

TALKING POINTS ON HURRICANE PREPARATION AND MUTUAL AID DURING A PANDEMIC

General

- Through the American Public Power Association (APPA), public power utilities have a strong national network of utilities that are prepared to send personnel and equipment wherever they are needed to respond to natural disasters and widespread outages.
- This is one of the many strengths of public power: having other public power communities from all over the country standing by to help their fellow public power communities in times of crisis. We call this “mutual aid.”
- Preparing for mutual aid activation amid the current pandemic has created some new challenges when utilities send or receive crews.
- Public power and the rest of the industry have spent the last several months working through these challenges, putting additional precautions in place, and developing guidance that will ensure mutual aid crews adhere to the highest health and safety standards.
- APPA—working with the [Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council](#)—has developed [guidance](#) around pandemic mutual aid, which covers topics such as work practices, safety protocols, staging, lodging and meals.
- Given the pandemic-specific challenges we’re facing, there are times when it may take longer than usual to get the lights back on and we are doing our best to work through this together, so we ask for your patience.

For Customers

- If you see public power or mutual aid crews out in the field, please maintain your distance and stay at least six feet back.
- Lineworkers and mutual aid crews always appreciate tokens of thanks, but this year we ask that members of the public not offer crews in the field food or drink.
- Instead, we encourage members of the public to find other ways to express your appreciation to lineworkers and utility crews (e.g. social media shout-outs).
- Additionally, we ask the members of our communities to be patient as power restoration times might take a little longer with crews needing to social distance and follow enhanced safety protocols.
- Customers should take the proper precautions to prepare themselves for extended outages.
- While public power utilities will be taking these extra measures to protect the health of our crews and mutual aid crews, our top priority will always be restoring power to our communities as quickly and as safely possible.