Storm-related outages cut wide swath across service territory

A series of storms battered Casa Grande and the Phoenix area last night and early this morning. This after a severe storm yesterday afternoon left northern Arizona without power.

Approximately 2,500 APS customers in numerous locations throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area experienced outages due to the early morning storms. By mid-morning the vast majority had service restored.

One storm hit the Casa Grande area late last night. The Sierra Ranch area near Florence was among the hardest hit. The area's approximately 350 customers remain without power. Crews currently are assessing the extent of the damage and are beginning repairs.

According to Judee Jackson**,** Community Development Manager, Division Community Relations — SE Division, "Because there are lines down in the area, the city is building a road to allow the residents to leave the area safely."

There also remain pockets of outages elsewhere in Pinal District as the area lost a total of approximately 30 poles. The Toltec area lost the largest number, 18 69-kilovolt poles. This left about 7,000 customers without power from 10 p.m. yesterday to 6 a.m. today.

The Red Cross set up a shelter at the Casa Grande Middle School for the evacuees and the city set up a command center at the WalMart on Florence Boulevard. In addition, APS ordered dry ice and will begin distribution at the command center starting at 1 p.m.

During yesterday afternoon's storm in northern Arizona, the Coconino Substation was affected when lightning struck a 230/69-kilovolt (kV) breaker and knocked off-line a significant portion of the 69-kV electrical bus. The bus, in turn, supplies all distribution substations from Tuba City to Flagstaff to Williams and the Grand Canyon.

The outage left approximately 32,000 APS customers without power. It lasted approximately 50 minutes until trouble and substation maintenance crews could isolate the bad breaker and re-route the 69-kV supply.

Editor's note: A bus is an electrical conductor that serves as a common connection for two or more electrical circuits. A bus may be rigid bars, either circular or rectangular in cross section, or stranded-conductor overhead cables held under tension.

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