



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Tampa Electric is Prepared for Hurricane Milton; Urges Residents to Prepare For Extended Outages**

**Tampa, Fla. October 6, 2024**

As Hurricane Milton approaches Florida's west coast, Tampa Electric stands ready to respond, and we encourage you to be prepared as well.

Milton is expected to bring life-threatening storm surge, heavy rain and damaging winds to West Central Florida starting Tuesday. While we prepare year-round for extreme weather and have a comprehensive strategy in place through our [Storm Protection Plan](#), a storm of this magnitude can damage overhead and underground power lines and other electrical infrastructure, resulting in widespread and extended power outages. It's important to be prepared and to have backup power arrangements if you or a loved one rely on electricity for health needs.

Tampa Electric's crews are prepared to work around the clock when and where it is safe to restore power as quickly as possible after the storm. We are securing thousands of utility workers to join Tampa Electric's 600-line crew members and contractors. Tampa Electric is a member of the Southeastern Electric Exchange, or SEE, a network of utilities that pledges mutual assistance in case of storms or other emergencies.

"The Tampa Bay area is once again preparing for a storm with the potential to significantly damage our community. As always, the safety of our customers and employees is our top priority. If you live in an evacuation zone, I urge you to follow all evacuation orders from local officials," said Archie Collins, president and chief executive officer of Tampa Electric. "While the path and intensity of Hurricane Milton remain uncertain, we anticipate high winds, heavy rain and significant storm surge. I encourage our customers to complete their personal storm plans for their homes or businesses and prepare for extended power outages. Please stay safe."

#### **Tampa Electric urges customers to follow these important tips and safety precautions:**

- Visit [FloridaDisaster.org](https://www.floridadisaster.org) for statewide and county preparedness guides, evacuation zones, shelter information, alerts and more.
- **Avoid downed power lines** and urge others to stay away. Call 911 to report it.
- **Water and electricity don't mix!**
  - Stay out of floodwaters, as they can hide energized power lines and other hazards.
  - Avoid wet electrical equipment such as transformers, circuit breakers, fuses, power lines and wiring.
  - Unplug or turn off non-essential electrical equipment and small appliances to protect them from power surges.
  - If you're evacuating, especially if due to flooding risk, we recommend turning your electricity off at the main breaker while your home is still dry. This helps protect your

electrical system from damage, supports your personal safety and improves restoration time. Never touch your breaker box if your hands are wet or you are standing in water.

- Please do NOT turn off your natural gas service at the meter. Natural gas appliances have safety valves that will shut off the flow of natural gas automatically if the pilot light goes out.
- **Use portable generators safely.**
  - Plug your appliances directly into the generator.
  - **DO NOT** connect your portable generator to your home's circuits. Connecting your generator to the circuits may cause power to flow to outside lines, posing life-threatening danger to restoration crews.
  - Portable generators must not be taken into homes or enclosed spaces (like a garage) where deadly carbon monoxide gases could build up.
- **Smell gas? Act fast.**
  - The odor of rotten eggs indicates that a natural gas line might be damaged. Immediately move to safety and **call 911**, then call Peoples Gas at **877-832-6747**. Emergency calls are answered 24/7/365.
- **Electric Vehicle Precautions.**
  - Fully charge your electric vehicle (EV) before severe weather to prepare for potential power outages. Adjust your vehicle's daily charging limit to 100% to allow for the maximum driving range if it's currently set to 80% as most manufacturers recommend.
  - Park your EV in a secure location away from areas that may flood.
  - Follow all manufacturer safety recommendations if you export power from your EV to run home appliances during a power outage. Remember, doing this will decrease your EV's driving range.

Visit [TampaElectric.com/Storm](https://www.tampaelectric.com/Storm) for tips, restoration information and additional guidance.

**Tampa Electric offers customers several ways to report and monitor power outages:**

- Log into your online account at [TECOaccount.com](https://www.tecoaccount.com) to report the outage with one click.
- Visit [TampaElectric.com/Outage](https://www.tampaelectric.com/Outage) to report your outage and get restoration status.
- Text **OUT** to **27079**. Text **UPDATE** or **STATUS** for updates on your reported outage.
- Call **1-877-588-1010**, Tampa Electric's dedicated toll-free automated power outage phone system.
- Go to [TECOaccount.com/Notifications](https://www.tecoaccount.com/Notifications) and sign up for free outage notifications by text, email or phone call.

Tampa Electric asks for your patience as crews assess damage and prioritize restoration efforts after Hurricane Milton. For outage updates and safety tips, follow our social channels at [TampaElectric.com/Social](https://www.tampaelectric.com/Social).

[Tampa Electric](https://www.tampaelectric.com), one of Florida's largest investor-owned electric utilities, serves more than 840,000 customers in West Central Florida. Tampa Electric is a subsidiary of Emera Inc., a geographically diverse energy and services company headquartered in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

**Media Contact:** Mary Lou Carn 305-434-2477

###