

Transmission Emergency Operations Center Activated

TVA activated its Transmission Emergency Operations Center (TEOC) in Chattanooga the morning of February 6th, as their repair crews were in the field evaluating and repairing storm damage. The TEOC was activated due to a number of outages resulting from a major storm system that started moving across the TVA service area the night before.

The severe weather experienced across the TVA service area is likely to go down as the largest February outbreak of storms on record, says TVA's Patrick Walshe, a planning manager in Power System Operations. The storms caused major damage to the TVA power system, at least 12 transmission lines were damaged and were out of service.

TVA distributors also experienced widespread damage, and about 50,000 homes and businesses were without power across the Tennessee Valley. Walshe says that on average, February has about 25 tornadoes across the entire country for the month.

Between the night of the 5th and early morning of the 6th, there were reports of 79 tornadoes, with 50 or more in the TVA service territory. Transmission-line outages that had been reported included two 500-kilovolt (kV) lines, nine 161-kV lines and one 69-kV line.

Here is the preliminary damage information from the tornados in West Tennessee.

- A total of 47 people were reported killed in Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky.
- Jackson Energy Authority reported 10,000 customers without power.
- Union University in Jackson Tennessee, sustained very heavy damage. Several students were trapped for hours under rubble from collapsed buildings and dormitories.
- I-40 East/West near Jackson, TN was closed overnight due to several tractor trailers blocking traffic after having been blown over.
- Memphis Light, Gas & Water reported 24,000 customers without power. The majority of customers were out of power around the Hickory Hill Mall, which sustained very heavy damage, the Airport area, Collierville and Germantown.
- Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation reported 4,000 customers without power.
- Southaven, Mississippi (served by Entergy), which is just across the state line from Memphis, reported 900 customers without power.
- Southaven had several large commercial buildings damaged by the tornados.
- Meriwether Lewis Electric Membership Cooperative reported 3,500 customers without power.
- Tri-County Electric Membership Cooperative reported 5,000 customers without power.