

SLECA Prepares for Hurricane Ida

For Immediate Release

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HOUMA (August 29, 2021) –SLECA is preparing to respond to widespread power outages in the wake of Hurricane Ida. SLECA anticipates the entire system will incur severe damage and warns member-consumers it could take weeks to restore power. “This is predicted to be one of the worst storms our area has seen in decades,” said SLECA General Manager Joe Ticheli. “Once the winds subside, we will begin accessing the damages and moving mutual-aid crews into our area to begin repairing the damage.”

SLECA employees have spent days making final preparations, and plan to hunker down to ride out the storm. Mutual-aid crews from Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Missouri as well as outside contractors are on stand-by and will head to Louisiana to help electric cooperatives in Ida’s path.

Hurricane Ida is expected to cause flooding which will complicate power restoration.

SLECA continues to urge member-consumers to put safety first and take the following steps:

- Do not clear any right-of-way to personal property until SLECA 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.
- Stay away from downed wires. Always assume they are energized. Contact SLECA to report downed wires or an outage.
- Avoid flooded areas. Flooding will be a major threat from Hurricane Ida. Flash flooding can occur suddenly due to intense rainfall. Long-term flooding along rivers and bayous persist for days following a storm. When approaching water on a roadway, remember: Don’t Drown. Turn Around.
- Avoid crews working in the street and give utility crews the right of way on highways and roads. This will keep you and the crews safe and allow them to work on restoring your power.

- If you plan to use a portable generator, follow the manufacturer's instructions and use only when necessary. Don't overload it and turn it off at night when you're asleep or if you leave your home.
- To avoid the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, place portable generators outside in a well-ventilated area, more than 20 feet away from your home, doors and windows. Never run a generator inside, not even in your garage. Do not connect the generator directly into your home's main fuse box or circuit panel.
- Protect food and refrigerated medicine with ice in an insulated cooler. If you are without power for more than two hours, refrigerated foods should be placed in a cooler. Foods will stay frozen for 36 to 48 hours in a fully loaded freezer if the door remains closed, and a half-full freezer will generally keep frozen foods for up to 24 hours. Check [foodsafety.gov](https://www.foodsafety.gov) to learn more about when to throw out or keep food after a power outage.
- Turn off power to flood-prone areas if it is safe to do so. However, if you have an electric sump pump for your home, you should not turn off the power.
- Tune in to local news broadcasts for the latest emergency information.

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SLECA serves approximately 21,576 member-consumers in Terrebonne, Lafourche, and St. Mary parishes.

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