

After a major power outage

# How The Energy Cooperative Brings Electricity To You

Illustration by Katherine Fowler

Ohio electric cooperatives own two generation facilities and one peaking plant. After electric power is generated it is sent into the transmission system, which investor owned utilities maintain. The transmission system delivers the electricity, at high voltages to the distribution system's substation. The Energy Cooperative is a distribution system consisting of substations, poles, wires and transformers that step the voltage down to the levels used by homes and businesses. The Energy Cooperative maintains nineteen substations with hundreds of members being served from each one.

When a major outage occurs, these substations are checked first. A problem could be caused by failure in the transmission system supplying the substation or in the substation itself. The Energy Cooperative does not own or maintain the transmission lines, and must rely on the transmission company to make those repairs.

Main distribution supply lines are checked next when the problem cannot be isolated at the substation. These supply lines (also known as three phase lines) carry electricity away from the substation to a group of consumers, such as a town or housing development. When power is restored at this stage, all consumers served by this supply line could see the lights come on, as long as there is no problem farther down the line.

**H**igh winds and ice storms. Tornadoes and blizzards. Electric Cooperative members have seen them all. And with such severe weather comes power outages. Restoring power after a major outage is a big job that involves much more than simply throwing a switch or removing a tree from a line.

The main goal is to restore power safely to the greatest number of members in the shortest time possible.

The major cause of outages is damage caused by fallen trees. That's why your electric Cooperative has an ongoing right-of-way maintenance program.

This illustration explains how power typically is restored after a major disaster.

**Area enlarged:** Sometimes, damage will occur on the service line between your house and the transformer on the nearby pole. This can explain why a member may not have power when your neighbor does. Your cooperative needs to know you have an outage, so a service crew can repair it. Members themselves, not the cooperative, are responsible for damage to the service line after the mast of point of attachment to the home or building.

During a major outage, other cooperatives send line crews to assist with restoring power. These additional crews, as well as communications equipment and supplies, are coordinated through the cooperatives' statewide organization.

Report your outage to the cooperative office. Employees or response services use every available phone line to receive your outage reports. Remember that a major outage can affect thousands of other members. Your cooperative appreciates your patience.

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**DANGER!**  
Stay clear of fallen lines

