



**To the Mayor and Members of the City Council**

**August 3, 2021**

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**SUBJECT: ELECTRIC GRID ISSUES AND COMMUNICATION**

The purpose of this report is to respond to Council's request is to provide information regarding the city's communication of electric grid issues.

When electric supply and demand can't be balanced with normal procedures, ERCOT begins emergency operations using three levels of Energy Emergency Alerts (EEAs) – Levels 1, 2 and 3.

- **LEVEL 1** (Conservation Critical; Risk of Controlled Outages) - If operating reserves drop below 2,300\* MW and are not expected to recover within 30 minutes. ERCOT can call on all available power supplies, including power from other grids, if available.
- **LEVEL 2** (Conservation Critical; Risk of Controlled Outages) - If operating reserves drop below 1,750 MW and are not expected to recover within 30 minutes. ERCOT can also use demand response resources that have been procured to address tight operating conditions.
- **LEVEL 3** (Conservation Critical; Controlled Outages Underway) - If operating reserves drop below 1,375 MW, ERCOT moves into level 3. If operating reserves drop below 1,000 MW and are not expected to recover within 30 minutes and/or the grid's frequency level cannot be maintained at 60 Hz. This type of demand reduction is only used as a last resort to preserve the reliability of the electric system as a whole. Each utility is responsible for deciding how to decrease demand in their area. This is typically done through rotating outages, which are controlled, temporary interruptions of electric service. In extreme circumstances, more prolonged outages may be required to balance supply and demand on the electric system.

ERCOT issues real-time notices related to energy emergencies through their app, ERCOT Twitter, or if customers subscribe to ERCOT's EmergencyAlerts and News\_Bulletins. The City of Fort Worth and Fire Office of Emergency Management receive State of Texas Operations Center notifications when there is potential impacts to residents of the State of Texas. Distribution of the messaging is dependent upon the level of urgency from ERCOT regarding the potential impact to the residents.

**GENERAL ERCOT Messaging:**

- All messages from ERCOT regarding Level 2 "conserve energy" will be reposted on all FWFD/OEM/City of Fort Worth social media platforms.
  - o This includes posts on FIRE/City of Fort Worth NextDoor accounts.
- Messaging should be shared by other city departments to increase message reach.
- *Using fortworthtexas.gov alerts at this stage may be excessive, as ERCOT will issue multiple "conserve energy" messages throughout the winter and summer.*

**INCREASED/ IMMEDIATE Urgency ERCOT Messaging:**

- All messages from ERCOT regarding Level 3 "rolling blackouts/impact to electricity availability" will be reposted on all FWFD/OEM/City of Fort Worth social media platforms.
  - o This includes posting to the FIRE/City of Fort Worth NextDoor accounts.

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- This messaging will be uniform and will be shared by other City Departments on their platforms.
- If needed, cooling centers (summer) or warming centers (winter) would be activated prior to any media outreach so all necessary information is available to the public. In the instance of prolonged outages and extreme heat/cold, shelter locations would also be activated under the direction of Neighborhood Services.
- All SNAP registrant data will be pulled by OEM to identify the residents that are electric dependent (medical reasons). Should the situation be immediate, the registrants would be notified of the situation and resources available.
- A fortworthtexas.gov alert would be issued to all Fort Worth residents that are registered for the alerts.
- A *potential* media alert from the Fire PIO would be pushed out with preparation messaging for Increased Urgency but would be sent out for immediate urgency to include expected duration of the rolling blackouts/power outages.

**Increased awareness and outreach**

Although an extensive outreach campaign was conducted for the FortWorthAlerts service when it was launched, FIRE/OEM is working with the Communications & Public Engagement department to increase the registrants through a new outreach campaign this fall.

**David Cooke**  
**City Manager**