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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**

VICTORIA 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

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

Victoria Electric Cooperative ("VEC") 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. VEC stipulates that its responses may be treated by all parties as if they were filed under oath.

Dated: August 29, 2024

Respectfully Submitted,

Blaine B. Warzecha
General Manager
Victoria Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Infinium Broadband
361-573-2428

SECTION-1: ELECTRIC UTILITIES - EMERGENCY PLANNING AND EVENT RESPONSE

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. Victoria Electric Cooperative (VEC) conducted the last hurricane drill on May 22, 2024.

b. The drill consisted of a storm which escalated to a Category 3 hurricane named Norma making landfall on September 16, 2024 just 5 miles north of Corpus Christi with sustained winds of 115 mph with a storm surge of 14 feet and rainfall of 8 inches and turning north into the VEC service territory on the west side with most of the system on the dirty side of the storm experiencing significant outages. See Evidence File (Staff 1-1_VEC EOP Drill – 2024.pdf)

c. During the 2023 tabletop the Operations Superintendent, Member Services Manager and the CFO led the meeting. We routinely change who leads the tabletop to provide leadership an opportunity to serve as lead. The storm was a Category 4 Hurricane making landfall 10 miles south of Port Lavaca with winds of 137 mph and 16 feet of storm surge. During the 2024 tabletop, the General Manager led the meeting and conducted two meetings with the first being solely of leadership members and the second including all employees of VEC. Another major difference was the path, while 2023

provided VEC to be on the clean side of the storm, discussions regarding the 2024 storm addressed issues expected with being on the dirty side of the storm, specifically regarding relocating equipment, the numbers of mutual aid and contractors needed and the timing.

d. There were no third party vendors included in the tabletop as all are contacted earlier in the year as part of our pre-season preparations.

e. There are no other electric, water, sewer or telecommunications utilities invited to participate in hurricane drills.

f. The local government agencies invited include Texas Department of Emergency Management, Victoria Office of Emergency Management, Dewitt, Calhoun Emergency management offices and the PUC. None attended the drill.

g. We do not measure the performance of the drill rather we make changes to the drill as needed by taking into account previous drills, events experienced and training received throughout the year.

h. Not applicable.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

VEC does not seek participation from its members during a hurricane drill.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

a. There is no specific time frame for use of actual past storms but experiences, areas of concern are used and revisited to ensure experiences are taken into account in the emergency response plan.

b. For the 2024 drill, VEC used the path of an unnamed storm of 1875 as the basis for the drill.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

South Texas Electric Cooperative invited VEC to participate in the 2024 drill. VEC participated in the drill on May 7, 2024.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

VEC uses a subscription service with Storm Geo for hurricane/storm tracking as well as for all weather events, including heat. In addition, VEC monitors Weather Underground, The National Hurricane Center, The Weather Channel, My Radar and Ventusky for weather events.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

During storm season we monitor each disturbance that develops off the coast of Africa with the potential to impact the United States. However, we begin communicating with our employees when a storm becomes cyclic.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

VEC began tracking Beryl on approximately 6/27 and entered Alert Level 1 formally on 6/29 when Beryl was 660 miles east-southeast of Barbados.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

We use our Outage Management System daily so it is not specifically part of our storm procedures. However, we did have an issue during Hurricane Harvey which since then they provided assistance as well as training. Prior to Beryl we reached out to our service provider on July 5th, prior to Beryl making landfall for them to perform a final review of our Outage Management System to prepare for Beryl.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

STAFF 1-9 How far in advance of landfall did you initiate requests for mutual assistance?

RESPONSE:

On July 1, 2024, in accordance with our Emergency Operations Plan we initiated communication with contractors determining availability. On July 4th communications began with mutual aid among Cooperatives.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Prioritization occurs in the following order:

- Cleaning/clearing roadways and emergency situations as directed by Emergency Management.
- Critical Loads
- Medical Priority
- Substations, backbones, feeders restoring power to the greatest number of members in the least time

During Beryl, the VEC system damage occurred along the coastal area which allowed VEC to focus on the Port O'Connor area and the Port Lavaca areas first as they were the most densely populated, followed by the more rural areas resulting in all outages restored within 12 hours.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

All incoming calls are routed thru our telephone system at 361-573-2428. There are 46 incoming lines. Our Member Services Department is the frontline and handles incoming calls, member complaints and issues with our members with the goal of a one call resolution. If complaints cannot be resolved, they are escalated to the MSR supervisor and/or manager. If the call is unresolved by the supervisor and/or manager, it is escalated to our General Manager.

Any communication with the media, local and state governmental entities, officials and emergency operations centers will be handled by the General Manager and/or his designee which normally includes the Communications Specialist and Member Services Manager in accordance with Section 2.3.5 of the VEC EOP.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

VEC has an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) that becomes activated once there is a possible threat to our system. The EOP was activated for Hurricane Beryl.

Please see attachment VEC EOP – (E) Hurricane Annex
E.1 – E.4 Storm Preparedness (p. 47-48) & Storm Alert Level 1 – Storm Alert Level 6 (p. 48-55)

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

In alignment with the established EOP, the General Manager coordinates mutual aid assistance and the engagement of contractors. As mutual aid service personnel arrive, the VEC service supervisor will oversee and manage the service personnel. The Operations Superintendent will coordinate all contractor construction crew personnel by dividing up all VEC Operations Personnel to serve as foremen of contractor crews ranging from the oversight of 2 crews to approximately 7 crews per person dependent upon experience. The ROW Coordinator will be responsible for the oversight of all ROW crews engaged.

In accordance with the established EOP, the Executive Assistant is responsible for obtaining lodging and food for all personnel. This will vary dependent upon the number of personnel from in house food preparation to contracting for on-site food preparations. Housing is dependent as well and would include early reservations of hotel rooms prior to storm impact to include the potential to bring in contractor housing such as a tent city if required.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC was not impacted by Derecho.

In accordance with Section E Hurricane Annex of our Emergency Operations Plan VEC entered Alert Level 1 on June 29, 2024 as a result of Beryl which initiated storm preparations which included communications to all VEC personnel, a meeting with supervisory staff, encouragement of employees to make preparations for personal property. The Operations Superintendent contacted existing contracted construction contractors to determine availability and the Right of Way (ROW) Technician contacted the right of way contractor to determine availability of crews.

On July 1, 2024 VEC entered Alert Level 2 as Beryl entered the Caribbean Sea. Communication was sent to entire VEC team. A meeting with the leadership team was called, supplies were obtained for routine items, contact was made with fuel distributor for fleet and contractor fuel reserves, onsite generators were fueled and tested, maintenance was conducted on the fleet and trailers, spare hand held radios were checked with satellite phones.

On July 4, 2024 VEC entered into Alert Level 3 as Beryl approached the Yucatan Peninsula. While it was July 4th we did not hold a meeting until July 5th with the leadership team. We did send our communication to the staff on both July 4th and 5th. Warehouse and Operations began securing materials at all sites, food was obtained for staff, equipment and vehicles were finalized, contractors were contacted again, a helicopter was placed on standby, fuel reserves were confirmed, mutual aid within TEC was reserved. Distribution cooperatives began having conference calls regarding storm preparation and mutual aid assistance.

On July 6th Hurricane Beryl was downgraded to a Tropical storm, however in accordance with VEC's hurricane plan, due to the storm strength and the of a named storm making landfall in the VEC service area, VEC entered Alert Level 4. Communication was sent to entire team and leadership meeting was called. All vacations were cancelled, final supplies such as pea gravel, increased food supplies were finalized all facilities were secured for storm. Due to the forecast indicating a Cat 1 at landfall, the decision was made to limit engagement of contractor personnel to the existing contractor used by VEC for normal work and for right of way work. They were notified to proceed. VEC operations team were stationed and scheduled as directed for the storm.

On July 7th Beryl began making landfall as a Category 1 Hurricane resulting in VEC moving to Alert Level 5. Outages were worked until winds achieved 40 mph then all personnel reported to their assigned locations until storms dropped below 40 mph.

On July 8th as winds dropped below 40 mph, VEC moved to Alert Level 6. Engineering teams and Operations personnel performed line patrol on coastal areas where outages totaling 2,801

were experienced. Operations and contractors were staggered restoring power and repairing damages. All outages were restored by 3:50 p.m. on July 8th.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

VEC was not impacted by Derecho.

In accordance with Section E Hurricane Annex of our Emergency Operations Plan VEC entered Alert Level 1 on June 29, 2024 as a result of Beryl which initiated storm preparations which included communications to all VEC personnel, a meeting with supervisory staff, encouragement of employees to make preparations for personal property. The Operations Superintendent contacted existing contracted construction contractors to determine availability and the Right of Way (ROW) Technician contacted the right of way contractor to determine availability of crews.

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On July 8th as winds dropped below 40 mph, VEC moved to Alert Level 6. Engineering teams and Operations personnel performed line patrol on coastal areas where outages totaling 2,800 were experienced. Operations and contractors were staggered restoring power and repairing damages. All outages were restored by 3:50 p.m. on July 8th.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC outage information is attached to this submittal (filename: Staff 1-16_VEC Outage Information)

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

a. N/A. VEC service area was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho.

b. Port O'Connor, 77982, Calhoun Coastal Region; Longest duration – 13hrs36mins, Port O'connor,77982 Calhoun

c. This is the coastal area of VEC's distribution system which was impacted directly by Beryl. Due to the nature of the environment with corrosion and salt water exposure on a daily basis, this will always be an area of vulnerability on the VEC electric system.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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

RESPONSE:

VEC was not impacted by Derecho.

Due to rain and storm surge from Beryl, the greatest challenge was performing work such as replacing poles in the coastal marshes.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC held as part of regular scheduled staff meeting a Beryl follow up discussion, but since the impact was so minimal, there were no changes to the plan warranted and no formal report generated.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

No information to provide at this time.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

SECTION 2: 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. Updates with state and local government officials and responders is extremely important as VEC takes part in all meetings that are established before and during the event. For example, the General Manager and Communications Manager participated on teleconference calls on Monday, July 8th and Tuesday, July 9th with regard to VEC's service territory with the local officials.

Regarding other entities, VEC communicated as established in the EOP Section 2. Communications Plan.

b. In support of hurricane response, the member services department would have schedules adjusted to respond to increased call volume prior to storm impact. Following the storm other departments such as accounting, engineering and human resources would adapt their schedules and responsibilities to support the call center.

c. VEC is the distribution and retail electric provider. As a result, communication to the end user is in accordance with our existing EOP.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

Our VEC strategy is that the VEC communications team coordinates with the Manager of Operations to provide official updates on VEC 's power restoration process to provide official updates on VEC's restoration process and post the information via VEC's website and social media. Status reports and updates are posted daily or as restoration status changes. During Hurricane Beryl VEC utilized social media and telephone campaigns to keep the public updated.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

See evidence files:

Staff 1-26 Social Media Comments.pdf

Staff 1-26_July Storm Summary.xlxs

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

Victoria Office of Emergency Management held a follow up to Beryl. Several items where reviewed, however overall, the opinion that communications and coordination with the organizations in questioned was satisfactory.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Cooperatives within the South Texas Electric Cooperative system held 2 calls per day during the approach and restoration of Beryl. In addition, there was an update provided by a meteorologist from Storm Geo to provide updates and forecast models. As a result, we felt there was sufficient communication, and it will continue in future events.

Date	Time(s)	StormGeo Attendance
7/2/2024	15:00	X
7/3/2024	15:00	X
7/4/2024	15:00	X
7/5/2024	15:00	X
7/6/2024	15:00	X
7/7/2024	15:00	X
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: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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. 1 in our dispatch department (12-hour shifts) and 7 in Member Services (7:30am – 5:00pm)

b. All are full-time employees.

c. Maximum wait time is 3 minutes, then calls will roll to another department.

d. Varies on situations presented however goal is one call resolution.

e. VEC does not have specific all center training for major outages or weather events. New member service representatives begin with a 30 day training program which includes introductions to all aspects and departments of the Cooperative. They then enter a step program that provides more specific training to their role and responsibilities and focuses on all aspects. VEC treats all outages with the same urgency, so aside from staffing changes, major outages, from a call center perspective is not very different except for the potential volume of calls expected to be received.

f. 46 incoming lines

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

Included below is our call summary from July 7th 12:00am thru Monday, July 8th 11:59pm. We do not monitor peak times. Also included below is our call log and storm comment summary. See evidence files:

Staff 1-27 Daily Average Call Volumes
Staff 1-27 July 7-8 Call Log
Staff 1-27_July Storm Comments Summary

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

We communicated with local leaders in daily coordination meetings and through similar updates provided via email coordinated by TDEM representative District Chief Ernie Paiz.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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 logged daily in our system; 50% of all calls to members services are randomly recorded. Calls are retained on our system for a year.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

All calls are logged daily in our system. See evidence file:

Staff 1-30 July 7-8 Call Log

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

No pre-recorded messages were utilized related to Hurricane Beryl.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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 on-premise 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. 2/20/2015

b. 9/21/21 last major software revision.

c. Outage tracker was fully functional.

d. Outage Tracker is viewable on mobile devices.

e. English

f. Our Outage Management System captures both circuit and meter information.

g. On-Premise Server

h. There is not a maximum number of users specified by the system but rather a limitation which depends on our sites Internet Bandwidth.

i. We have internal redundancies/contingencies. Our Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system can also be utilized if our outage tracking is down. We did not have to use these redundancies/contingencies during Beryl.

j. 7/19/2023. Over 1900 members out of service.

SPONSOR: Adam Estrada

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:

Not applicable

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Total Number of Outage page requests 23,132. All power restored same day. We do not track peak number of users.

SPONSOR: Adam Estrada

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:

In addition to our outage management system, when large scale outages occur, VEC will send text messages to provide updates as well as routinely update an outage hotline number that provides areas with estimated restoration times. Social media is also used to communicate outages impacting more than one circuit.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Our outage management system did not go down during Beryl, but we did send out texts messages and updated the outage hotline as well for those areas impacted.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

In Calhoun County, Victoria Electric Cooperative has 5,997 AMI meters. Areas impacted in Calhoun County were Port Lavaca, Port O'Connor and Seadrift. VEC had a total of 2,074 members out of power, giving VEC a total of 34.58%, out of power in Calhoun County. In Jackson County VEC has 587 AMI meters. Area impacted was Vanderbilt, which had 326 members out of power. Giving VEC member's a total of 55.54% out of power in Jackson County.

SPONSOR: Richard Tristan

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

RESPONSE:

Local government contacts for the impacted areas in Victoria and Calhoun counties received initial communication on the 7/8/24 at 7:35 a.m., the day of landfall via email regarding the initial status report.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC maintains a Critical Load Registry in the CIS system. This registry informs VEC's Operations/Restoration team about certain accounts that are deemed "priority" in terms of restoration planning. VEC will make every effort to communicate with Critical Load members via text, SMS messages, Phones calls, and other appropriate communication methods in advance of planned outages and in advance of anticipated and predictable weather emergency or other anticipated system emergency events.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

VEC did not contact any Critical Load in advance of Hurricane Beryl.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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:

VEC's communicates with our members (which includes critical care members) thru social media, and our website as wells as text and phones calls during service outages and restoration efforts. A campaign is sent out to members when an outage occurs and once the outage is restored, another campaign advising service restored is sent.

SPONSOR: Jeri Alvarez

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

RESPONSE:

Communication with South Texas Electric Cooperative and related distribution cooperatives within the STEC service area occurred daily beginning on 7/2/24 and increased to multiple times per day on 7/5/24 through 7/11/24.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

SECTION-3: 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:

In accordance with the VEC EOP Section B.2 Restoration Plan and Priorities it states the following:

B.2.1 Purpose and Applicability

To provide the guidelines, policies, and procedures that VEC shall utilize in system restoration activities, including restoration follow Firm Load Shed events.

B.2.2 Administration / Initial Tasks

Develop / Implement a Restoration Priorities Plan as part of the EOP Load Shed Annex: VEC shall develop and maintain a Restoration Priorities Plan that includes restoration priorities and procedures for restoration following Firm Load Shed events and other significant system outages. The Manager of Operations develops and maintains the Restoration Priorities Plan.

B.2.3 Annual Review / Ongoing Maintenance

Manager of Operations shall conduct a review of the Restoration Priorities Plan each year. This review shall occur prior to the annual table-top exercise, or as needed. The Restoration Priorities Plan shall be reviewed as necessary or at a minimum, annually.

B.2.4 Restoration Priorities and Process

- VEC will coordinate with STEC following all Firm Load Shed (EEA Level-3) events. As the Transmission Operator, STEC will restore VEC feeders that were tripped during the Firm Load Shed event using SCADA. In a situation where a feeder is not able to be restored utilizing STEC control of the breaker, including cold-load pickup situations, VEC will coordinate with STEC and take steps to restore these feeders. This may require VEC operations personnel to sectionalize these circuits and restore service using this method.
- The priority of VEC in restoring service shall be to locations involving electric service to critical loads, including to gas pipelines and infrastructure serving generation facilities along with hospitals, nursing homes, and other locations involving community health and safety.
- In addition to priorities concerning community health and safety, crews shall be assigned to defined areas. Generally, crews shall concentrate on a given feeder, working to the end or to a sectionalizing point, and then returning to restore service on single phase lines or taps off the feeder.
- Restorations shall be done systematically, avoiding pressure from individuals for special attention. However, one or more crews may be assigned to locations where special hazards exist or where especially critical loads require immediate attention. When not on special assignments, these crews may be used to repair individual services.
- No crew shall be sent to work in a county or area where a known biohazard or terrorist act has

occurred until clearance has been granted by the county sheriff's department in the affected area.

B.2.5 Additional Information

- VEC Operations personnel shall categorize, prioritize and sequence loads and establish procedures for restoration of service.
- The plan incorporates the guidelines for coordinating emergency assistance with other cooperatives. The procedure for securing assistance is in accordance with the plan developed by

the Texas Electric Cooperatives for TEC and mutual Cooperative assistance request process.

- VEC critical assets and facilities include all distribution facilities and equipment, the VEC main office complex office, including the VEC Dispatch / Operations Center.
- During any emergency event, VEC Manager of Operations shall maintain close communications with all utilities with interconnections to the VEC system.
- Once STEC has notified VEC that generation and transmission services have been restored, VEC shall systematically begin to energize its distribution services as conditions allow. VEC shall coordinate local pickup with STEC to ascertain system stability and adequate system resources.
- VEC can confirm the status of distribution breakers via its SCADA system and subsequently the restoration of service to its members.
- Crews shall be assigned to distribution feeders, working to the end of the feeder or to a sectionalizing point, and then restoring service on single-phase lines or taps. Restorations shall be done systematically, avoiding pressure from individuals for special attention. However, one or more crews may be assigned to locations where special hazards exist or where especially critical loads require immediate attention.
- VEC Operations personnel shall coordinate with VEC Dispatch to identify Critical Loads that may be able to be prioritized during restoration efforts.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Please see the answer provided for the Staff 1 - 43 regarding procedures. There is no way to assign a timeline for restoration of services for an emergency or weather-related event as each is unique in severity and duration.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC was not impacted by the May 2024 Derecho.

During Hurricane Beryl the procedures were modified due to the limited impact of Beryl to our coastal region of our distribution system. As a result, priority accounts were identified with those circuits restored first, followed by the restoration of the greatest number of members first.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

7/8/2024
Jackson County- Two linemen crews consisting of six men.
Calhoun County- Ten linemen crews consisting of twenty-four linemen and two employees from the Engineering Department.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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.

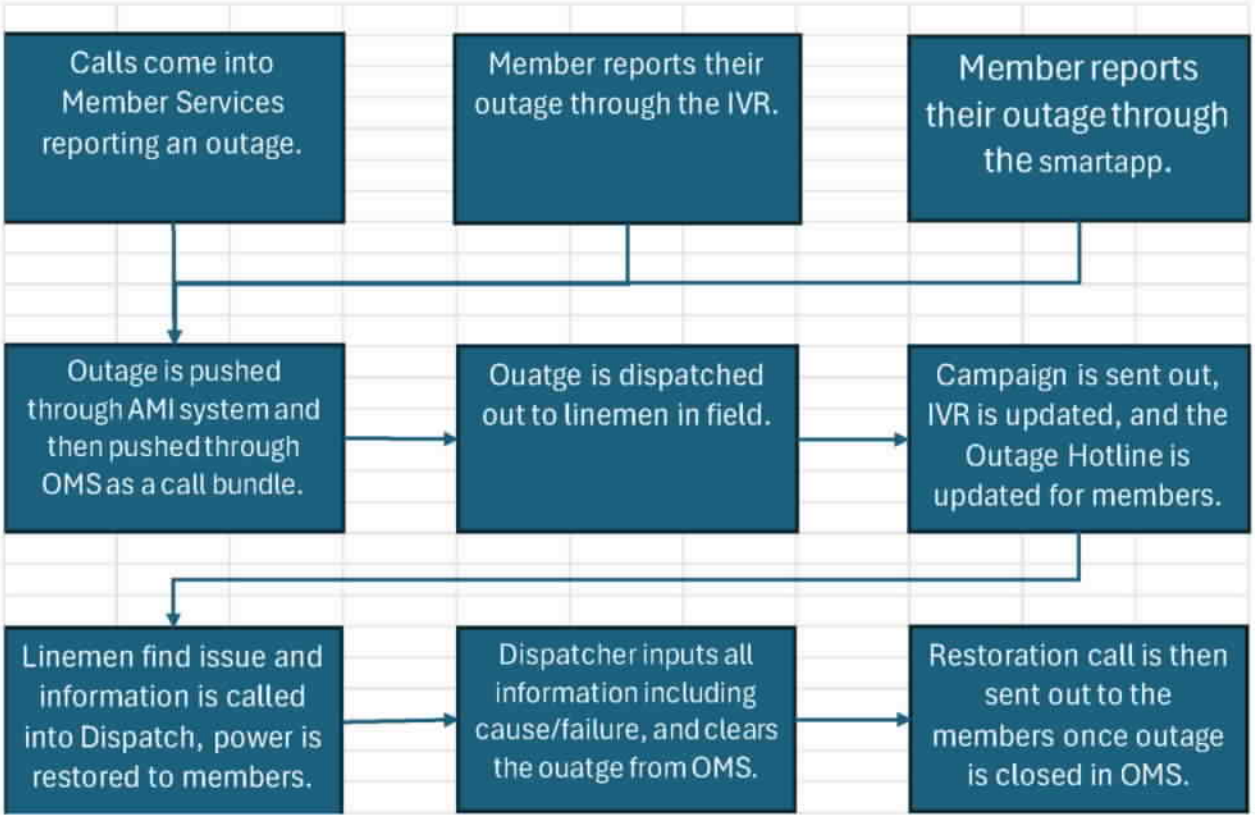
RESPONSE:

County	Date Time Start	Date Time Complete	custDnstm Affected	Percentage of Members Out
Calhoun	7/8/24 0:04	7/8/24 18:55	2240	37.40%
Jackson	7/8/24 2:39	7/8/24 13:20	317	54%

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:



SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

VEC does not have any formal agreements with local, state or federal agencies regarding restoration services. Other than the reporting of progress, there was no coordination of services required.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

The only challenges experienced while working to restore power, before Beryl made landfall, were the high winds, heavy rain and storm surge. Once wind speeds reached forty plus mph, VEC crews were advised to take shelter in accordance with EOP.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

Due to the limited impact of Beryl, there were not any lessons learned that would change the planning for future events.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

While we have some managers attend NIMS training, VEC does not implement NIMS officially for managing emergency event response.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC personnel as a whole is not trained in Incident Command System Process. Members of the leadership team have attended some NIMS training and are familiar with Incident Command processes.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

SECTION-4: DISTRIBUTION INFRASTRUCTURE

STAFF 1-54 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) 10 percent of VEC's pole population are evaluated approximately every 18 months

b)

- Assets identified as less than 10 years old will receive a visual inspection, GIS location and data collection.
- Assets identified as more than 10-years old will receive a visual inspection, GIS location, data collection, partial excavation inspection and sound and bore. If there is no decay, excavated area will be returned to its original condition and tagged.
- Assets identified as having evidence of decay, meaning either decay has begun (which is not extensive), or there are conditions present which will lead to decay if not addressed, the pole is fully excavated, inspected, and treated with a long-lasting wood preservative.
- Assets that fail inspection are marked as a reject (critical or non-critical), marked and scheduled for priority replacement

c) Assets that are deemed to have excessive damage from visual inspection (i.e. woodpecker holes, visible decay) or fail criteria b)-c and b)-d above.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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

RESPONSE:

The VEC easements provide 10 feet from the center line of single and three phase distribution lines.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

a) Total quantity of poles, on the effected feeders, is 6027. All poles are wood.

b) Total poles that failed were 5. This equates to 0.082% of the affected feeders.

c) The primary cause of failure was high winds.

d) See evidence file:

Staff 1-56 PUC Filing Questions.xlxs

e) See evidence file:

Staff 1-56 PUC Filing Questions.xlxs

f)

- V07104 Project 312 -- Rebuild 1.1 miles.
- V15303 Project 608-58 – Rebuild 0.5 miles.
- V15303 Project 608-59 – Rebuild 0.1 miles.

g) Q4 2024

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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) Feeder V07104 has two poles matching the criteria.
b) This feeder experienced 3 failures; 1 broken pole and 2 secondary mutual failures.
c) This feeder was designed to the latest NESC and RUS requirements at the time of construction.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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:

Pole embedment is typically 10% of pole length plus 2 feet in accordance with Ansi Standard 05.1. The exception to that standard has been along coast line area where soil composition requires deeper embedment.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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:

Standardized poles for the impacted area are 40 foot class 3 poles.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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

RESPONSE:

Wood pole installations follow appropriate loading requirements per NESC section 250 for our geographical area. Specific construction considerations follow NESC section 260. All installation details are in accordance with Rural Utilities Service (RUS) specifications.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

STAFF 1-61 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:

Many single-phase distribution designs may require a lower size and class pole; however, to improve resiliency, in the impacted area, we have standardized to a 40 class 3 pole for new construction and pole replacements for areas south of Highway 35.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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:

a) The design criteria are in accordance with NESC section 250 and 260. All installation details are in accordance with Rural Utilities Service (RUS) specifications and recognized and generally accepted good engineering practice.
b) Installed pole composition is wood.
c) ROW is twenty (20) feet. Ten (10) foot on either side from centerline of pole.
d) All lines have been designed to the latest NESC and RUS requirements at the time of construction.
e) There were several instances where high winds exposed corrosion issues on equipment, such as pole top pins.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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:

N/A

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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:

N/A

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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:

Structure #	Type	NESC loading criteria	Cause of Failure
47400	30-6	1.90(vert) 2.20(trav)	Wind
6357	40-5	1.90(vert) 2.20(trav)	Wind
25009	30-6	1.90(vert) 2.20(trav)	Wind
47713	40-5	1.90(vert) 2.20(trav)	Wind
5761	30-6	1.90(vert) 2.20(trav)	Wind

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

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:

See evidence files:

Staff 1-66 2010 Inspection Records for Poles 576.pdf

Staff 1-66 Osmose Pole Changes 2009-2010.xlxs

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti/Laddy Brown

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:

It is our opinion that such requirements are already in place. Utilities are currently required to ensure any and all overhead and underground distribution services are engineered to appropriate standards and specifications. Specifically referring to VEC, new construction installations are audited regularly to ensure compliance to such standards, specifications and recognized and generally accepted good engineering practice.

Should it be deemed that more rigorous requirements are necessary to improve distribution resilience for susceptible areas, then those requirements should be adopted by the governing standards driving electrical distribution design. The PUCT should then reference adherence to those adopted standards relative to a certain geographical area.

SPONSOR: Patrick Uresti

SECTION-5: 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:

Not applicable

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Not applicable

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Not applicable

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Not Applicable

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

Not applicable

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

SECTION-6: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

STAFF 1-73 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. The current size of our vegetation management staff consists of 1 full-time VEC Coordinator, and 3 independent contract companies consisting of 21 individuals.

b. The average size of our vegetation management staff over the last 5 years has consisted of 1 full-time VEC Coordinator, and 3 independent contract companies consisting of approximately 20 individuals.

c. The appropriate level of full-time vegetation management staff over the last 5 years has been determined by the ability of the staff to oversee the vegetation management contractor production.

d. VEC has only used one full-time, in-house coordinator to oversee vegetation management contractors.

e. VEC historically employed an arborist in the position of ROW Coordinator but since his retirement we do not currently have an arborist on staff. The existing coordinator is in the process of becoming an arborist and is part of the permanent vegetation management staff.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

VEC does not maintain transmission lines. The minimum clearance standard for vegetation along distribution power lines at all voltage levels is 20 feet, one-half (1/2) of such distance on either side of Cooperative's lines, poles, or other facilities installed on its pole line (but excluding guy wire installations and other anchors) as actually installed per RUS standards and VEC Board approved easement form(s).

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

VEC Linemen regularly inspect the circuits in their respective service areas as part of VEC's Line Patrol Program. Problematic vegetation is reported to the VEC vegetation management coordinator.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

Below are vegetation job orders that were made from line patrol and completed by vegetation maintenance contractors in the Beryl affected areas.

Service Order	City	Pole #	Feeder	Date Created	Date Closed
136137	Port O'Connor, Tx	5806	V15-303	1/10/2020	1/14/2020
137354	Port O'Connor, Tx	5574	V15-303	2/5/2020	3/4/2020
142283	Port O'Connor, Tx	5514	V15-303	5/20/2020	12/6/2020
152675	Port O'Connor, Tx	5731	V15-303	12/14/2020	12/16/2020
159715	Vanderbilt,Tx	47305	V14-202	5/3/2021	1/19/2022
160844	Port O'Connor,Tx	5496	V15-303	5/25/2021	8/12/2021
166510	Port O'Connor, Tx	5277-5279	V15-303	9/3/2021	12/6/2021
167990	Port O'Connor, Tx	5427-5426	V15-303	9/29/2021	3/11/2022
179612	Port O'Connor, Tx	5627	V15-303	5/6/2022	5/10/2022
179906	Vanderbuilt, Tx	48062	V14-202	5/11/2022	10/14/2022
180654	Vanderbuilt, Tx	47397	V14-202	5/26/2022	5/31/2022
180798	Vanderbuilt, Tx	47397	V14-202	5/26/2022	6/1/2022
180956	Vanderbilt, Tx	47511	V14-202	5/31/2022	7/22/2022
181341	Vanderbilt, Tx	47511	V14-202	6/6/2022	6/9/2022
185999	Vanderbilt, Tx	47915	V14-202	8/29/2022	10/12/2022
195056	Port O'Connor, Tx	5917	V15-303	3/3/2023	4/4/2023
198789	Vanderbilt, Tx	47363	V14-202	5/11/2023	6/2/2023
198892	Port O'Connor, Tx	6204	V15-303	5/12/2023	5/25/2023
206585	Vanderbilt, Tx	47312	V14-202	10/18/2023	11/7/2023
209983	Inez, Tx	47915	V14-202	1/9/2024	2/15/2024
212930	Port O'Connor, Tx	6177	V15-303	3/12/2024	3/12/2024
213106	Port O'Connor, Tx	5893	V15-303	3/15/2024	3/19/2024
215548	Port O'Connr, Tx	5310	V15-303	5/6/2024	6/11/2024
219010	Port O'Connor, Tx	5332	V15-303	7/8/2024	7/8/2024
219022	Vanderbilt, Tx	47843	V14-202	7/9/2024	7/18/2024
219995	Port O'Connor, Tx	82726	V15-303	7/26/2024	
220969	Edna, Tx	48084	V14-202	8/12/2024	

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

VEC Linemen regularly inspect the circuits in their respective service areas as part of VEC's Line Patrol Program. Problematic vegetation is reported to the VEC vegetation management coordinator.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

a. V15303 (City Main) & V14202 (Vanderbilt)

b. V15303 7/8/2024 00:22 – 7/8/2024 01:30 (1hr 8mins)
V14202 7/8/2024 06:50 – 7/8/2024 09:05 (2hrs 20mins)

c. V15303 7200 V, V14202 7200 V

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

See evidence files:

Staff 1-79 ROW 14202.pdf

Staff 1-79 ROW 15303.pdf

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

There were no forced interruptions due to vegetation work during Hurricane Beryl.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

VEC has addressed the vegetation management issues that contributed to outages during Beryl.

Infrastructure issues that contributed to outages during Beryl were identified and provided to the VEC Operations department to be addressed immediately following outage restoration.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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

RESPONSE:

VEC's vegetation management plan was reviewed, augmented, and/or modified during the annual budget review that began in September 2023.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

VEC did not have any vegetation management issues that contributed to outages during Derecho or Beryl.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

The VEC ROW Coordinator contacts each landowner prior to work being performed. In the event there are hazards outside of our ROW, he attempts to convince the landowner to let VEC bear the expense and remove the hazard.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

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:

There is one VEC employee that oversees the ROW program.

SPONSOR: Laddy Brown

SECTION-7: STAFFING AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE

Supporting Documents for this Section

Staff Section-7 Mutual Aid Agreement Blank.pdf
Staff Section-7 2024 EmergencyContacts.xlxs

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:

VEC provided mutual assistance to the following within the past year:

Bowie Cass Electric Cooperative

San Bernard Electric Cooperative

Wharton County Electric Cooperative

Jackson Electric Cooperative

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC did not receive mutual assistance during Beryl.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC did not receive mutual assistance during Beryl.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC did not receive mutual assistance during Beryl. However, if needed we would simply send an email, text of phone call to the contact at our statewide association Texas Electric Cooperative.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

When it was determined that Beryl had the potential to affect our ability to provide service to our members, contacts were made with Cooperatives near our service area to begin coordinating support and contact was made by our statewide association to determine levels and types of assistance required.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC did not receive mutual assistance during Beryl.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

The mutual assistance program through the Texas Electric Cooperative Association does allow to accept or decline resources as needed.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

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:

VEC did not receive mutual assistance during Beryl.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

STAFF 1-94 Please provide a list of any hurricane response staging area you established in the lead up to and in the aftermath of Hurricane Beryl. Please include the date the center(s) was established, the location of the center(s), the day-to-day staffing levels at the center, and types of equipment and personnel staged at the center(s).

RESPONSE:

VEC owns a satellite office in Port O'Connor not staffed daily, but inventory of distribution equipment, poles, transformers, etc.

VEC owns an office building and yard in Victoria, Texas not staffed daily, but inventory staged with distribution equipment, fiber material, poles, etc.

Parkway Baptist Church in Victoria, Texas established with the April Pre-hurricane agreement and was not staged with equipment but would serve as a lay down yard potential tent city location.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager

STAFF 1-95 How did the rollout and deployment of mutual assistance during the events of Hurricane Beryl compare to previous hurricane events during which you requested assistance from mutual assistance programs? In your response, please specifically compare the types and quantities of resources requested, the percentage of request aid provided, the efficacy of coordination between your company and the mutual assistance provider, and the efficiency of staging, deployment, and release of those assistance resources.

RESPONSE:

VEC did not receive mutual assistance during Beryl.

SPONSOR: Blaine Warzecha, General Manager