

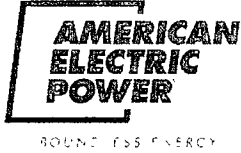


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Public Utility Commission of Texas
Energy Link

March 17, 2021

Chairman Arthur D’Andrea
Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 N. Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Project No. 50664 – Issues Related to the State Disaster for Coronavirus Disease 2019

Dear Chairman D’Andrea:

March 13, 2020. That is the day that COVID-19 changed our lives forever—it affected the way we live, learn and work. Although AEP Texas, Southwestern Electric Power Company (SWEPCO) and Electric Transmission Texas (ETT) (collectively, the AEP Companies) are all still in response mode, it is important to take a few minutes to reflect on the past year and what we have been able to accomplish together to support our communities.

Our priority is to deliver safe and reliable service to our customers. This pandemic only reminded us even more of the essential service we provide, especially as many people began working and educating their children from home. That is why we continue to practice COVID-19 safety precautions diligently and are providing incentives and encouragement for our employees to get vaccinated once they are eligible.

In addition to battling COVID-19, we also responded to multiple significant storms across our service territory over the last year. We overcame Hurricanes Hanna, Laura, and Delta and most recently, the severe winter event that greatly affected our state. Through it all, we were incredibly proud of the response our teams provided during these storm events. We were able to rely on assistance from our sister AEP companies and mutual assistance teams to restore power as quickly as possible, all while maintaining enhanced safety and health protocols.

We also expanded our support of communities and customers, providing emergency funding for basic services, and taking other steps to assist customers during this difficult time.

The attached update provides more details on our actions to support our employees, our customers and our operations related to COVID-19 in the last year. We continue to be encouraged by the creativity and partnerships that have developed during this time and vow to approach future challenges with that same level of collaboration. As always, please reach out with any questions or concerns, and let us know if we can provide additional information or support.

Sincerely,

/s/Judith E. Talavera

Judith E. Talavera
President & COO
AEP Texas

/s/Malcolm Smoak

Malcolm Smoak
President & COO
SWEPCO

/s/Kip M. Fox

Kip M. Fox
Managing Director
ETT

AEP Companies One-Year COVID-19 Update

Essential Coordination

- Coordinated with state officials to ensure frontline workers were designated essential and able to travel to keep power flowing and provide mutual assistance in storms. We also worked to make sure equipment suppliers and support industries could continue to operate.
- Collaborated with ERCOT and SPP to ensure reliability of the transmission system and power supply during the pandemic, and to plan for potential disruption scenarios.
- Consulted with peer utilities to share best practices and responses and identify vendors that could provide essential personal protective equipment and other supplies.
- Developed comprehensive emergency operating plans, including sequestration plans, to ensure continued staffing and operation of critical systems.
- Worked collaboratively with ERCOT, SPP, the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUCT) and mutual aid groups to ensure protection of the grid and adapt mutual assistance processes for COVID-19 so that resources would be available to respond to major weather-related outage events.
- Worked with state and local officials to ensure hospitals and locations housing COVID-19 vaccines were on service priority and restoration lists to preserve critical functions and protect vaccine storage.
- Worked with local and state officials, as well as regulatory bodies to manage the electric grid and operations remotely through a series of extreme events: Presidential election, social unrest & protests across our territories, and increased cyber & physical threats across all critical sectors.

Corporate Giving

- On behalf of the American Electric Power Foundation and other small grants, AEP Texas received approximately \$449,000 in emergency funds to provide COVID-19 relief. That amount was used to support non-profit organizations across our service area to help address the hardships faced by customers and communities. Some of the agencies that received support included:
 - United Way of the Coastal Bend
 - Food Bank of the RGV
 - South Texas Food Bank
 - San Angelo Area Foundation, and
 - United Samaritan Services of Vernon.
- Similarly, SWEPCO provided financial support to non-profit organizations across our three-state service area amounting to more than \$500,000. Some of the agencies that received support include:
 - East Texas Food Bank
 - Greater Longview United Way
 - Shelby County Children's Advocacy Center
 - Donley County Senior Citizens Association
- Electric Transmission Texas, LLC also provided financial support to several non-profit organizations in the communities where ETT has assets. During the year 2020, ETT donated \$87,300 to these organizations including:
 - First responders—Volunteer Fire Departments
 - South Texas Food Bank
 - Hope House

- MileOne International Business Assistance Center ("IBAC")—this included the purchase of sewing machines that were used to make masks for first responders and health care workers.
- Additionally, AEP donated 119,000 masks, 110,000 gloves and 2,200 face shields to support front-line health care providers during the early phases of the pandemic.
- AEP continued to honor the financial support commitments for events and local fundraisers canceled due to COVID-19 to help sustain local arts and cultural organizations.

Customer Focus

- Proactively communicated with our customers and stakeholders about payment options as well as energy efficiency information, small business support, scam alerts awareness and the company's COVID-19 preparations.
- AEP Texas worked with the PUCT to develop a customer assistance program, called the COVID-19 Electricity Relief Program (ERP), which was implemented on March 26, 2020. The program was designed to assist residential customers whose ability to pay was impacted by COVID-19. Qualifying residential customers were not subject to a disconnect order from the Retail Electric Provider (REP) and any unrecovered wires and energy charges continue to be collected through an ERP rider currently charged by the ERCOT TDUs. The program ended September 30, 2020.
- SWEPCO suspended non-payment disconnections during the spring and summer of 2020 in response to PUCT directives. SWEPCO also supported Texas customers through various initiatives such as suspending fees for payments made by credit card, expanding the number of self-service channels available to customers, and dedicating a customer service team to helping small business owners identify and apply for government assistance.

Operational Actions

- Took significant steps to keep our employees safe and healthy. Line workers and other critical employees have been working in smaller teams, practicing physical distancing, wearing facial coverings when physical distancing is not possible, monitoring themselves for symptoms and taking other prevention measures recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state specific guidance.
- In critical locations such as dispatch centers, we put in place additional health and safety protocols, including separate reporting locations and dedicated teams and equipment, to ensure that essential employee teams remain healthy and available to manage and respond.
- Mobilized supply chain resources to ensure that our front-line workers have access to facial coverings, hand sanitizer, and cleaning projects and services.
- Advocated for priority vaccinations for our essential workers who are maintaining reliable service by keeping the electric grid operating safely.
- Leveraged our relationships across the utility industry to implement best practices on operations and customer service.
- Applied new technology use and software to help us communicate effectively during normal business and emergency restoration in order to maintain physical distance requirements.
- Performed proactive infrastructure inspections and repairs on electrical facilities that serve hospital and medical facilities that were treating COVID-19 patients.

- Based our operational decisions and employee/community communications on consultations with medical staff with expertise in public health and occupational medicine to help interpret guidelines and ensure a consistent level of understanding of our policies and actions.
- More than 12,000 AEP staff have been working from home since March 2020 and continue to do so effectively. More than 85% of our customer call center team has been working from home to increase physical distancing in our call centers.
- Established a Call Center Alumni Program, made up of recent retirees and employees with prior call center experience, to help customers with questions about service and other issues.
- Developed a company-wide “Return to the Workplace” plan, applying standards and lessons learned from the CDC, state and federal governments, and best industry practices, to ensure an orderly and phased return of employees to our offices and facilities once we determine it is safe to do so.