

COLUMBUS CURRENTS

Restoring Power Safely and Efficiently

By Abby Berry

We do our best to avoid them, but there's no way around it: power outages occasionally happen.

For most Columbus Electric Cooperative (CEC) members, outages are rare and only last a few hours. But when major storms, like high wind or monsoon storms impact our area, extended outages are unavoidable.

So when the power goes out, how do CEC crews know where to start working? How do you know if your outage has been reported? We've got answers to these questions and more, and it all starts with a safe, efficient plan for power restoration.

When the lights go out and it's safe for our crews to begin the restoration process, they start by repairing power lines and equipment that will restore power to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible.

This process typically begins with repairs to the larger main distribution lines that service a great number of homes and businesses. After those repairs are made, crews work on tap lines, which deliver power to transformers, either mounted on utility poles (for above-ground service) or placed on pads (for underground service). Finally, individual service lines that run between the transformer and the home are repaired.

We can't control the weather, but we can prepare for it. CEC keeps a supply of extra utility poles, transformers and other equipment on hand so we can quickly get to work in the event of an outage. When widespread outages occur, multiple crews will be out in the field simultaneously working to repair damage at multiple locations. We also coordinate with nearby co-ops to bring in additional crews when necessary.

A proactive approach to maintenance helps minimize the chance of prolonged outages; this is why you see CEC crews periodically trimming trees and clearing vegetation near rights-of-way. We love trees too, but it only takes one overgrown limb to knock out power for an entire

neighborhood. Trimming improves power reliability for our entire community. In addition to managing vegetation, we regularly inspect utility poles, power lines and other critical equipment to maintain a more reliable system.

If you experience a power outage, don't assume a neighbor reported it. It's best to report the outage yourself, and we make it easy to do. The quickest way to report an outage is by calling our outage reporting number 24/7 at 1-800-228-0579.

If you have a medical condition that requires electrical equipment, please let us know, and always have a backup plan in place. This plan could include a portable generator, extra medical supplies or moving to an alternate location until power is restored. If you plan to use a generator for backup power, read all safety information and instructions before use. Notify us if you plan to connect a generator to your electrical panel. Improperly installed generators can create back feed, which creates a safety hazard for crews and the community.

Mother Nature can be unpredictable, but as a member of CEC, you can feel confident knowing we're standing by, ready to restore power as quickly and safely as possible.



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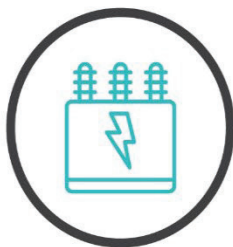
The Steps to Restoring Power

When a major outage occurs, our crews restore service to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible – until everyone has power.



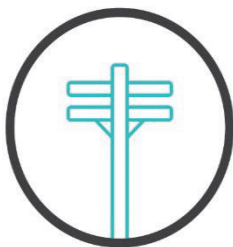
1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines

These lines carry large amounts of electricity. They rarely fail but must be repaired first.



2. Distribution Substations

Crews inspect substations, which can serve hundreds or thousands of people.



3. Main Distribution Lines

Main lines serve essential facilities like hospitals and larger communities.



4. Individual Homes and Businesses

After main line repairs are complete, we repair lines that serve individual homes and businesses.

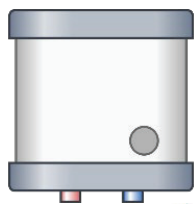
Board Highlights

The Board of Trustees at the May meeting approved engaging Bolinger, Segars, Gilbert & Moss to perform the 2022 financial audit. They heard reports updating them on the status of a pole replacement project in the Hachita area that is on BLM property. They also discussed director financial training to be provided by CoBank, one of our lenders, to the Trustees at the June board meeting.



It's true! We sell water heaters

As a member of CEC, you can purchase a new 40 or 50 gallon water heater through our water heater program at a discounted price of \$50 for 40 gallons and \$60 for 50 gallons. For more information about the program call 1-800-950-2667 or visit columbusco-op.org/rebates.



Our office will be closed Monday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day!

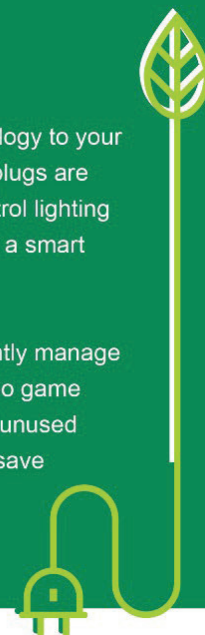


Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

If you're looking to add smart technology to your home, consider smart plugs. Smart plugs are inexpensive and can be used to control lighting and other electronic devices through a smart phone app.

With smart plugs, you can conveniently manage lighting, home office equipment, video game consoles and more. By powering off unused devices when you're away, you can save energy (and money!).

Source: energystar.gov



Emergency Response Number
1-800-228-0579

Toll - free Office Number
1-800-950-COOP (2667)

www.columbusco-op.org