


# Rutherford EMC Restoration Expected To Take A Week Or More

## Rutherford EMC

FOREST CITY, N.C.– Rutherford EMC has restored power to more than 20,000 members and the cooperative will continue its efforts until power is restored to all homes capable of receiving electric service.

Rutherford EMC is backed by reinforcements from peer electric cooperatives in and out of state, as well as contract crews, tree removal experts and other support specialists. Damage is so widespread that it could take this army of restoration personnel several more days or even weeks to fully restore power.

“It’s hard to describe the extent of the damage to our system,” said Dirk Burleson, General Manager for Rutherford EMC. “In many cases, it’s not just a repair effort, but a rebuild.”

Lingering flood water, mudslides and collapsed roads have made some areas of the cooperatives systems inaccessible, and in other areas, crews are pushing through trees, brush and debris to locate and begin working on damaged infrastructure.

“When crews get to where they need to be, they’re not just met with a limb on a line – they’re met with entire trees that have pulled down spans of line and snapped poles that need to be rebuilt,” said Burleson.

Prolonged outages are frustrating, and Rutherford EMC members are thanked for their patience, as well as the gratitude they’ve shared with restoration personnel. Please know, every single cooperative member who is without power is a part of Rutherford EMC’s plan. Crews will work as quickly and safely as possible to return the essential service of electricity to all.

You can help by being especially vigilant of work areas. Please do not go out on the roads unless absolutely necessary. Keeping the roads clear will help first responders do their jobs and allow restoration crews access to impacted areas. Additionally, many road shoulders are saturated or inaccessible, which means crews will have to set up their trucks and equipment on the road in some locations. Help us keep our linemen safe.

Safety:

Help keep our crews safe. If you see utility crews working on the side of the road, slow down and drive carefully.

Never wade into or drive through flood water.

Only use generators and charcoal grills in well-ventilated areas; a garage does not count as a well-ventilated area.

Never connect a portable generator directly to a home’s wiring. Instead, use an extension cord to plug lights and appliances into the generator.

Never touch a downed power line, and remember that sometimes debris can cover fallen lines, making them difficult to spot.

*Stay informed by viewing Rutherford EMC’s storm center and outage map. Rutherford EMC is an electric cooperative serving approximately 75,000 members in 10 western North Carolina counties.*