity consumption is growing sufficiently fast that levels 1 through 2B are unlikely to prevent the need for rotating outages. Appendix A-2 includes a template form of notice that will be the basis for EEA Level 1 Notice unless External Affairs staff determines that the template is not appropriate for that particular situation.

D. EEA Level 2A Notice – Ordering Interruptible Customers (Load Resources) to Curtail Load

If Level 1 is not successful in restoring reserves, or frequency continues to deteriorate, ERCOT will declare EEA Level 2A and order that large industrial customers who are under contract to curtail power usage in an emergency ("interruptible customers") shut down their facilities, thereby reducing demand on the electrical grid.

Following declaration of EEA Level 2A, ERCOT will provide notice that Level 2A has been implemented. ERCOT External Affairs staff will issue an appeal for voluntary conservation during Level 2A if one has not been issued in an earlier step. Appendix A-2 includes a template form of notice for EEA Level 2A.

E. EEA Level 2B Notice – Ordering Emergency Interruptible Load Service (EILS) to Curtail Load

If levels 1 and 2A are not successful in restoring reserves, or frequency continues to deteriorate, ERCOT will declare EEA Level 2B and deploy Emergency Interruptible Load Service, if available, to reduce demand on the electrical grid.

Following declaration of EEA Level 2B, ERCOT will provide notice that Level 2B has been implemented. Appendix A-2 includes a template form of notice for EEA Level 2B.

F. EEA Level 3 Notice – Ordering Mandatory Rotating Outages of Customers

Level 3 of the EEA is an order by ERCOT for the 17 largest transmission operators[2] to institute rotating outages of customers to reduce the demand on the electric grid. ERCOT orders outages in increments of 100 MW as required to stabilize the system in order to

[2] Transmission operators are called "local utilities" in public notices to more clearly describe their role to laypersons.

prevent a widespread, uncontrolled blackout from occurring. As a rule of thumb, 1 MW of demand equates to approximately 200 residential households.

When the frequency of the electric grid falls below a certain level (59.8 Hertz), ERCOT immediately implements Level 3, even if there has not been time to declare prior steps. The rotating outages are allocated among transmission operators in the following manner:

ERCOT Load Shed Table[3]

Transmission Operator	2009 Total Transmission Operator Load (MW)
American Electric Power	9.33
Austin Energy	3.96
Brazos Electric Power Cooperative	4.62
CenterPoint Energy	26.56
City of Bryan	0.57
City of College Station	0.29
City of Denton	0.49
City of Garland	0.74
CPS Energy	7.34
Greenville Electric Utility Service	0.17
Lower Colorado River Authority	5.21
Magic Valley Electric Cooperative	0.65
Oncor	35.55
Public Utility Board of Brownsville	0.43
Rayburn Country Electric Cooperative	0.93
South Texas Electric Coop-Medina Electric Coop	0.67
Texas New Mexico Power	2.35
Tex-La	0.14
ERCOT Total	**100.00**

ERCOT External Affairs staff will provide follow up information on the Level 3 implementation, following the automated ENS notification, and note the expected duration of the rotating outages (e.g. through the afternoon peak period). Communications staff will also issue a news media release regarding implementation of Level 3. Appendix A-2 includes the form of notice that will be issued.

G. Notice of the Cancellation of EEA Level 3

Once ERCOT Operations terminates its instruction to the local utilities to implement rotating outages, Crisis Communications staff will provide notice that Level 3 has been

[3] from ERCOT Operating Guide, Section 4.5.3.2, July 1, 2010

cancelled. The notice will indicate that customers who continue to experience outages should contact their local utilities, as these are likely caused by equipment failure.

H. Notice of Cancellation of EEA

Once ERCOT completely exits the EEA, notice will be provided that emergency conditions are over and grid operations have returned to normal. (ERCOT will not issue a separate notice relating to the restoration of power to interruptible industrial loads, as they will have received direct instructions from ERCOT Operations.)

Communications Related to Localized Reliability Issues

In addition to the possibility of a regional generation shortfall, ERCOT also monitors the grid for the possibility of localized transmission outages or other reliability problems that could cause interruptions of service on a local level. In such cases, Crisis Communications staff, in consultation with the PUC, may also issue an advisory for a specific geographic area within the region if there is a reasonable probability that localized outages may be needed.

To the extent localized outages may occur without advance notice, ERCOT and the PUC will strive to provide immediate notification to local officials via the SOC. An additional advisory will be sent out when grid operations have returned to normal and power has been restored to all customers.

Appendix A-1 – Energy Emergency Alert External Communications Matrix

EEA Level / Grid Status	Triggering Event	Operators' Actions	Automated Notifications Initiated by Operators	Follow-up Communications by External Affairs	Media Notification	PUC Powerful Advice Web Site
Peak demand expectation	Demand forecast above current all-time record	Notify ERCOT External Affairs of high demand expectations.	None	Notify PUC to change Powerful Advice site to Power Watch, if needed.	News release about potential for new record	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**
Advisory	< 3000 MW adjusted reserves	Notify generation resources informational only - no additional authority.	Issue update of 0300/1500 Daily Report email (distribution: PUC's distribution list).	None	None	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**
Watch	< 2500 MW adjusted reserves	Deploy non-spin reserves. Dispatch quick-start capacity. Start RMR units. Instruct resources to suspend generation testing.	Emergency Notification System (ENS) automated emails and calls to PUC, IMM, TRE, FERC, OPC, and Board leadership	Gather information and notify GridAlert* list if potential for emergency situation.	None	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**
Firm load shed in local area	Local area transmission emergency or voltage issue	Instruct local utility to drop load in limited area until local transmission/voltage issue resolved.	ENS GridAlert list (PUC, IMM, TRE, FERC, OPC, and Board leadership)	Notify Lege staff and MP PIOs in affected area. Notify GridAlert list with additional information.	News release to affected area, if appropriate	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed (optional)**
EEA Level 1	< 2300 MW adjusted reserves	Use capacity available from DC ties. Dispatch uncommitted units.	ENS GridAlert list	Notify GridAlert list with additional information	News release, if appropriate	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed (optional)**
EEA Level 2A -- MEDIUM potential for rotating outages	< 1750 MW adjusted reserves	Deploy interruptible loads (Load resources under contract). Begin block-load transfers of load to neighboring grids.	ENS GridEmergency list (GridAlert list PLUS Lege/Govmt leadership; Board; MP PIOs and MP GridNotification list)	Notify GridEmergency list with additional information	News release, if appropriate	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed**
EEA Level 2B -- HIGH potential for rotating outages	To maintain system frequency at 60 Hz or adjusted reserves trending downward or not available	Deploy Emergency Interruptible Loads (EILS) if available.	ENS GridEmergency list **PLUS State Operations Center (notification to city, county officials & law enforcement) and statewide media list**	Notify GridEmergency list - plus State Operations Center (SOC) with "High Priority"	News release, if not already done	**Power Warning - Conservation Critical**
EEA Level 3 -- ROTATING OUTAGES	To maintain system frequency at 59.8 Hz or greater	Instruct transmission operators to shed firm load via rotating outages in blocks of 100 MW.	ENS GridEmergency list **PLUS State Operations Center and statewide media list**	Notify GridEmergency list	News release	**Power Emergency - Rotating Outages**
Cancellation of EEA Level 3	Frequency restoration	n/a	ENS	Notify GridEmergency list	News release	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed**
Cancellation of EEA	Grid conditions normal	n/a	ENS	Notify GridAlert list	News release updates as needed	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**

EEA Level / Grid Status	Triggering Event	Operators' Actions	Automated Notifications Initiated by Operators	Follow-up Communications by External Affairs	Media Notification	PUC Powerful Advice Web Site
Peak demand expectation	Demand forecast above current all-time record	Notify ERCOT External Affairs of high demand expectations.	None	Notify PUC to change Powerful Advice site to Power Watch, if needed.	News release about potential for new record	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**
Advisory	< 3000 MW adjusted reserves	Notify generation resources informational only - no additional authority.	Send update of PUC Daily Report email to PUC grid list, IMM, and TRE).	None	None	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**
Watch	< 2500 MW adjusted reserves	Deploy non-spin reserves. Dispatch quick-start capacity. Start RMR units. Instruct resources to suspend generation testing.	Emergency Notification System (ENS) automated emails/calls to PUC, IMM, TRE, and FERC.	Gather information and notify GridEmergency list* if potential for emergency situation.	None	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**
Firm load shed in local area	Local area transmission emergency or voltage issue	Instruct local utility to drop load in limited area until local transmission/voltage issue is resolved.	ENS automated emails/calls to PUC, IMM, TRE, FERC, OPC, Govmt, and Board	Notify Lege staff and MP PIOs in affected area. Notify GridEmergency list* with additional information.	News release to affected area, if appropriate	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed (optional)**
EEA Level 1	< 2300 MW adjusted reserves	Use capacity available from DC ties. Dispatch uncommitted units.	ENS automated emails/calls to above list - plus State Operations Center (notification to city, county officials & law enforcement)	Notify GridEmergency list* with additional information	News release, if appropriate	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed (optional)**
EEA Level 2A -- MEDIUM potential for rotating outages	< 1750 MW adjusted reserves	Deploy interruptible loads (load resources under contract). Begin block-load transfers of load to neighboring grids.	ENS automated emails/calls to above list	Notify GridEmergency list* with additional information	News release, if appropriate	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed**
EEA Level 2B -- HIGH potential for rotating outages	To maintain system frequency at 60 Hz or adjusted reserves trending downward or not available	Deploy Emergency Interruptible Loads if available.	ENS list above - plus major news services	Notify GridEmergency list*	News release, if not already done	**Power Warning - Conservation Critical**
EEA Level 3 -- ROTATING OUTAGES	To maintain system frequency at 59.8 Hz or greater	Instruct transmission operators to shed firm load via rotating outages in blocks of 100 MW.	ENS list above	Notify GridEmergency list*	News release	**Power Emergency - Rotating Outages**
Cancellation of EEA Level 3	Frequency restoration	n/a	ENS automated emails/calls	Notify GridEmergency list*	News release	**Power Watch - Conservation Needed**
Cancellation of EEA	Grid conditions normal	n/a	ENS automated emails/calls	Notify GridEmergency list*	News release updates as needed	**Conservation Encouraged - Normal Conditions**

* GridEmergency list: SOC, PUC, OPC, Board, Govmt/Lege, IMM, TRE, FERC, and Market Participant communications/PIOs

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Appendix A-2 – EEA Notification Templates

Following are approved sample notices to be used for EEA notifications. Any changes should be event-specific. Messages may be skipped, combined or adjusted depending on actual events, subject to the discretion of the Crisis Communications Team.

Winter Version

The templates in this section are written for summer months. For winter grid events, and the time period for peak demand will be adjusted as advised by Grid Operations, and the conservation tips will be changed to the following:

- Keep your thermostat as low as is comfortable.
- Turn off and un-plug non-essential lights and appliances.
- Avoid running large appliances such as washers, dryers, and electric ovens during peak energy demand hours.
- Close shades and blinds at night to reduce the amount of heat lost through windows.
- Businesses should minimize the use of electric lighting and electricity-consuming equipment as much as possible.
- Large consumers of electricity should consider shutting down or reducing non-essential production processes.

All templates for summer and winter are saved on the Legal drive in the Crisis Communications folder.

POWER WATCH – Conservation Needed; Chance of Rotating Outages

(PUC PowerfulAdvice Stage: Yellow)

(EMAIL SUBJECT) ERCOT Power Watch – Conservation Needed

(EMAIL TEXT)

The news release below will be issued shortly.

If you have questions, please contact your ERCOT representative.

- Theresa Gage, Director of External Affairs, Wk: 225-7074; C: 512-658-6047
- Shelly Botkin, Government Relations Manager, Wk: 225-7177; C: 512-297-5228
- Dottie Roark, Communications Manager, Wk: 512-225-7024; C: 512-413-3379
- CLIENT RELATIONS, 512-248-3900 (option 1 – wholesale)

==========

Electric Reliability Council of Texas
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Dottie Roark, ERCOT, 512-225-7024

Power Watch – Conservation Needed
Chance of Rotating Outages

Consumers and businesses are encouraged to reduce their electricity use as much as possible today during peak electricity hours from 3 to 7 p.m. to avoid electricity emergencies or the need for rotating outages.

- Limit electricity usage to only that consumption which is absolutely necessary. Turn off all unnecessary lights, appliances, and electronic equipment.
- Do not use your dishwasher, laundry equipment, hair dryers, coffee makers, pool pump, or other home appliances between the hours of 3 to 7 p.m.
- Close blinds and drapes on windows that get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 80 degrees, and use fans to circulate the air.
- Use microwaves or outdoor grills for cooking to avoid heating the home.
- Businesses should minimize the use of electric lighting and electricity-consuming equipment as much as possible.
- Large consumers of electricity should consider shutting down or reducing non-essential production processes.

See more conservation tips at "Powerful Advice," Public Utility Commission of Texas: www.puc.state.tx.us./ocp/conserve

Background

Power Watches are issued by the regional electric grid operator, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), during periods of high demand when supplies of reserve power are low. At this stage, ERCOT has emergency measures to bring on additional generation, so rotating outages are not likely. However, if all sources of supplies are exhausted or large generation outages occur, ERCOT will order utilities to begin reducing load by cutting service through rotating outages.

WHO TO CALL FOR OUTAGE INFORMATION?
For information about the how the utilities implement rotating outages and exemptions, call the transmission and distribution service provider on your electric bill.

Consumer Assistance Hotline
Public Utility Commission Hotline – 1-888-782-8777
Office of Public Utility Counsel Consumer Assistance – 1-877-839-0363

Utility Information
Check your electric bill to identify your utility company or transmission provider.
American Electric Power - AEP
Austin Energy
Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative
Brazos Electric Power Cooperative
Brownsville Public Utilities Board
Bryan Texas Utilities
CenterPoint Energy
College Station Utilities
CPS Energy – San Antonio
Denton Municipal Electric
Garland Power & Light
LCRA
Magic Valley Electric Cooperative
Nueces Electric Cooperative
Oncor
Pedernales Electric Cooperative
Rayburn County Electric Cooperative
Sharyland Utilities
South Texas Electric Cooperative
Texas-New Mexico Power

~~**ERCOT Region**~~

~~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). Region map: http://www.ercot.com/news/mediakit/maps/index.html~~

~~Helpful Contacts~~

~~For Utility Information~~

~~Check your electric bill to identify your utility company or transmission provider.~~

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

~~Investor-Owned Utilities~~
~~AEP TEXAS CENTRAL COMPANY~~
~~AEP TEXAS NORTH COMPANY~~
~~CENTERPOINT ENERGY HOUSTON ELECTRIC~~
~~SHARYLAND UTILITIES~~
~~TEXAS-NEW MEXICO POWER CO~~
~~ONCOR~~

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

Conservation Tips
http://www.puc.state.tx.us/ocp/conserve/index.cfm

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The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) manages the flow of electric power to approximately 22 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 40,~~5~~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 6.5 million Texans in competitive choice areas.

Power Warning – Conservation CRITICAL; HIGH Risk of Rotating Outages

(PUC PowerfulAdvice Stage: **Red)**

(EMAIL SUBJECT) ERCOT Power Warning – Conservation Critical; Rotating Outages Possible

(EMAIL TEXT)

TO: **State Operations Center Hotline – FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION**
PUC Commissioners and Staff
Government and Legislative Leadership
Legislators
ERCOT Board of Directors
Market Participant PIOs

The news release below will be issued shortly.

If you have questions, please contact your ERCOT representative.

- Theresa Gage, Director of External Affairs, Wk: 225-7074; C: 512-658-6047
- Shelly Botkin, Government Relations Manager, Wk: 225-7177; C: 512-297-5228
- Dottie Roark, Communications Manager, Wk: 512-225-7024; C: 512-413-3379
- CLIENT RELATIONS, 512-248-3900 (option 1 – wholesale)

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Electric Reliability Council of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Dottie Roark, ERCOT, 512-225-7024

Power Warning – Conservation CRITICAL
HIGH Risk of Rotating Outages

Conservation is critical to avoid electricity emergencies or the need for rotating outages during the peak hours of 3 to 7 p.m. Consumers should reduce their consumption of electricity as much as possible to help prevent an emergency.

- Limit electricity usage to only that consumption which is absolutely necessary. Turn off all unnecessary lights, appliances, and electronic equipment.
- Do not use your dishwasher, laundry equipment, hair dryers, coffee makers, pool pump, or other home appliances between the hours of 3 to 7 p.m.

- Close blinds and drapes on windows that get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 80 degrees, and use fans to circulate the air.
- Use microwaves or outdoor grills for cooking to avoid heating the home.
- Businesses should minimize the use of electric lighting and electricity-consuming equipment as much as possible.
- Large consumers of electricity should consider shutting down or reducing non-essential production processes.
-

See more conservation tips at "Powerful Advice," Public Utility Commission of Texas: www.puc.state.tx.us./ocp/conserve

Power Warnings are issued by the regional electric grid operator, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), when there is **a likelihood that rotating outages will be needed** to reduce load.

Rotating outages are controlled, temporary interruptions of electrical service initiated by each utility when supplies of reserve power are exhausted. Without this safety valve, generators would overload and begin shutting down to avoid damage, risking a domino effect of a region-wide outage.

Rotating outages primarily affect residential neighborhoods and small businesses and do not typically include critical-need customers such as hospitals and nursing homes.

The outages are limited to 10-45 minutes before being rotated to a different neighborhood. Some customers may experience longer outages if power surges cause equipment failure during the restoration process. Customers can minimize power surges by turning off appliances, lights and other equipment, except for one task light to determine when power has been restored.

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~~http://www.ercot.com/news/mediakit/maps/index.html~~

~~**Helpful Contacts**~~

~~**For Utility Information**~~
~~Check your electric bill to identify your utility company or transmission provider.~~

~~**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~~

~~**Investor-Owned Utilities**~~
~~AEP TEXAS CENTRAL COMPANY~~
~~AEP TEXAS NORTH COMPANY~~
~~CENTERPOINT ENERGY HOUSTON ELECTRIC~~
~~SHARYLAND UTILITIES~~
~~TEXAS-NEW MEXICO POWER CO~~
~~ONCOR~~

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

~~**Conservation Tips**~~
~~http://www.puc.state.tx.us/ocp/conserve/index.cfm~~

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WHO TO CALL FOR OUTAGE INFORMATION?
For information about the how the utilities implement rotating outages and exemptions, call the transmission and distribution service provider on your electric bill.

Consumer Assistance Hotline
Public Utility Commission Hotline – 1-888-782-8777
Office of Public Utility Counsel Consumer Assistance – 1-877-839-0363

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Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative
Brazos Electric Power Cooperative
Brownsville Public Utilities Board
Bryan Texas Utilities
CenterPoint Energy
College Station Utilities
CPS Energy – San Antonio
Denton Municipal Electric
Garland Power & Light
LCRA

Magic Valley Electric Cooperative
Nueces Electric Cooperative
Oncor
Pedernales Electric Cooperative
Rayburn County Electric Cooperative
Sharyland Utilities
South Texas Electric Cooperative
Texas-New Mexico Power

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Power Emergency – Conservation CRITICAL; Rotating Outages In Progress

(PUC PowerfulAdvice Stage: **Black**)

(EMAIL SUBJECT) ERCOT Power Emergency – ROTATING OUTAGES in progress

(EMAIL TEXT)

To: **State Operations Center Hotline – FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION**
PUC Commissioners and Staff
Government and Legislative Leadership
Legislators
ERCOT Board of Directors
Market Participant PIOs

The news release below will be issued shortly.

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- CLIENT RELATIONS, 512-248-3900 (option 1 – wholesale)

==========

Electric Reliability Council of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Dottie Roark, ERCOT, 512-225-7024

Power Emergency – Conservation CRITICAL
Rotating Outages Have Begun

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) has instructed utilities to begin rotating outages to compensate for a generation shortage.

Rotating outages are controlled, temporary interruptions of electric service, typically lasting 10-45 minutes per neighborhood. The locations and durations are determined by the local utilities. Critical need customers such as hospitals and nursing homes are generally not included.

The need for rotating outages will likely last through the peak electricity hours from 3 to 7 p.m.

Consumers and businesses are urged to reduce their electricity use to the lowest level possible, including these steps:

- Limit electricity usage to only that consumption which is absolutely necessary. Turn off all unnecessary lights, appliances, and electronic equipment.
- Do not use your dishwasher, laundry equipment, hair dryers, coffee makers, pool pump, or other home appliances between the hours of 3 to 7 p.m.
- Close blinds and drapes on windows that get direct sun, set air conditioning thermostats to 80 degrees, and use fans to circulate the air.
- Use microwaves or outdoor grills for cooking to avoid heating the home.
- Businesses should minimize the use of electric lighting and electricity-consuming equipment as much as possible.
- Large consumers of electricity should consider shutting down or reducing non-essential production processes.

See more conservation tips at "Powerful Advice," Public Utility Commission of Texas: www.puc.state.tx.us./ocp/conserve

BACKGROUND

A **Power Emergency** indicates that the regional electric grid operator, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), has instructed utilities to implement rotating outages to reduce load.

Rotating outages are controlled, temporary interruptions of electrical service initiated by each utility when supplies of reserve power are exhausted. Without this safety valve, generators would overload and begin shutting down to avoid damage, risking a domino effect of a region-wide outage.

Rotating outages primarily affect residential neighborhoods and small businesses and do not typically include critical-need customers such as hospitals and nursing homes.

The outages are limited to 10-45 minutes before being rotated to a different neighborhood. Some customers may experience longer outages if power surges cause equipment failure during the restoration process. Customers can minimize power surges by turning off appliances, lights and other equipment, except for one task light to determine when power has been restored.

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~~http://www.ercot.com/news/mediakit/maps/index.html~~

~~**Helpful Contacts**~~

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~~Check your electric bill to identify your utility company or transmission provider.~~

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~~http://www.puc.state.tx.us/electric/directories/index.cfm~~

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

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~~SHARYLAND UTILITIES~~
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~~Oncor~~

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~~Texas Public Power Association, http://www.tppa.com/~~

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~~http://www.puc.state.tx.us/ocp/conserve/index.cfm~~

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Brownsville Public Utilities Board
Bryan Texas Utilities
CenterPoint Energy
College Station Utilities
CPS Energy – San Antonio
Denton Municipal Electric
Garland Power & Light
LCRA

Magic Valley Electric Cooperative
Nueces Electric Cooperative
Oncor
Pedernales Electric Cooperative
Rayburn County Electric Cooperative
Sharyland Utilities
South Texas Electric Cooperative
Texas-New Mexico Power

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Electric Industry Links
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Appendix A-3 – EEA Incoming Call Hotline Messages

Grid Condition Messages – To be recorded for incoming callers...

EEA Level 3:

"[Text of Level 3 Media Advisory]

If you are able to access the Internet, you can find updates at www.ercot.com. You can also call this number back to get updates as they become available. Thank you for your patience during this event.

To repeat this message, please press 1.

Please note that ERCOT does not normally maintain a call center and is not equipped to answer large volumes of calls. However, if you have an ERCOT-related question that does not involve a power outage, you may leave a message — including your name, phone number, and a brief summary of your question — by waiting for the tone. We will return your call as soon as possible."

EEA Level 3 Cancelled:

"[Text of Level 3 Cancelled]"

ERCOT has discontinued its instructions to transmission operators to involuntarily curtail customers via rotating outages. Any consumers continuing to experience outages should contact their local electricity providers. All ERCOT-directed load curtailments have been cancelled.

To repeat this message, please press 1.

Please note that ERCOT does not normally maintain a call center and is not equipped to answer large volumes of calls. However, if you have an ERCOT-related question that does not involve a power outage, you may leave a message — including your name, phone number, and a brief summary of your question — by waiting for the tone. We will return your call as soon as possible."

EEA Cancelled:

"[Text of Level 1 Cancelled Media Advisory]

ERCOT earlier discontinued its instructions to transmission operators to involuntarily curtail customers via rotating outages. Any consumers continuing to experience outages should contact their local electricity providers. All ERCOT-directed load curtailments have been cancelled.

To repeat this message, please press 1.

Please note that ERCOT does not normally maintain a call center and is not equipped to answer large volumes of calls. However, if you have an ERCOT-related question that does not involve a power outage, you may leave a message — including your name, phone number, and a brief summary of your question — by waiting for the tone. We will return your call as soon as possible."

Appendix B: Hurricane Communications Materials

Crisis Communications Procedures

SAMPLE HURRICANE MEDIA ADVISORY

MEDIA ADVISORY
ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL OF TEXAS

CONTACT: Dottie Roark, 512-225-7024; CELL – 512-413-3379

ERCOT ACTIVATES HURRICANE _____ WEB PAGE FOR ELECTRIC GRID UPDATES

AUSTIN, ____, 200_ – ERCOT has activated a special Hurricane ___ Web page http://www._____ to disseminate timely information regarding the impact of Hurricane ____ on the ERCOT electric grid. The page includes:

- Electric grid updates
- Frequently asked questions
- Links to information resources

We will make updates as they become available, with best estimates on the numbers of customers out of service and major transmission lines that are out of service.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GENERAL PUBLIC
For questions related to power outages and restoration of service, the public should contact their retail electric provider, electric cooperative or municipal utility.

Members of the public may also contact the Public Utility Commission Consumer Assistance Hotline, 1-888-782-8777.

The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) manages the flow of electric power to approximately 22 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 40,000 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 6.5 million Texans in competitive choice areas.

HURRICANE – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FOR WEBSITE)

1. 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. If any part of the high-voltage bulk transmission system has been disabled by the storm, ERCOT will work with these entities and with the generation plants in the market to ensure that power is restored safely.

You can find links to the websites of transmission and distribution providers and retail electric providers at our Hurricane ____ links page.

2. 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.

ERCOT does not have jurisdiction over the local, lower voltage distribution lines that are connected directly to homes and businesses.

3. 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 a transmission or substation facility is 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.

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 constant — such as normal weather patterns and business cycles.

A hurricane poses much greater challenges because it can produce immediate dramatic drops in load.

One important point: because of the evacuations on the Gulf Coast, the load in the affected areas is already 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.

4. 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, and points north. That section of East Texas 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.

Storm damage and winds from Hurricane ____ are very capable of causing power outages in both the Entergy and ERCOT regions.

5. 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, 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 municipally 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.

6. How can a large-scale blackout be prevented?

ERCOT has emergency operation procedures that are designed to maintain system-wide reliability even if major outages occur in parts of the region. We work with transmission operators and generators, and rely on a sophisticated system of real-time communications from many hundreds of points on the electric grid.

7. What if it's a blackout specific to my neighborhood?

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, but customers lose power nonetheless.

ERCOT's responsibility for electric grid operations and ensuring reliability extends only to the high-voltage transmission grid – it does not include local, lower voltage neighborhood distribution lines.

8. 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 and until 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.

9. What has happened to the grid in previous hurricanes?

Hurricane Rita struck the eastern coast of Texas in 2005, causing significant electric outages in the region. Most of the affected areas were not in the ERCOT region. ERCOT assisted the neighboring grid operator, SPP, during the event.

Hurricane Alicia struck the Houston area in 1983. In that storm, significant electric service outages occurred in Houston and the surrounding area. Damage was less because the storm moved inland, and the winds weakened. ERCOT areas outside the storm path did not experience large power outages. It took several days to restore all service in the Houston area.

The effects of Hurricane _____ are expected to be _____. Larger outages will occur in the path of the storm, and it may take several days to restore service. Customers outside the storm path should not be affected.

10. What if I have a health emergency?

If you have a health emergency, please contact 911. You can get general hurricane information updates from the Texas State Operations Center by dialing 211.

HURRICANE SCRIPTS FOR INBOUND CALLS – TO BE RECORDED

Grid Condition Message – To be recorded for incoming callers...

"Thank you for calling the Electric Reliability Council of Texas. ERCOT is the independent electric grid operator for most of Texas, but does not own or maintain power lines.

If you are calling to request current grid conditions or any other information related to Hurricane ____, we encourage you to visit our special hurricane Web page at www.ercot.com/___.

If you are experiencing an emergency, please hang up and call 911.

If you are calling because of a power outage or other problem in your area, please call your electricity provider or transmission and distribution utility.

If you do not know which company serves your area, we have a recorded message with several phone numbers for companies in the areas affected by the hurricane. To listen to this message, please press ONE now.

If you are trying to reach a specific person at ERCOT, please press TWO now.

Please note that ERCOT does not maintain a call center and is not equipped to answer large volumes of calls. However, if you have an ERCOT-related question that does not involve a power outage related to the hurricane, you may leave a message — including your name, phone number, and a brief summary of your question — by pressing FOUR. We will return your call as soon as possible."

TDSP Phone number message. [Tailor as appropriate depending on where the hurricane is projected to hit]

"Following are phone numbers for the transmission and distribution service providers in the areas affected by Hurricane ____.

Customers in and north of the Beaumont-Port Arthur-Orange Tri-City area are served by Entergy Gulf States, which is not part of the ERCOT region. Entergy's customer service line is _____.

Most customers in the Houston area are served by Centerpoint Energy, _____.

Customers along the Gulf Coast south of Houston, including the Corpus Christi area, are served by AEP Texas South, _____.

Customers served by the Texas-New Mexico transmission and distribution utility, in some south and east Houston suburbs, may call TNMP at _____.

Other areas along or near the coast are served by electric co-ops affiliated with the South Texas Electric Cooperative, _____.

If your provider was not listed here, or if you are still not sure who to call, a helpful resource is the Customer Protection Division of the Public Utility Commission of Texas, at 1-800_____.

Another excellent resource for help during the hurricane is the State Operations Center hurricane hotline, which may be reached simply by dialing 211.

If you have an ERCOT-related question that does not involve a power outage related to the hurricane, you may leave a message — including your name, phone number, and a brief summary of your question — by waiting for the tone. We will return your call as soon as possible."

Appendix C: Crisis Communication Contacts
Crisis Communications Procedures

Appendix C-2 – Government Contacts

The ~~Legal~~ External Affairs staff will maintain lists for contacting constituents about grid conditions or emergencies. ~~Updated lists will be sent to the General Counsel, the Director of External Affairs, the Manager of Communications, the Governmental Relations Manager, , and the Communications Specialist.~~ The original copy will be saved on the Legal drive in the folder: Crisis Communications Procedures.

~~GridAlert and~~ GridEmergency Distribution List~~s~~

The distribution lists for PUC and government contacts are restricted lists managed through an offsite location – www.lists.ercot.com. The Manager of Communications is the list manager. Members of the~~-~~ Crisis Communications Team have "send" privileges to the list.

Emergency Notification System Distribution Lists

Grid Operations owns and maintains the ENS system lists and scenarios. External Affairs assists Operations as needed in development and updating of the distribution lists.

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Appendix C-3 – Media Contacts

Any interested media, market participants or other stakeholders may self-subscribe to the "News_Bulletins" list on the ERCOT Web site. This distribution list, which is managed by the Manager of Communications, receives all news releases and news bulletins distributed by External Affairs.

In addition, the Manager of Communications maintains a database of media contacts for use on the restricted media list for ENS notifications. This list is updated throughout the year and stored on the Legal Drive in the Crisis Communications Procedures folder. The Manager of Communications will provide an annual update for the ENS list each year when the Crisis Communications Procedures is updated.

Appendix C-4 – Market Participant Contacts

ERCOT has established a subscriber email list (notice_gridcondition) to allow any market participants to elect to receive emergency notifications from Client Services representatives on the Crisis Communications Team. Pursuant to dialogue with PUC Commissioners and staff, industrial consumers may also subscribe to the list.

Subscribers are screened by ERCOT Client Services staff to ensure they need to receive messages. This should limit misinterpretations of messages.

External Affairs also maintains a list of market participants' communications/media contacts. The list is updated each year prior to the annual communications drill which coincides with the grid operations' annual drill. This list is used on the "GridEmergency" distribution list and the ENS automated notification system on any levels where media are notified.

Appendix D: Procedures for Using the Public Website
Crisis Communications Procedures

WEBSITE CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES

In Case of Crisis:

NOTE: This section is to be updated shortly. The Web team is working on developing an emergency web page that can be deployed during a major emergency.

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During a crisis event, External Affairs may need assistance from the ERCOT.com Web team to 1) initiate 15-minute deployments on the public site news release page; 2) deploy a homepage "spotlight" directing the public to the news release page for emergency news updates; and 3) assist as needed to enable rapid posting of news release updates.

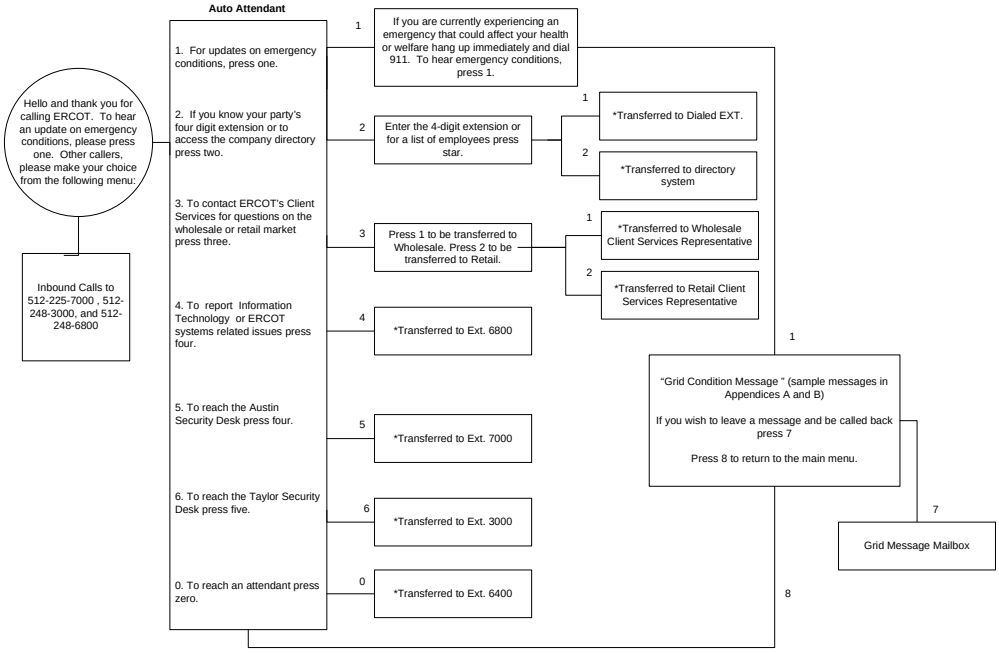
External Affairs will contact the core ERCOT.com Web team via the ERCOT HelpDesk, or if not available, according to the priority phone list in *Appendix A*.

The Web team will maintain a file of pre-approved emergency home page spotlights.

Appendix E: In-Bound Calls Treatment
Crisis Communications Procedures

CALL TREATMENT FOR EMERGENCY/CRISIS SITUATION

Telecommunications staff forwards main incoming extensions, 3000, 6800, and 7000, to an emergency phone tree.



For "Grid Message Mailbox" examples, see EEA examples in Appendix A-2 and a Hurricane example in Appendix B.

Appendix F: Black Start
Crisis Communications Procedures

BLACK START

In the event of a full system outage requiring use of the ERCOT Black Start Plan[4], the Manager of System Operations will contact the Communications staff. The Communications staff will work with System Operations throughout the outage to determine the appropriate information to release to the media and public. ERCOT will not publicly release the names of specific plants utilized in the Black Start Plan. The detailed Black Start Plan is a confidential document.

[4] A high-level description of the Black Start Plan is included in ERCOT Protocols, Sections 6.5.8 and 6.10.3.6.