

Pacific Power urges residents to stay safe in storm

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As Del Norte County sees the beginning of a potentially dangerous and historic storm, Pacific Power, the county's electricity provider, urges residents to stay safe and prepare for possible power outages.

"Snow and high winds can knock down trees and powerlines causing power outages," David Lucas, Pacific Power vice president of operations said in a press release. "With the storm having the potential to affect holiday celebrations, we are pulling out all the stops to mobilize [our] crews as needed."

In preparation, Pacific Power has deployed additional crews and equipment throughout Southern Oregon and Northern California. Every winter they expect storms to hit, so they take a comprehensive inventory and organize staffing, even going into the holiday weekend, to ensure they are well prepared for impending weather.

"From what I've been looking at – gusts up to 100 miles per hour – that's obviously pretty serious for trees and wires, but we're prepared. That's what we prepare for," said Tom Gauntt, spokesman for Pacific Power.

Pacific Power in a press release encouraged residents to have an emergency kit prepared in case of an outage. The emergency kit should contain a flashlight, a battery-operated radio and clock, extra batteries, non-perishable foods, a manual can opener, bottled water and blankets.

“Anytime a storm is saying it’s going to have high winds, we need to prepare ourselves and be ready to go,” Gauntt said.

Gauntt added that families should have emergency plans in case of a prolonged outage and to look out for neighbors who might be isolated and need assistance.

If the storm becomes more serious, Pacific Power also coordinates with local emergency agencies to set up warming centers.

Gauntt also warned people to be aware of fallen power lines, especially if the power lines look live. He said anyone who sees a downed power line should keep a safe distance from it and report it to Pacific Power by calling 1-877-508-5088. People can report a power outage by calling 1-877-508-5088 or texting “OUT” to 722797.

Pacific Power’s call centers are out of the storm’s area, so residents can call the centers for safety advice should the power go out, according to Gauntt.

For more information on the storm, see the Triplicate’s story “Weather Service: ‘Historic’ storm approaching” on the Triplicate.com.