

Media release



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Update: North Coast power battered by weather

Essential Energy field crews are working to restore power to nearly 20,000 customers throughout the North Coast as strong winds and rain continue to batter the area.

Customers throughout the Tweed, Byron, Ballina, Lismore and Richmond Valley local government areas have been the most affected with 2,000 customers in the Mid North Coast also losing supply.

Essential Energy acting regional general manager North Coast, Daniel Bylsma said crews have worked tirelessly to restore supply however continuing weather conditions are hampering efforts.

"Crews are working as quickly as safety will allow them to get the power back on for customers, however rising flood levels, fallen trees, debris, boggy conditions and strong winds are preventing access to a number of areas," Daniel said.

When flooding has impacted the power network in the past and ground access has been an issue, Essential Energy has called on helicopters and boats to move field crews and equipment in a bid to establish supply again.

"We are currently investigating all possible options to get the power back on while ensuring the safety of our crews and the public.

"Power will be restored progressively over the coming days due to the damage to the network - this means that some customers may be without power for two or three days."

Areas within the Far North Coast including Cudgen, Hastings Point, Bilambil Heights, South Tweed, Banora Point, Murwillumbah, Tumbulgum, Lismore, Laverty's Gap, Byron Bay, Ewingsdale, Lennox Head, Coraki, Woodburn, Wardell as well as many pockets throughout the area will be without power overnight.

Mid North Coast customers in parts of Bellingen, Arakoon, Stuart's Point, Scott's Head and Nambucca Heads are also without supply.

"Crews from across the North Coast region are assisting with repairs to the network with further crews from the Northern, New England and Hunter areas arriving Tuesday to help.

"Customers are reminded to keep safety a focus throughout this weather and if they see fallen powerlines to stay at least eight metres away and call Essential Energy on 13 20 80," Daniel said.

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Essential Energy is the operator of Australia's largest electricity network spanning 95 per cent of New South Wales' land mass. Owned by the New South Wales Government, Essential Energy employs around 4,600 people and also provides water and sewerage services to customers in far western New South Wales.