Twitter Thread by Austin Energy



Austin Energy
@austinenergy

LIVE: ❄■ City of Austin leadership including @AustinEnergyGM will address the unprecedented severe weather.
■ Due to tech limitations, it will only be available via Facebook Live here: https://t.co/PchiwUgP0M
We will be live-tweeting in this thread.

Mayor Steve Adler: This will require us all to come together and help one another.
City Manager Spencer Cronk: As a City, we are doing our best to help those in need.

Cronk: Stay off the roads and conserve energy. Every little bit helps.

COA Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Juan Ortiz: Currently we have a warming center at the Palmer Events Center. You can show up at any time. As of this morning, cold weather shelters remain active. 282 were sheltered overnight.

Ortiz: Urge residents to conserve much power as possible to help with the emergency issues. We are working with critical facilities to ensure that access to those facilities remain open, so ambulances can get in.

Travis County Judge Andy Brown: My power has been off since 2 a.m. I know the providers, county and city are doing everything they can. Please stay in your house unless there is some type of emergency. I want to thank all the first responders.

Austin Energy General Manager Jackie Sargent: I want all of our customers to know how concerned we are about you during this unprecedented weather emergency. There is a very urgent call for energy conservation. We want our customers that we are doing everything we can.

Sargent: We strongly urge customers who have power to reduce their energy where they can. Every little bit that you can do can help us. Austin Energy is part of the ERCOT wholesale market. We work in concert with ERCOT to prepare for emergencies.

With everyone's help, we can reduce demand enough to get power back on to customers. We have circuits that contain critical load (hospitals, fire stations, water treatment centers) - so we need to maintain electricity to those places.

This event happened quickly and the amount of load we needed to remove from the grid was significant and in was in a matter of short time. We maxed out on available circuits on what we have to not interrupt critical load.

Now we are on to media questions.
How can people without power get to warming centers if they're asked to stay off roads?
Ortiz: If you need to get to a warming center, make the decision now and go when it is still daylight. If you wait, it's going to get more complicated.

What percentage of Austin Energy outages are caused by ERCOT?
Sargent: We have some situations where we've had some outages and we're including that in our load shed requirements. Right now, that is all wrapped together to meet those requirements from ERCOT.

cont: We are working on infrastructure. I can't break out a percentage of any specific load to a non-event outage at this time. We are aware of where our system is at - and we're operating within the constraints of ERCOT. ERCOT says this situation is likely to continue through

the night and possibly in the afternoon and tomorrow morning. It depends on what we do as consumers, managing our consumption. The more we can conserve, the more we can help our neighbors. Also, making sure our resources are operating properly. We have people here 24/7.

Question: Regarding 311 system down
Sargent: We are working with our Utility Contact Center to back up @ATX_311. We are working in conjunction with our City IT and they're working very diligently to restore those services.

Are customers heeding request to reduce energy?
Sargent: We are making those requests. We have reached out to specific groups of customers and they are responding by conserving. The thing I talked about that individuals can do - lowering thermostat, closing blinds, will help us.

Is South Austin bearing the brunt of the outages?
Sargent: That is not the case. The outages are across the system. They are designated by specific circuits and those are circuits - if you look at the outage map, they're across our service territory.

Sargent: Those are part of the circuits that we were instructed to turn off as part of the response to this event. As we added to all of those circuits, we got to a point where we hit all of them. So we couldn't drop any additional load to go and rotate through.

Sargent: Basically, we are stuck here until we can get a reprieve from ERCOT. It's a tough situation. I understand that. We are doing everything we can to get to a place where we can get people's power back on.

Concerns about more winter weather?
Sargent: If we see that continue across the entire footprint, across our state, that we'll continually to have challenges to meet the demand. Asking customers to conserve will continue to be critical.

Frozen precip on trees creates outages. Some of the areas are challenging to get to. There are canyons, vegetation. Continue to monitor & watch these conditions. Do what you can to be prepared. Have what resources you have available. We can't say for sure this won't continue.

Ortiz: We currently have 4 cold weather shelters that are open. Plus a warming center (Palmer Events Center) that is also functioning as a shelter. We're distributing individuals throughout those shelters.

Brown: We may be asking people to take showers tonight, so not everyone showers tomorrow morning to reduce natural gas usage.

Adler: Consider donating a blanket to Front Steps. If you're in need of food, dial 211. We're all in this together and we're going to take it one moment at a time. Be safe.

Cronk: As we know this is impacting every corner of our state, but it's also impacting the corners of our neighborhood and homes. Thank you to everyone.
END OF THREAD