

Essential Energy plans in place for extreme weather

With extreme weather conditions forecast to continue across NSW over the next few days, Essential Energy has a range of strategies in place to manage the electricity distribution network and minimise customer impacts in the event of power supply interruptions.

Planned outages

During the extreme weather conditions, Essential Energy's regional teams will continue to assess planned outages on a case-by-case basis to determine if these should proceed. However, any urgent faults identified during this period can require emergency outages to enable power to be restored safely and as quickly as possible.

Unplanned outages

As an overhead network spanning regional, rural and remote NSW, the network is constantly exposed to wildlife, weather, vegetation, motor vehicle, aircraft and other impacts resulting in unplanned outages. Despite best practice planned maintenance programs, no energy provider can guarantee customers an uninterrupted power supply as unplanned repairs and maintenance in response to these events are inevitable.

Unlike short, linked city networks, which provide the flexibility to transfer customers to an alternative power supply during periods of planned maintenance or repairs, overhead electricity networks in rural areas generally comprise longer radial lines, without alternative supply.

Reliability

Effective management of the network and co-ordinated responses to unplanned outages have seen reliability of power supply to Essential Energy customers continue to improve, with today's performance approximately 20 per cent better than ten years ago. Comparing 2017 and 2018, the average total minutes customers were without power for the year improved by 10 per cent, from 236 minutes in 2017 to 212 minutes in 2018.

Power supply interruptions on Essential Energy's network range from single customer outages, faults on the low voltage network which can affect up to 200 customers, faults on the 11,000 and 22,000-volt networks, which could affect between 100 and 2,500 customers, and larger faults on the sub-transmission network which can interrupt the power supply to 3,000 or more.

In the event of an outage

Essential Energy respects customer concerns about planned and unplanned outages and we thank all our customers for their patience and understanding under both circumstances. Please visit <https://www.essentialenergy.com.au/outages> or our Facebook or Twitter pages for more information. Remember to call 000 if you believe a situation may be life-threatening and stay at least eight meters from fallen powerlines.

FACT FILE:

- Essential Energy's footprint covers 95 percent of NSW, traversing 737,000 square kilometres of landmass with 183,612 km of powerline.
- The network services more than 840,000 customers with approximately 4.6 customers to each kilometre of powerline, which is almost one-tenth the customer density compared to other NSW electricity distribution networks.
- Essential Energy's footprint includes 1.38 million power poles, equating to 1.6 power poles per customer.

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Media contact: Natasha Mutch t: 0447 442 753