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Marathon BECi Rebuilding Effort Continues *1,100 utility workers dedicated to full restoration*

DeRidder— Roughly one week after Hurricane Laura’s historic landfall, Beauregard Electric Cooperative, Inc. (BECi) continues its rebuilding efforts.

“The herculean effort required to recover from Hurricane Laura will be a marathon, not a sprint,” said BECi General Manager Kevin Turner. “BECi is working with crews from across the nation to restore power as safely and quickly as possible. We are taking every measure we can to restore electricity to our members. This effort will also require communication and continued patience from our members as we work together to rebuild in the wake of the storm.”

Hurricane Laura’s Category 4 winds caused a BECi system-wide outage when the storm made landfall. Assisted by 1,500 utility workers from nearly 12 states, the co-op has since restored power to roughly 4,000 of its 43,000 members. Full power restoration to all BECi members is expected to take an additional three weeks.

“We know no one wants to be without power,” BECi spokesperson Danielle Tilley said. “Most of our employees don’t have power at their own homes – if they even have a home to go back to. Despite those personal challenges, our entire team is focused on helping the community recover by making daily progress to get the lights back on as soon as possible.”

Rebuilding efforts have been complicated by the severe damage to transmission infrastructure – large metal structures and high-voltage power lines owned by other companies that deliver electricity from power plants to BECi substations. Once BECi has rebuilt local power lines and repaired substations, the power won’t come back to local communities until other companies are able to rebuild the damaged transmission infrastructure.

Safety is always the top priority in any restoration effort. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, crews are following additional protocols designed to keep them safe and healthy. These protocols add an additional layer of complexity to the restoration process. Members are urged not to approach crews and to remember the importance of social distancing so these mission-essential workers can continue to work safely.

All calls and questions regarding the work to rebuild BECi’s system should be directed to the main office in DeRidder:

- To report an outage through our toll-free automated outage reporting system, dial (888) 367-0275.
- To speak to a customer service representative, dial (337) 463-6221 or (800)367-0275.

Additional safety tips include:

- Stay away from downed wires. Always assume they are energized. Contact the co-op to report downed wires or an outage.
- Do not clear any right-of-way to personal property until electric cooperatives clears right-of-way for you. There are numerous life-threatening hazards as well as potential to do more damage to our system. Please wait until your cooperative is available to clear a path for you.
- Do not pile debris near utility equipment.
- Under no circumstances should a meter be removed or pulled. It is illegal to tamper with a meter because it creates other safety hazards.
- Avoid crews working in the street. This will keep you and the crews safe and allow them to work on restoring your power.

As of September 4, 2020, 12:00 PM, here are the current outage totals.

| Parish | Members Served | Total Number of Members Without Power | Total Number of Members Restored to Date | Percentage of Parish Still Out | Percentage of Parish Restored |
|---------------|-----------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Allen | 5509 | 5081 | 428 | 92% | 8% |
| Beauregard | 14943 | 14093 | 850 | 94% | 6% |
| Calcasieu | 12402 | 12325 | 77 | 99% | 1% |
| Evangeline | 50 | 48 | 2 | 96% | 4% |
| Jeff Davis | 336 | 326 | 10 | 97% | 3% |
| Rapides | 1487 | 1402 | 85 | 94% | 6% |
| Vernon | 8172 | 5666 | 2506 | 69% | 31% |
| Total | 42889 | 38941 | 3958 | 90% | 10% |

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