

# **Filing Receipt**

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#### **PROJECT NO. 56822**

INVESTIGATION OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE BY UTILITIES IN HOUSTON AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

OF TEXAS

#### MEDINA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S RESPONSE TO COMMISSION STAFF'S FIRST REQUEST FOR INFORMATION TO TARGETED ELECTRIC CO-OPS QUESTION NOS. STAFF 1-1 THROUGH 1-120

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TO: John Lajzer, Public Utility Commission of Texas, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin, Texas 78711

Medina Electric Cooperative ("MEC") files these responses to Commission Staff's First Request for Information to Targeted Electric Co-ops, Question Nos Staff 1-1 through 1-120 ("Staff's First RFIs to Co-ops"). Commission Staff directed that responses to Staff's First RFIs to Co-ops be filed by August 30, 2024, thus these responses are timely filed. MEC stipulates that its responses may be treated by all parties as if they were filed under oath.

Dated: August 29, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

Herbert Grebe III Chief Executive Officer Medina Electric Cooperative

# **STAFF 1-1**

Provide the following information concerning the last hurricane or major storm drill conducted in 2024:

- a. The date the drill was conducted;
- b. The category of hurricane drilled and any conditions (e.g., where the hurricane made landfall, date hurricane made landfall, status of infrastructure and vegetation management activities in affected area, aid received vs aid requested from mutual assistance programs, total number of customers in anticipated affected area) used in the drill;
- c. A description as to how the drill conducted in 2024 differed materially from the previous annual drill;
- d. The identity of all third-party vendors that assisted in either conducting or preparations for the 2024 hurricane drill;
- e. The identity of all other electric, water, sewer, or telecommunication utilities that were invited to participate in your 2024 hurricane drill and a description of their participation;
- f. The identity of all local government, trade associations, medical and eldercare facilities, community organizations, PGCs, and REPs that were invited to participate in your 2024 hurricane drill and a description of their participation;
- g. How performance during the 2024 hurricane drill was measured; and
- h. Any feed-back whether internally or externally from a third-party vendor or party invited to participate in the 2024 hurricane drill.

# **RESPONSE:**

a – Medina Electric Cooperative conducted a hurricane or major storm drill on May 7th at 10:30a as part of the South Texas Electric Cooperative (STEC) annual hurricane drill.

b – Medina Electric Cooperative, as part of the drill, activated the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) September 1, 2024, as the depression reached 60 degrees West Longitude. The drilled fictional Hurricane Ashley made landfall at Bay City, TX as a Cat. 3 with 120 MPH wind. Aid would be coordinated by Texas Electric Cooperatives for any of the Texas Electric Distribution Cooperative Members under the Mutual Aid Agreement. No Medina Electric Cooperative members would be affected under this scenario. Medina Electric Cooperative would provide assistance to the affected cooperatives.

c-STEC's drills each year follow the same parameters and steps as outlined in the EOP. The only change is the location of the impact area and intensity so that the STEC Member Distribution Systems can consider the variability and their response to the storm. Some STEC Distribution members would be experiencing EOP stages and preparation. Other STEC Distribution members unaffected by the storm would be preparing to send assistance.

d – STEC developed, coordinated and facilitated the drill. STEC is not a 3rd Party vendor but is the Generation and Transmission (G&T) utility that provides power supply and transmission operator services for Medina Electric Cooperative.

e – Participants: STEC, Victoria Electric Cooperative, Jackson Electric Cooperative, Medina Electric Cooperative, Magic Valley Electric Cooperative, Wharton Electric Cooperative, Nueces Electric Cooperative, San Patricio Electric Cooperative, Karnes Electric Cooperative, San Bernard Electric Cooperative

Notified but did not participate: Public Utility Commission of Texas

f – None participated, TDEM was invited but was unable to attend.

g – Each of the STEC Distribution Systems measures the drill based upon the factors related to whether they are sending aid to an impacted system, or if they are impacted in the drill and follow the steps outlined as in the EOP.

h - No.

SPONSOR: Trey Grebe

**<u>STAFF 1-2</u>** Do you ever seek participation of your customers during a hurricane drill? If yes, please provide a description of their level of involvement.

# **RESPONSE:**

No.

Sponsor: Keith Calle

- **STAFF 1-3** Are actual events and conditions experienced during a previous hurricane or storm used in the next year's hurricane or major storm drill? If yes:
  - a. How long would an actual storm be used to set the conditions for future hurricane drills?
  - b. What hurricanes and major storms were used to set the conditions for the 2024 hurricane drill?

#### **RESPONSE:**

No, hurricanes rarely affect MEC's service territory. Historical storms are used but not the next year.

<u>STAFF 1-4</u> Please identify any electric, water, sewer, or telecommunication utilities that invited you to participate in their 2024 hurricane or major storm drill.

## **RESPONSE:**

None.

<u>STAFF 1-5</u> Please identify all resources, internal or external, used for weather or storm tracking purposes before July 8, 2024.

#### **RESPONSE:**

Storm Geo, National Weather Service, the Weather Channel, and receives weather and grid conditions updates from STEC, TDEM, and ERCOT

#### SPONSOR: Trey Grebe

**<u>STAFF 1-6</u>** How many days before projected landfall do you start tracking storms that could affect or disrupt operations within your service area?

#### **RESPONSE:**

MEC tracks all cyclic storms in the western Atlantic Ocean or Caribbean Sea west of 60° W longitude.

<u>STAFF 1-7</u> How many days before projected landfall did you start tracking the storm eventually named Hurricane Beryl?

# **RESPONSE:**

Tracking started on Monday July 1, 2024.

**<u>STAFF 1-8</u>** Do you check the functionality or performance of your outage tracker as part of your regular storm preparation procedures?

## **RESPONSE:**

Functionality and performance of Medina Electric Cooperative's Outage Map is consistently reviewed, no special checks are made in preparation of storm.

**<u>STAFF 1-9</u>** How far in advance of landfall did you initiate requests for mutual assistance?

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by either the May Derecho or Hurricane Beryl, therefore no requests for mutual assistance were made.

**STAFF 1-10** Provide information as to how restoration efforts are prioritized, and resources are allocated following a hurricane or major storm. For purposes of this question, please provide how these prioritizations and allocation guidelines were used in practice during your response to Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

After transmission and substation services are restored, MEC will begin to energize feeder breakers. Crews will be assigned to feeders and will work along the main line from the substation to the first protective device. Restoration of lines on taps or single service will be completed after the main line is completed. Taps serving a larger number of members will be given priority.

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by either the May Derecho or Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-11** Describe the procedures during an emergency for handling complaints and for communicating with the public; the media; customers; the commission; the Office of Public Utility Counsel (OPUC); local and state governmental entities, officials, and emergency operations centers, the reliability coordinator for your Company's power region; and critical load customers directly served by the entity.

## **RESPONSE:**

Complaints received during emergencies are addressed as received and forwarded to the appropriate departments.

MEC's Incident Commander will work closely with local, regional and state agencies to ensure effective communication regarding outage and restoration condition, status, and plans as necessary.

Status updates will be provided at least daily on MEC's website. Notices of the updates will be shared through social media and emails to our members.

**STAFF 1-12** Does your company use an operating condition system? If yes, define each level of the operating condition system and actions taken at each level. Please include citations to the relevant section(s) of your EOP filed with the PUCT when answering this question.

#### **RESPONSE:**

Yes. Annex E of Medina Electric Cooperative's EOP is summarized below.

Level 1 – Declared when a storm with the possibility of becoming a named storm is west of  $60^{\circ}$  W longitude. Key staff are made aware of the storm and system operations begins to actively monitor.

Level 2 – Declared when a storm with the possibility of becoming a named storm is west of  $80^{\circ}$  W longitude (approximately 4.5 days from service area) and has the potential to impact the service area. Operations crews begin to prepare for the storm by verifying material, contract crew availability, fuel levels, and consumables. Hotel rooms are contacted, and emergency personnel are identified.

Level 3 – Declared when a named storm is in the Gulf of Mexico with a reasonable probability of impacting the service area. Emergency personnel are allowed time to make personal preparations. Hotel rooms are booked, and meal accommodations are made. Material susceptible to high winds is secured at the area offices.

Level 4 – Declared when a named storm has a high probability of impacting the service area within the 36 hours. Impacted offices will be closed to the public. Personnel are assigned to their designated areas.

Level 5 - Declared when a storm is in the service area, and crews are stationed at their predetermined areas. Once safe to do so, crews are out visually inspecting the area.

Level 6 – Declared when a storm has passed, and restoration efforts are underway.

**STAFF 1-13** Explain the system and tools used to manage all emergency response assignments. Your response should include management of mutual assistance and contract personnel and consider needed food and lodging facilities.

# **RESPONSE:**

The system and tools used to manage all emergency response assignments are contained in MEC's EOP (which has been filed at the Commission).

**STAFF 1-14** How far in advance of the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl did you initiate emergency preparations? Describe the timeframes for the preparation work in anticipation of emergency operations plan activation. Please include citations to the relevant section(s) of your EOP filed with the PUCT when answering this question.

# **RESPONSE:**

No emergency preparations were made in advance of the May 2024 Derecho.

Level 1 was declared on Monday July 1<sup>st</sup> for Hurricane Beryl. Level 2 was declared on Wednesday July 3<sup>rd</sup> and all necessary preparations were taken as described in MEC's EOP Annex E. All level 3 actions were also completed due to the timing of the storm with the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. Level 3 was declared on Friday July 5<sup>th</sup> and all necessary preparations were verified to be completed. Level 4 was never declared due to the path of the storm shifting northward over the weekend. On Monday July 8<sup>th</sup>, MEC was no longer in a hurricane emergency level and operations shifted to providing mutual assistance to cooperatives affected by the storm.

**STAFF 1-15** Please provide a timeline of your Company's response to the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl so no after storm actions were required on Medina Electric Cooperative's system.

**STAFF 1-16** Please detail the extent and duration of outages experienced by your customers during and in the aftermath of the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl. Include the total number of customers affected; minimum, maximum, and average hours of service interruptions; and maximum and average time to service restoration in your response.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

STAFF 1-17 Provide the following information concerning your service territory:

- a. Identify the geographic areas that experienced the highest number of outages and longest duration of outage due to the May 2024 Derecho. Your response should identify the neighborhood, city, zip code, and county if possible.
- b. Identify the geographic areas that experienced the highest number of outages and longest duration of outage due to the Hurricane Beryl. Your response should identify the neighborhood, city, zip code, and county if possible.
- c. Identify or describe the factors that contributed to the areas identified in response to subparts (a) and (b) as being particularly vulnerable.

#### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-18** Describe any challenges in restoring operations your Company encountered due to the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-19** Please provide a copy of the after-action reports or provide a date by when the action reports will be completed for the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**<u>STAFF 1-20</u>** Please provide any additional information and describe any concerns that may be helpful to this investigation.

# **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.

#### **Electric Utilities Communication and Coordination**

- STAFF 1-21 Provide the following information concerning the communication strategy and policy in place before July 8, 2024:
  - a. What consideration is given to local governments, community organizations, and other electric, water, sewer, and telecommunication utilities concerning your communication strategy after a hurricane or major storm in your service territory?
  - b. Describe any augmentation to staffing at call centers or help desks that would occur in advance of or after a hurricane or major storm entered your service territory.
  - c. For transmission and distribution utilities, please describe how your company coordinates communication to end-use customers with retail electric providers.

# **RESPONSE:**

- a. Entities impacted by storm events who receive power from MEC will receive ongoing updates on restoration status.
- b. During an emergency, call centers will be staffed around the clock. Additional resources, both internal and contractor, will be utilized.
- c. Not applicable.

**SPONSOR:** Laurie Van Damme

**STAFF 1-22** Describe your communication strategy with the public before, during, and after the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl and by what means these communications were conducted.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative did not send out any communications prior to the May 2024 Deracho.

Hurricane Beryl preparation communication was sent in accordance with our EOP. Direct communication to members through email and mobile app notifications. Website news item and social media notice for storm prep.

Since Medina Electric Cooperative's service area was not impacted by either event, there was no communication sent during or after the event.

**STAFF 1-23** Please provide any available data regarding customer feedback you received in response to your service restoration efforts during and in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl therefore no feedback was received.

**STAFF 1-24** What steps are being taken to improve coordination and communication with local governments, medical and eldercare facilities, community organizations, trade associations, and other similar organizations for future significant weather events?

# **RESPONSE:**

Accounts listed on our critical care list receive additional email notifications to make proper preparation ahead of predicted significant weather.

**STAFF 1-25** What steps are being taken to improve coordination and communication with other electric, water, sewer, and telecommunication utilities for future significant weather events?

# **RESPONSE:**

Critical load accounts designated in NISC will receive email notifications ahead of predicted significant weather events.

- STAFF 1-26 Provide the following information concerning call centers and help desks used by your company before July 8, 2024:
  - a. How many people work in call centers or help desks?
  - b. Of these people, please provide the percentage of these employees that are full-time employees (FTE), contracted labor, or temporary/seasonal workers.
  - c. What is the target wait time or response time for calls?
  - d. What is the target resolution time for calls?
  - e. Provide a detailed description of company-specific training provided to call center and help desk operators concerning major outages and major weather events including, but not limited to, hurricanes and high wind events.
  - f. What is the maximum call volume for the call centers of help desks that were available and in operation during or in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl?

# **RESPONSE:**

- a 16
- b 100%
- c 10 seconds
- d No target
- e -
- Weather Talking Points & Resources:
  - Medina EC has been monitoring the path of the current storm system and is preparing for any impact it could have on our service area, which could include high winds, extreme rain, flooding, and tornadoes.
  - We encourage you to make preparations for you and your family as needed.
  - Weather conditions can impact restoration times due to hazardous driving conditions. Crews will work as quickly as safely possible to respond to outages.
  - Please know that our staff is always working hard behind the scenes; we know members expect the lights to come on when they flip the switch, and our staff wants the same.
- Power Outage Information
  - The impact of the storm is likely to cause power outages across our system. Please know that our team works to restore power as quickly as safely possible. We cannot tell a member exactly when their power will be restored.

- Outage Reporting: SmartHub (web or app) or by calling 1-866-632-3532.
- Outage Map: Outage Map
- Outage Alerts: To enable these notifications, you will need to verify your mobile number or email under Contact Methods on your SmartHub account. (How to verify account)
- Power Restoration
  - Restoring outages, especially during and after a storm, takes time. Crews must first find the problem and follow a series of steps to bring the lights back on as quickly as safely possible. Learn more about power restoration on our website: <u>https://www.medinaec.org/outagesrestoration</u>
- Safety
  - Downed Powerlines: If you see downed powerlines, stay away and report them by calling 911 or the cooperative at 1-866-632-3532.
  - Generator Safety: If you have a generator, be sure to operate it safely. Follow manufacturer guidelines and never run a generator inside a home or garage.
  - Flood Safety: Avoid crossing roadways with flooding. Even shallow water can pose significant hazards.
- Staying Safe During Power Outages
  - Stay Indoors: If possible, stay indoors to avoid hazards such as falling debris and downed powerlines.
  - Emergency Kit: Have an emergency kit ready with flashlights, batteries, a first-aid kit, and any necessary medications.
  - Battery-Powered Devices: Keep phones and other battery-powered devices charged. Limit use on cell phones to preserve batteries or invest in a backup battery pack. Consider having a battery-powered radio to stay informed about the storm.
  - Candle Safety: Use caution if you need to use candles as a light source. Never leave candles unattended and keep them away from flammable materials.
- Pre-Storm Preparation
  - Secure Outdoor Items: Bring in or secure outdoor furniture, decorations, and other items that could become projectiles in high winds.
  - Trim Trees: Trim branches that could pose a risk to your home or power lines.
  - Fuel Up: Ensure your vehicle has a full tank of gas and you have fuel for generators if needed.
  - Charge Devices: Fully charge all mobile devices, portable chargers, and other essential electronics.
- Preserving Food
  - Refrigeration: Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to maintain the cold temperature. A refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours if unopened. A full freezer will maintain its temperature for about 48 hours (24 hours if half full) if the door remains closed.

- Dry Ice: Consider using dry ice to keep your refrigerator and freezer cold if the power is out for an extended period.
- Perishable Food: Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers) that has been above 40°F for 2 hours or more.
- Critical Care/Life Support
  - If you or someone in your home requires electronically-operated medical devices, have a plan in case of extended power outages.
  - Backup Power: Ensure you have a backup power source, such as a generator, and know how to operate it safely.
  - Emergency Contacts: Keep a list of emergency contacts handy, including your medical provider and local emergency services.
- Other Resources
  - o <u>https://www.ready.gov</u>
  - <u>https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies.html</u>
  - <u>https://www.cdc.gov/natural-disasters/response/what-to-do-protect-yourself-during-a-power-outage.html</u>
- f Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by Hurricane Beryl.

SPONSOR: Laurie VanDamme

**STAFF 1-27** Provide the daily average and peak call volume to your call centers or help desks during or in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl. For purposes of this question, please provide responses for each day from July 8, 2024, through the date power was restored to at least 99% of the customers in the service territory in the Impacted Area.

# **RESPONSE:**

Total calls for July 8<sup>th</sup> were 217 with a peak of 33 calls within 1 hour. Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by Hurricane Beryl and never met the 99% threshold.

**STAFF 1-28** Describe how you communicated and shared information on recovery resources and updates with local and state leaders as well as your customers during leading up to, during, and in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

No communication was provided since Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-29** Please indicate whether calls incoming to your call centers, help desks, or priority call desks are recorded, and if so, provide your retention schedule for the captured calls.

# **RESPONSE:**

All calls are recorded. Calls are kept from newest to oldest with oldest being deleted as space fills up.

**STAFF 1-30** If calls incoming to your priority call desks are not recorded, please indicate if incoming calls are logged or otherwise tracked. If tracked or logged, please provide a copy of all logged or otherwise tracked calls to the priority call desk during or in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.

#### **RESPONSE:**

Calls are recorded, logged and tracked.

**STAFF 1-31** Please provide an audio copy and transcript of any pre-recorded messages related to either the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl used by your call centers or help desks and the date these messages were utilized.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by Hurricane Beryl/ Derecho and did not utilize any pre-recorded messages related to this event.

- **STAFF 1-32** Provide the following information concerning the outage tracker in use on July 8, 2024:
  - a. The date the outage tracker was rolled out to customers.
  - b. The last date the software underpinning the outage tracker was updated.
  - c. whether the outage tracker was functioning during the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl as intended or provide an explanation as to why not.
  - d. Whether the outage tracker was mobile-friendly;
  - e. the languages supported by the outage tracker;
  - f. Whether the outage tracker captured circuit-specific or meter-specific information or both.
  - g. Whether the outage tracker was cloud-based or operated through an onpremise server?
  - h. The maximum number of simultaneous users the outage tracker was designed to accommodate.
  - i. Whether you had internal facing redundancies/contingencies for outage tracking, and if so if these redundancies/contingencies were utilized during your response to Hurricane Beryl.
  - j. The date of the last stress or load test of the outage tracker.

# **RESPONSE:**

a – Exact date is not available but sometime in 2014.

b – May 29, 2024

c - Yes

e – English, additionally MEC has a landing page in Spanish that re-directs members to MEC's outage resource page with the tracker embedded

f-Both

- g On-premises server
- h 750 hits on the web page per second before any noticeable performance issues

i - None

j – Outage tracker is not able to be stress tested by Medina Electric Cooperative

d - Yes

**STAFF 1-33** Provide daily total and peak numbers of users accessing your outage tracker in the greater Houston area during each day of the May 2024 Derecho event.

# **RESPONSE:**

Zero, Medina Electric Cooperative does not have any members in the greater Houston area.

STAFF 1-34 Provide the daily total and peak number of users accessing your outage tracker in the Impacted Area starting from July 8, 2024 through the date service was restored to 100% of your service territory.

# **RESPONSE:**

This data is not available.

## SPONSOR: Douglas Kindred

**STAFF 1-35** Describe any processes or policies adopted by your company as contingencies to inform customers about service outages and estimated restoration times in the event the outage tracker is offline.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina EC would leverage the website, email, and social media platforms if the outage tracker application became unavailable.

**STAFF 1-36** Please indicate if the processes or policies described in your response to Staff 1-35 were utilized during either the May 2024 Derecho event or in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl. If they were, please identify the dates the identified processes and policies were activated.

## **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.

**STAFF 1-37** Please provide a breakdown of smart meters currently in service for each county in your service territory that was included within the Impacted Area. In providing a response to this question, please provide both raw numbers and answers as a percentage of total customers in each county.

## **RESPONSE:**

County	Smart Meters	Percentage
Atascosa	97	100%
Brooks	101	100%
Dimmit	472	100%
Duval	100	100%
Frio	4,191	99.98%
Jim Hogg	625	100%
Kinney	10	100%
La Salle	2,435	100%
McMullen	147	100%
Medina	13,098	99.98%
Starr	4,084	100%
Uvalde	3,684	99,97%
Webb	3,284	99.97%
Zapata	1,335	100%
Zavala	1,551	100%

**<u>STAFF 1-38</u>** Provide the date and method (e.g., email, phone call, text message) you initially contacted local governments in the Impacted Area.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl. Local governments were not contacted.

**STAFF 1-39** Describe what processes, if any, you had in place on or before July 8, 2024, to contact medical and eldercare facilities or critical infrastructure (e.g., police stations, firehouses, TV stations) in advance of a hurricane or major storm. Please include citations to the relevant section(s) of your EOP filed with the PUCT when answering this question.

## **RESPONSE:**

The Communications Team will call, text or email Critical Load accounts to provide relevant information.

EOP Section 2.3.11

SPONSOR: Jackie Muennink

**STAFF 1-40** If your company has a process to contact critical care facilities, provide the date and method (e.g., email, phone call, text message) you initially contacted medical facilities, eldercare facilities, or critical infrastructure (e.g., police stations, firehouses, TV stations) in advance of Hurricane Beryl.

### **RESPONSE:**

All accounts, including critical care facilities, received preparation notifications in advance of Hurricane Beryl on July 5<sup>th</sup> via email and other enrolled notifications methods.

**SPONSOR:** Jackie Muennink

STAFF 1-41 Please describe how you communicate and with what frequency you communicate with critical care and at-risk customers about service outages and restoration efforts.

## **RESPONSE:**

Updates will be provided to critical care members, delivered by email, as needed.

**SPONSOR:** Jackie Muennink

**STAFF 1-42** For ERCOT-located utilities, please describe any communication with interconnected power generation companies regarding their operational status during Hurricane Beryl.

## **RESPONSE:**

MEC attended STEC (power generation cooperative) meetings as shown below.

Date	Time(s)	Meteorologist also in attendance (StormGeo)
7/2/2024	15:00	Х
7/3/2024	15:00	Х
7/4/2024	15:00	х
7/5/2024	15:00	х
7/6/2024	15:00	Х
7/7/2024	15:00	Х
7/8/2024	08:30, 17:00	X (08:30 only)
7/9/2024	08:30, 17:00	
7/10/2024	08:30, 17:00	
7/11/2024	16:00	
SPONSOR: Trey Grebe		

### Electric Utilities – Customer Restoration Workflow

**STAFF 1-43** Please state whether you have a service restoration plan regarding service outages caused by extreme or emergency weather events. If you do, please provide a copy of that plan(s). Please include citations to the relevant section(s) of your EOP filed with the PUCT when answering this question.

### **RESPONSE:**

Yes. Annex B.2.5 of Medina Electric Cooperative's EOP for restoration caused by weather events are summarized below.

After transmission and substation services are restored, MEC will begin to energize feeder breakers. Crews will be assigned to feeders and will work along the main line from the substation to the first protective device. Restoration of lines on taps or single service will be completed after the main line is completed. Taps serving a larger number of members will be given priority.

STAFF 1-44 Please describe the procedures followed for customer restoration of service, including prioritization criteria and timelines for restoration or service. Please note if these policies may lead to quicker restoration of service for an area of your service territory relative to the others and why.

## **RESPONSE:**

Restoration is worked according to the number of members impacted, larger taps and line sections will be given higher priority.

STAFF 1-45 Please describe and explain any changes or modifications made to your service restoration plan(s) during and in the aftermath of the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-46** Please provide a county-by-county summary of date on which and number of damage assessment, vegetation, and linemen crews that you deployed to assess and begin service restoration efforts after Hurricane Beryl made landfall in the Impacted Area.

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

STAFF 1-47 Please provide a county-by-county summary of the percentage of your customers that did not have service due to outages caused by Hurricane Beryl for each day from the day Hurricane Beryl made landfall in the Impacted Area to when service was fully restored to your customers.

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-48** Please describe how calls received by your call centers during and after Hurricane Beryl were incorporated in your service restoration workflow and processes.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-49** Please describe your coordination efforts with local, state, and federal agencies, as well as any other stakeholders regarding service restoration before, during, and after Hurricane Beryl. Please provide details of any formal agreements or understandings with these parties.

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-50** Excluding the need to clear significant volumes of vegetation, please identify and described any major challenges you experienced during the process of restoring service to your customers before, during, and after Hurricane Beryl and any solutions implemented to address those challenges.

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-51** Please describe any lessons learned about restoring service to customers during Hurricane Beryl and how what you learned will inform restoration efforts in the future.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-52** Does your utility employ the National Incident Management System? If yes, please provide the date on which your utility starting using NIMS as its framework for managing emergency event response.

# **RESPONSE:**

No.

**STAFF 1-53** Are your emergency response personnel trained in Incident Command System processes? If not, please describe any training your emergency event management personnel have received and how they interact with local and state officials and other utilities.

## **RESPONSE:**

No.

### **Distribution Infrastructure**

**<u>STAFF 1-54</u>** Please explain your process for evaluating and replacing distribution poles. Please include an explanation for the following in your response:

- a. How frequently this evaluation is conducted;
- b. What criteria you utilize for this evaluation; and
- c. When you decide to replace the distribution pole.

### **RESPONSE:**

- a Poles are inspected on a 10-year cycle by an independent pole inspection contractor.
- b Criteria includes inspection of external decay/damage and internal boring.
- c Poles that do not pass inspection are replaced.

### SPONSOR: Leonard Geyer

**STAFF 1-55** Please provide your minimum required right-of-way (ROW) width for both 3-phase and single-phase distribution lines.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative's standard ROW width for both three-phase and single-phase distribution lines is a total of 40-foot, 20 feet on either side of the pole.

### SPONSOR: Leonard Geyer

- **STAFF 1-56** Identify all feeders on your distribution system affected by Hurricane Beryl or the May 2024 Derecho and provide the following for each identified feeder in MS Excel format:
  - a. The quantity and percentage of each installed pole type (e.g., wood, composite, steel, concrete, other) on the feeder before Hurricane Beryl;
  - b. The quantity and percentage of pole failures, by pole type, due to Hurricane Beryl;
  - c. Identify the primary cause of failure for each pole type on the feeder (e.g., trees, branches, wind, or other);
  - d. Identify the primary point of failure of the poles (e.g., crossarm failure, pole leaning, pole break, or other);
  - e. NESC construction strength and overload factors the feeder is currently built to;
  - f. Identify which feeders are in your plans to rebuild to a higher wind loading standard; and
  - g. Provide an estimate for when identified rebuilds will commence.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

- STAFF 1-57 If your distribution system includes feeders with poles taller than 60-feet above ground level, please provide the following:
  - a. Identify each feeder that has any number of poles meeting this criteria;
  - b. Explain the damage experienced on these lines due to either the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl; and
  - c. Explain the design criteria for these types of lines.

## **RESPONSE:**

a - Quihi - Feeder 1, D'Hanis - Feeder 1, D'Hanis - Feeder 2, Hondo - Feeder 1, Ferris - Feeder 2, Uvalde - Feeder 3, Devine - Feeder 1, Moore - Feeder 2, Frio Town - Feeder 2, Pearsall - Feeder 3, Natalia - Feeder 2, Jardin - Feeder 1, Cotulla - Feeder 1, Lopeno - Feeder 1, Lopeno - Feeder 2, Escobares - Feeder 1

b - Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

c – All lines are designed in accordance with Question 60 of this RFL

**STAFF 1-58** Please explain your standard for distribution pole embedment. In your response, please explain if this standard has changed in the last 10 years.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative's standard poles are buried 2' plus 10% of the height of the pole (e.g., a 40' pole is buried 6' deep).

**STAFF 1-59** Please provide the standard distribution pole size and class for both single and three phase lines on your system within the Impacted Area.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative's standard pole for both single and three-phase is a 40' class 4.

**<u>STAFF 1-60</u>** Please explain the NESC construction strength and overload factors your distribution lines were built to in the past.

### **RESPONSE:**

All distribution designs adhere to NESC standards for load factors and construction grades. New overhead lines are designed to a minimum of NESC Grade C construction, with Grade C "At line crossing" load factors to prevent future adjustments if new communications lines are installed. As required, the design standards are increased to Grade B and the associated load factors.

**<u>STAFF 1-61</u>** Please explain any new NESC construction strength and overload factors you adopted for distribution lines in the last two years to improve system resiliency.

# **RESPONSE:**

None.

- **STAFF 1-62** Please provide the following information regarding distribution feeders in the Impacted Area that did not lose power during Hurricane Beryl and the May 2024 Derecho:
  - a. Provide the designed criteria for these lines;
  - b. The type of poles installed;
  - c. The ROW widths;
  - d. Explain if these lines are designed to the latest NESC construction strength and overload factors; and
  - e. Explain if any distribution line experienced damage but remained standing.

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-63** Please provide the number of distribution poles that were in service before the May 2024 Derecho. In your response, please provide quantities by pole type and NESC wind loading criteria of the pole.

# **RESPONSE:**

This data is not available.

**STAFF 1-64** Please provide the total number of distribution poles that failed due to the May 2024 Derecho. In your response, please provide separate quantities for each pole type and NESC wind loading criteria for the poles that failed, and separately identify the number of pole failures caused by either high wind or structural loading from vegetation or debris.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-65** Please provide the total number of distribution poles that failed due to Hurricane Beryl. In your response, please provide separate quantities for each pole type and NESC wind loading criteria for the poles that failed, and separately identify the number of pole failures caused by either high wind or structural loading from vegetation or debris.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-66** For each distribution pole that failed due to the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl, please provide the date of the last inspection and explain the planned frequency of those inspections. Additionally, please provide the most recent inspection report for each pole that failed.

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-67** Should the PUCT require utilities to construct and maintain distribution feeder equipment located in a hurricane prone area to a certain NESC standard? If so, which ones? If no, why not?

# **RESPONSE:**

No opinion at this time.

#### Transmission Infrastructure

- **STAFF 1-68** Please explain your process for evaluating the hardening of transmission lines. If you file an annual storm hardening report under 16 TAC § 25.95, do not merely recite information provided in those filings. In your response, please include an explanation for the following:
  - a. How frequently this evaluation is conducted?
  - b. What criteria is utilized for this evaluation?
  - c. When do you decide to harden transmission lines?

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative does not own or maintain any transmission infrastructure.

**STAFF 1-69** Please provide the number of transmission structures that were in service before the May 2024 Derecho In your response, please provide quantities by structure type and NESC wind loading criteria of the structure.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative does not own or maintain any transmission infrastructure.

**STAFF 1-70** Please provide the total number of transmission structures that failed due to the May 2024 Derecho. In your response, please provide separate quantities for each structure type and NESC wind loading criteria of the structure, and separately identify the number of structure failures caused by either high wind or structural loading from vegetation or debris.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative does not own or maintain any transmission infrastructure.

**STAFF 1-71** Please provide the total number of transmission structures that failed due to Hurricane Beryl. In your response, please provide separate quantities for each structure type and NESC wind loading criteria of the structure, and separately identify the number of structure failures caused by either high wind or structural loading from vegetation or debris.

### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative does not own or maintain any transmission infrastructure.

**STAFF 1-72** For each transmission structure that failed due to the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl, please provide the date of the last inspection and explain the planned frequency of those inspections. Additionally, please provide the most recent inspection report for each structure that failed.

#### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative does not own or maintain any transmission infrastructure.

#### Vegetation Management

**<u>STAFF 1-73</u>** Provide the following information concerning your vegetation management staff:

- a. Provide the current size of your vegetation management staff. Your response should include a separate figure for full-time staff and independent contractors.
- b. Provide the average size of your vegetation management staff over the last 5 years. Your response should include a separate figure for full-time staff and independent contractors.
- c. Please explain how you determined the appropriate level of full-time vegetation management staff for each of the last 5 years.
- d. Provide the cost difference per circuit-mile between using contractors versus in-house vegetation management crews.
- e. Whether you retain an arborist as part of your permanent vegetation management staff or have an arborist consult with your vegetation management crews.

## **RESPONSE:**

- a. Medina Electric Cooperative currently employs 2 full-time vegetation management coordinators and 3 independent contractors.
- b. The average size of full-time staff is 2 and the average number of independent contractors is 3.
- c. Staff levels were determined by the workload and the ability to effectively manage contracted crews.
- d. Medina Electric Cooperative does not have any in-house vegetation management crews. Cost difference per circuit-mile is not available.
- e. Medina Electric Cooperative currently employs 2 certified arborists.

**STAFF 1-74** Please describe the minimum clearance standard for vegetation along transmission and distribution power lines at various voltage levels and how these clearances were derived based on your service territory.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative does not own or operate transmission power lines.

The standard minimum clearance for primary distribution lines (12kv-25kv) is 10 feet. The standard minimum clearance for secondary lines(120v-762v) is 5 feet.

These clearances were derived based on vegetation types and growth cycles.

**STAFF 1-75** Does your company incorporate any inspection of high customer count circuit segments to proactively identify problematic vegetation for circuits that may be outside their normal cycle period?

# **RESPONSE:**

Yes.

**STAFF 1-76** Please provide inspection logs and field reports from workers who performed VM services in the Impacted Area for the past five years.

# **RESPONSE:**

2019 Circuit/VM Area	Miles	2020 Circuit/VM Area	Miles	2021 Circuit/VM Area	Miles
Bigfoot 52-02	96.2	Natalia 58-01	58.0	Natalia East 2	58.7
Castroville 8-02	74.1	Devine 28-01	108.1	Devine Southwest	55.96
Devine 28-03	61.7	Devine 28-04	53.5	Hondo East	79.19
HWY 57 Line Section	4.5	Montell 26-02	104.7	Hondo Central	129.37
Miles Cleared	236.5	16-03 Line Section	9.9	Bader West (PART)	8.2
		Bigfoot Line Section	8.4	Moore East	86.2
		Moore 30-02 Section	3.3	Miles Cleared	417.62
		Miles Cleared	345.9		

2022 Circuit/VM Area	Miles	2023 Circuit/VM Area	Miles	2024 Circuit/VM Area	Miles
D'Hanis East	196.7	Hondo North	127.1	D'Hanis South	143.0
Moore West	75.0	Devine Southeast	100.6	Crystal City	105.0
Pearsall West	89.06	North Batesville	176.79	Hondo South	110.00
Ferris West	171.8	Moore West	109.9	Sabinal North	157.00
Miles Cleared	532.6	Miles Cleared	514.4	Natalia West	141.00
				Miles Cleared	656.0

**STAFF 1-77** Does your company conduct proactive vegetation management on feeders located in hurricane prone areas? If so, how far in advance of hurricane season do you send out vegetation management crews?

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative's service territory does not encompass hurricane prone areas.

- **STAFF 1-78** Please provide a list of the circuits that experienced a vegetation-related outage during the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl, and provide the following information pertaining to the circuits identified:
  - a. The name of the circuit(s);
  - b. The date, time, and duration of the outage;
  - c. The voltage of the circuit(s);
  - d. A description of the cause of the outage; and
  - e. The NERC category (Grow-In, Fall-In, Blow-In) associated with the outage.

#### **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-79** Please provide aerial maps of circuits and their easements that experienced a vegetation-related outage during the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl. Overlay the map with the circuits that received vegetation management treatment for the past 5 years, using a distinct color code for each year. Provide any additional information or details to show clarity.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-80** For the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl, please provide the percentage of forced interruptions that were related to vegetation issues.

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-81** What steps are being taken to address vegetation management and infrastructure issues that contributed to outages or were identified during restoration after the May 2024 Derecho and Hurricane Beryl?

# **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-82** When did you last substantively review, augment, or modify your vegetation management plan before July 8, 2024?

# **RESPONSE:**

The vegetation management plan was last reviewed on January 5, 2024. No substantive modifications were made.

**STAFF 1-83** What percentage of vegetation-related outages were caused by trees or branches outside of the easement or right of way? In responding to this question, please provide both an overall percentage and a breakdown for each county within your service territory that was affected by the May 2024 Derecho or within the Impacted Area for Hurricane Beryl.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho nor Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-84** Describe your programs or initiatives that are designed to work with property owners to address potentially hazardous vegetation management issues that are outside of the utility easement or right of way.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative does not provide programs or initiatives related to vegetation management.

**STAFF 1-85** Identify the number of staff that participate in any program or initiative designed to address vegetation management hazards outside of the utility easement or right of way.

# **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.

### Staffing and Mutual Assistance

**STAFF 1-86** Please state whether you participated in or were a member of any mutual assistance programs on or before July 8, 2024. If yes:

- a. Please identify all mutual assistance programs you participated in or were a member of on that date;
- b. Please provide copies of any agreements entered as part of your membership or participation in those mutual assistance programs; and
- c. Please provide a list of members or participants for each mutual assistance program you are a member or participant in.

# **RESPONSE:**

Yes.

- a. MEC is a signatory of the Texas Electric Cooperative's Mutual Aid Agreement. The last signed agreement is dated April 6, 2022.
- b. The template is shown below:

#### MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

In consideration of the mutual commitments given herein, each of the Signatories to this Matual Aid Agreement agrees to render aid to any of the Signatories as follows:

- <u>Request for aid</u>. The Requesting Signatory agrees to make its request in writing to the Aiding Signatory within a reasonable time after aid is needed and with reasonable specificity. The Requesting Signatory agrees to compensate the Aiding Signatory as specified in this Agreement and in other agreements that may be in effect between the Requesting and Aiding Signatories.
- 2. <u>Discretionary rendering of aid</u>. Rendering of aid is entirely at the discretion of the Aiding signatory. The agreement to render aid is expressly not contingent upon a declaration of a major disaster or emergency by the federal government or upon receiving federal funds.
- 3. <u>Invoice to the Requesting Signatory</u>. Within 90 days of the return to the home work station of all labor and equipment of the Aiding Signatory, the Aiding Signatory shall submit to the Requesting Signatory an invoice of all charges related to the aid provided pursuant to this Agreement. The invoice shall contain only charges related to the aid provided pursuant to this Agreement.
- 4. <u>Charges to the Requesting Signatory</u>. Charges to the Requesting Signatory from the Aiding Signatory shall be as follows:
  - a) <u>Labor force</u>. Charges for labor force shall be in accordance with the Aiding Signatory's standard practices.
  - b) <u>Equipment</u>. Charges for equipment, such as bucket trucks, digger derricks, and other special equipment used by the aiding Signatory, shall be at the reasonable and customary rates for such equipment in the Aiding Signatory's locations.
  - c) <u>Transportation</u>. The Aiding Signatory shall transport needed personnel and equipment by reasonable and customary means and shall charge reasonable and customary rates for such transportation.
  - d) <u>Meals, lodging and other related expenses</u>. Charges for meals, lodging and other expenses related to the provision of aid pursuant to this Agreement shall be the reasonable and actual costs incurred by the Aiding Signatory.
- <u>Counterparts</u>. The Signatories may execute this Mutual Aid Agreement in one or more counterparts, with each counterpart being deemed an original Agreement, but with all counterparts being considered one Agreement.
- 6. <u>Execution</u>. Each party hereto has read, agreed to and executed this Mutual Aid Agreement on the date indicated.

Date	Entity
	Ву
	Title

 $c\,-$  The following Texas Electric Cooperative members participate in the Mutual assistance program.

# Cooperative

Bailey County ECA	Harmon EA	Rusk County EC
Bandera EC	Heart of Texas EC	Sam Houston EC
Bartlett EC	HILCO EC	San Bernard EC
Big Country EC	Houston County EC	San Miguel EC
Bluebonnet EC	J-A-C EC	San Patricio EC
Bowie-Cass EC	Jackson EC	South Plains EC
Brazos EPC	Jasper-Newton EC	South Texas EC
Bryan Texas Utilities	Karnes EC	SW Arkansas EC
Central Texas EC	Lamar EC	SW Rural EA
Cherokee County ECA	Lamb County EC	SW Texas EC
Coleman County EC	Lea County EC	Swisher EC
Comanche EC	Lighthouse EC	Taylor EC
Concho Valley EC	LCRA	Tri-County EC, TX
CoServ Electric	Lyntegar EC	Tri-County EC, OK
Deaf Smith EC	Magic Valley EC	Trinity Valley EC
Deep East Texas EC	Medina EC	United Co-op Services
East Texas EC	MidSouth EC	Upshur Rural ECC
Fannin County EC	Navarro County EC	Victoria EC
Farmers EC, NM	Navasota Valley EC	Western Farmers EC
Farmers EC, TX	North Plains EC	Wharton County EC
Fayette EC	Nueces EC	Wise EC
Fort Belknap EC	Panola-Harrison EC	Wood County EC
Golden Spread EC	Pedernales EC	
Grayson-Collin EC	PenTex Energy	
Greenbelt EC	Rayburn Country EC	
Guadalupe Valley EC	Rio Grande EC	
Hamilton County ECA	Rita Blanca EC	

SPONSOR: Trey Grebe

**STAFF 1-87** Please describe, prior to, during, or in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl how you integrated mutual assistance crews into your existing emergency preparedness and response processes, any coordination challenges you faced in doing so, and how you addressed any such challenges prior to, during, or in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.

## **RESPONSE:**

Medina Electric Cooperative has not previously asked for mutual assistance and was not affected by Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-88** Please describe the command structure and communication protocols used to manage and direct resources from mutual assistance program(s) you received assistance from prior to, during, and in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.

**STAFF 1-89** Please describe the process and timeline for requesting or activating assistance as part of your membership or participation in any mutual assistance program(s) prior to, during, or in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl.

# **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.

**STAFF 1-90** Once you learned of the Hurricane Beryl's potential to affect your ability to provide service to your customers, what specific actions were taken to begin coordinating with and staging mutual assistance resources to respond to service issues resulting from the hurricane?

## **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.

- STAFF 1-91 Provide the following information concerning mutual assistance received in response to either the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl:
  - a. Identify all mutual assistance programs from which you requested assistance;
  - b. Describe the specific assistance, including but not limited to the number of damage assessors, vegetation management crews, linesmen, generators, and materials, requested from the mutual assistance program(s); and
  - c. Provide all documentation of requests made to mutual assistance programs and their responses to your requests.
  - d. If it is not evident from the documentation provided in response to Staff 1-91(c), please provide the date the request was made, the date the specific assistance requested began arriving in the Impacted Area, and the date by when the specific assistance requested was fully received.

### RESPONSE:

Medina Electric Cooperative was not affected by the May 2024 Derecho or Hurricane Beryl.

**STAFF 1-92** When you receive responses to requests for assistance from other mutual assistance program participants that confirm their ability to provide the requested assistance, are you able to accept or decline resources being offered as needed, or must you accept all assistance provided in response to a request?

## **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.

**STAFF 1-93** What considerations did you give to reimbursement of costs and expenses incurred by participants of mutual assistance programs when making requests for assistance during the events of Hurricane Beryl?

# **RESPONSE:**

Not applicable.