

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ComEd System Improvements Help to Prepare for Winter Weather

Utility readies itself for snow and ice, offers customers more ways to manage their electric bills

CHICAGO (Nov. 11, 2014) – As forecasters predict another winter of extreme cold and snow, ComEd’s system and process improvements are ensuring that the electrical delivery grid is ready to serve customers all winter long. This work includes inspecting and reinforcing aerial and underground electrical equipment, substations and other facilities; upgrading, replacing and repairing equipment; conducting emergency response drills and other training for employees; and maintaining and testing of critical computer and support systems.

“Last winter’s polar vortex was a triple threat with snow, wind and cold but storm hardening and smart grid improvements meant reliable power for our customers,” said Terence R. Donnelly, ComEd executive vice president and chief operating officer. “We are continuing to make improvements that will help ensure our delivery system, and our customers, are prepared for the winter season ahead.”

In 2012, ComEd formed a storm task force and has made more than 60 enhancements to its storm restoration process. These enhancements included GPS and mobile dispatch technology to more efficiently manage crews to expedite restoration, a mobile operations center to bring ComEd closer to customers in hardest hit areas, and more efficient management of contractor crews. ComEd is continuing to build on these process improvements, with new areas of focus this year including an enhanced damage assessment process, better coordination of vegetation management crews and improved material staging to ensure readiness during severe weather. Over the past two years, process improvements already in place have resulted in a 30 percent improvement in restoration time.

“In addition to technology upgrades on our system, we also are continually reviewing processes and making improvements to ensure that our people are prepared to respond quickly, efficiently and safely to restore power in the event of a significant winter storm,” said Donnelly.

ComEd also offers the following tips to help customers safely prepare their homes for winter weather, manage their energy usage and reduce electricity costs.

- Set your thermostat up to 10 degrees lower during the winter, when you leave your home and before going to sleep. You could save up to 15% a year on heating and cooling costs.
- Check your HVAC filter every month. If the filter looks dirty after a month, change it. A dirty filter will slow down air flow and make the system work harder to keep you warm thus wasting energy.
- Replace incandescent holiday lights with LEDs (lighting emitting diode). LEDs typically consume about 50% less energy and can last up to 10 times longer. They’re also more durable, shock-resistant and generate less heat compared to traditional incandescent light strands.
- Inspect the caulking and weather-stripping around all windows, doors and openings for utility services, replacing as necessary. Also, check ducts that move air to-and-from a forced air furnace, central air conditioner, or heat pump, which are often big energy wasters. Sealing and insulating ducts can improve the efficiency of your heating and cooling system by as much as 20%.

- Take advantage of the home energy savings available through the ComEd Smart Ideas® Energy Efficiency Program. Get a free home energy assessment; receive rebates on weatherization and AC replacements, and save instantly with in-store discounts on CFLs, LEDs and more.

ComEd also wants to help its customers who may be struggling to pay their electricity bills. The company offers financial assistance programs for customers who qualify, including: Residential Special Hardship grants, C.H.A.M.P. (ComEd Helps Active Military Personnel) and Non-Profit Special Hardship programs, as funds are available. ComEd also offers gift certificates in time for the holiday season so customers can help friends or family members pay their bills.

For more information about these and other programs, customers in Chicago and Cook County can call 1-800-571-2332. More contact information by county is available at ComEd.com/CARE or by phone at 1-888-806-CARE (2273).

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Commonwealth Edison Company (ComEd) is a unit of Chicago-based Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), the nation's leading competitive energy provider, with approximately 6.6 million customers. ComEd provides service to approximately 3.8 million customers across northern Illinois, or 70 percent of the state's population. For more information visit ComEd.com, and connect with the company on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).