

El Paso Electric Company

To: Rio Grande Electric Cooperative
Attention: Gregg Gardner & Clinton Brown

Van Horn Power Outage on June 29, 2009

At 7:50 p.m. MDT alarms come in on the EMS computer that the 69 kV line out of Alamo substation has relayed and dispatcher cannot reclose the line. Crews are called out to patrol transmission line from Tornilla, Texas to Sierra Blanca, Texas. EPE employees from Van Horn and Sierra Blanca are beginning the patrol from the Sierra Blanca area back towards the Alamo substation. The EPE Fabens crews will begin patrolling from Alamo substation towards the other crews. Please realize that this area has been hit by recent storms and that the task of even patrolling the line is difficult, the once graded roads have been washed away in places, water pools as big as small ponds have to be driven around or through. Getting stuck at some point will happen.

In less than one hour the problem is located, a plan is drawn to get tools equipment to the site. In the meantime crews are making plans to sectionalize the downed power line, this effort is needed to enable some customers to be restored using the distribution lines in the area. By 10 p.m. power is restored to the town of Sierra Blanca using 24 kV distribution circuit from Alamo sub (about 50 miles) Attempts were made to tie more distribution feeders together to reach the Van Horn area loads, but the distance and loads in the area are just to high for distribution feeders to deliver good voltages at the end of some 80 to 90 miles of wire.

Next 2 paragraphs come from the High Voltage Transmission Manager, in his words.

Due to heavy run off from a localized thunder storm structure 251 of the Alamo to Sierra Blanca line washed out. When structure 251 was washed out at the base it over loaded the adjacent structure on the El Paso side and the pole supporting the line failed. These structures are near mile marker 76 on I-10. The closest land mark is McNary.

This area is very sandy. We had to clear approximately 2 miles of access road to be able to get material to the site. Even though our trucks are all wheel drive we still needed the cat to pull the trucks through the sand. We replaced structure 250 and were able to stand 251 back up.

In less than 3 hours from the time the outage started crews had a clearance on the 69 kV transmission line and were beginning the job of replacing the downed structure. At 5:16 a.m. MDT crews released clearance on the transmission line and by 6:00 a.m. MDT all power had been restored to customers in the Van Horn area.

We regret any inconvenience this outage may have caused to your customers. We would like to be of any assistance and we look forward to working with you all to provide the best service possible for our customers. Please contact me, I will arrange for any information or other help that you may need to correct these problems.

Thanks,

Bill Massie
Manager System Control
El Paso Electric Company