

Archuleta County
Extended Power Outage
Emergency
MITIGATION & RESPONSE PLAN

January 2017



RESOLUTION 2017 - 11

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ARCHULETA COUNTY, COLORADO AMENDING THE EXTENDED POWER OUTAGE EMERGENCY MITIGATION AND RESPONSE PLAN

WHEREAS, Resolution 2015-70, the Board of County Commissioners adopted the Archuleta County Extended Power Outage Emergency Mitigation and Response Plan submitted by the Director of Emergency Operations; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Archuleta County finds that the Extended Power Outage Emergency Operations Plan is necessary for protecting the public health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Archuleta County; and

WHEREAS, the Archuleta County Office of Emergency Management is the County agency responsible for coordinating and/or implementing the All Hazards Emergency Operations Plans, and is created and designed to conduct authorized functions pursuant to the Colorado Disaster Emergency Act of 2014, of Article 24-33.5-704, et. seq., of Title 24 C.R.S.; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Emergency Management has amended the Extended Power Outage Emergency Mitigation and Response Plan and recommends the adoption of the amended Plan; and

WHEREAS, all previous Archuleta County Extended Power Outage Emergency Mitigation and Response Plans are superseded by this amended Plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of County Commissioners of Archuleta County hereby adopts the amended Archuleta County Extended Power Outage Emergency Mitigation and Response Plan attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated into this Resolution by this reference.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 21st day of March, 2017 in Pagosa Springs,
Archuleta County, Colorado.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ARCHULETA COUNTY, COLORADO**

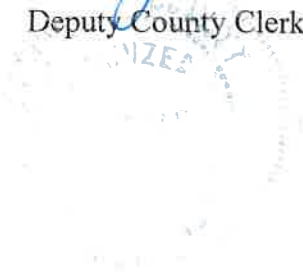


Steve Wadley, Chair

ATTEST



Deputy County Clerk



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EMERGENCY CONTACT

In all county emergencies call 911.
Emergency Operations Center 970-731-4799

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Power outages ranging from several city blocks over one or two operational periods to entire multi-state regions for more than a week can cause difficult and unexpected problems for emergency workers and require the (hopefully) preplanned cooperation of many agencies, both public and private, to protect life and property.

The biggest problem in Archuleta would be an extended outage over many operational periods during cold weather. A major snow/ice event would significantly exacerbate the problems. The most immediate needs would be shelter (heat) and transportation. As shelters fill during the initial and second operational periods, fuel supplies would become scarce (gas pumps don't work without power) making transportation difficult and the demand for shelters more extensive. In the absence of backup generators, most local radio stations would be unable to keep the public informed and in a geographically extended outage, we could not expect help from nearby stations nor communities. As buildings cool down, pipes begin to freeze denying water and sanitary service. Supplies (potable water, batteries, fuel) begin to run out and people are making runs on the food and hardware stores. Traffic accidents and the need for more security are overloading law enforcement, and secondary heating methods are causing multiple fires, stressing our firefighters. People-at-risk exhaust their backup supplies and require evacuation and hospitalization. Fatalities begin to overwhelm our mortuary capabilities. Civil unrest begins to overpower law enforcement and their auxiliaries.

This document is intended as an outline for advance planning for power outage events with the possibility of extending for more than the first operational period. Advance planning, pre-arranged cooperative agreements, pre-positioned supplies and periodic exercises can mitigate the damages caused by such incidents.

SCOPE

The scope of this document is to provide a plan for responding to extended power outages in Archuleta County. Aspects of the plan include public information, emergency shelter; supplies including food, water and fuel; and such emergency services as shall be required to accomplish the above objectives.

OBJECTIVES

Safety of the public, public service responders and volunteers.

Keep the peace.

Minimize loss of life, injuries, and property damage.

Facilitate delivery of critical supplies as needed.

Keep the public informed.

DEFINITIONS

An extended power outage is defined as any power outage lasting more than a few hours and extending over significant portions of the county.

Classification of Power Outages: Power outages can be classified both by their duration and by their geographic extent. Their cause has little to do with the type of emergency response other than to limit further damage in the case of terrorism, wildfire, etc. Note that while this document deals primarily, with electrical outages, much of it also applies to natural gas outages or to outages caused by failure of the transportation system preventing resupply of propane, engine fuels, food and other essential supplies.

Short term outages: Short term outages are those lasting less than one operational period. While such outages cause concern primarily for people-at-risk and traffic control, they are mainly a trigger for setting this plan into effect. Most of these last less than a few minutes or hours and call for little or no response other than alertness.

Rolling outages: These are usually caused by some problem in the power system such as inadequate supply, and are instituted by the power company to mitigate insufficient capacity. Power is shut off to relatively small areas on a rotating basis, conserving capacity while allowing these areas to maintain essential services. Action required is usually limited to persons-at-risk, alarm response, and traffic.

Extended outage: An extended outage is any outage lasting more than one operational period and covering significant areas of the county, and is the main concern for this plan. Such an outage is exacerbated by **cold weather** or **widespread** coverage over many counties or states. Activation of Phase I Response is required.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Because of the time span of an extended outage, the County should put into effect an extended Public Information Function. Every effort must be made to keep the public informed about the known facts of the situation, and to advise them on availability of critical resources and mitigation strategies.

At the same time, we must recognize the damage that is caused by misinformation. Representatives of the Public, Press and/or News Media will be directed to the Archuleta County Public Information Officer (PIO) or absent a County PIO, the Incident Commander or the Incident assigned PIO. Under no circumstances, unless authorized by the Incident Commander, will any member(s) of the response team, county staff or other persons involved in the Incident, either directly or indirectly, in person, by telephone, or in writing provide any information on the incident or events surrounding the incident to the Press or other Media.

RESPONSE PLAN

Response should occur in several phases. These plans are meant as guidelines only. Operational personnel will make changes as conditions develop.

Phase I

As determined by local Law Enforcement Command (ACSO, PSPD) arrangements will be made to cover critical highway interchanges. After 30 minutes, at the discretion of the responsible law enforcement agencies, law enforcement Auxiliaries ("Victor" units, Mounted Patrol, Volunteer Fire) should be called out to manage critical intersections and help with other traffic issues and release LE personnel to more critical functions. Coordination with the Colorado State Patrol (CSP) is appropriate at this time.

EOC personnel (Power Management Team Leader) will contact the appropriate supplier (LPEA) to determine the likely cause and duration of the outage. In a reported electrical power outage area, a power company "trouble shooter" or repair crew must arrive at the location of the power outage to survey the damage before an estimated time of repair can be made. Once the estimated time of repair is determined, this information is relayed to the power company operation center. The supervisor in each center should be the contact point for EOC and EOC should have appropriate phone numbers for contact.

The first critical point occurs about two hours into the outage. It involves a meeting initiated by EOC personnel or the sheriff (most likely by phone) of appropriate emergency operations command staff to determine the likely nature and extent of the outage. A trigger condition is

agreed upon. For example, if it cannot be *assured* that the outage will be corrected within three hours of the beginning of the outage, the Phase I plan will be put into effect. Command and general staff are put on alert.

Phase II

Phase II response includes the following actions.

Establish emergency power for EOC.

Designate PIO personnel to provide information to local and neighboring commercial media outlets, including internet publications. Staff the PIO phone number. PIO should hold an early press conference via phone or in person (away from the command post.)

Provide a situation report to local emergency services, Commissioners, Mayor and other local officials. Put on notice personnel who will form the unified command. Schedule a Unified/Area command meeting (away from the command post.)

Notify DHSEM Representative that the Power Outage Response Plan (no action required by them for now.)

Notify dispatch of activation, and instruct them to refer PIO calls to the appropriate number and media outlets.

Activate a few uniformed volunteers from Upper San Juan SAR (USJSAR,), San Juan Mounted Patrol (SJMP, formerly Colorado Mounted Rangers) to help with welfare checks and other tasks. Be mindful of the need for additional personnel in the following operational periods.

Activate additional phones at the command center.

Activate the American Red Cross and begin arrangements to establish shelter areas.

Notify the Humane Society of Pagosa Springs of the possible need for additional animal shelter.

Continue to monitor the situation with LPEA.

Begin filling positions for **Plans:** Situation, Resources, Documentation; **Logistics:** Communication, Transportation, Facilities, Medical, Food/Water. Designate someone to manage volunteer personnel (determine and keep track of who can work when and for how long, where to report, who is team leader, relief, food, coffee, etc. This person needs a phone.)

If it is anticipated that a second operational period is going to be needed, begin designating the command staff for that period and place them on alert.

Phase III

Phase III begins with the second operational period.

Establish a Unified (and Area if necessary) Command at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Meet with Commissioners, Mayor and other County/Town officials. Update on situation and prognosis.

Designate a Commissioner to act (remotely) as head of Finance and Admin.

Continue to monitor the situation with LPEA.

Continue to inform the public. Arrange for interviews with elected officials and senior personnel. (This usually involves teaming them with a senior staffer who actually knows the situation.)

If it is anticipated that a third operational period is going to be needed, begin designating and alerting the command staff for that period.

Liaise with Durango or other outside jurisdictions. Start arranging for outside delivery of supplies as needed: fuel, food, water, generators, etc.

Phase IV

The outage extends into the third and following operational periods. Plans for longer term response are put into effect. Neighboring, state and federal assistance may be sought. Phase III is the continuing plan.

Provide for continuing volunteer help, personnel support, transportation, delivery of supplies to posts and shelters, fuel, etc.

Continue to monitor the situation and inform the public.

Meet with Commissioners and other County/Town officials. Update on situation and prognosis.

If it is anticipated that additional operational periods are going to be needed, begin designating the command staff for that period.

Transportation (School busses, Mountain Express, Wilderness Journeys, cab, church busses, private vehicles)

CRITICAL SERVICES

Command, communication and control.

Command would be provided through command structures described by the National Incident Management System. This would include an Incident Commander with possibly Unified (Multiagency) and/or Area Command structures. The Archuleta County Sheriff's Department would be the lead agency.

It is essential that emergency workers and county officials know who is in charge. By law, the Sheriff is responsible for emergency operations within the county. The commissioners, mayor and others need to be involved with unified and/or area command structures, but the Sheriff designates the Incident Commander who is in charge.

Tactical communication would be provided by telephone, cellular, VHF and 800MHz radio. Additional communication can be provided by amateur radio services and courier. Public service announcements would be provided by commercial stations in Archuleta, and LaPlata counties.

Radio communication would use the standard frequencies for the county, with the possible addition of amateur frequencies. Refer to the SW Regional TIC Plan.

Emergency Services: these agencies would be most involved in this response.

- Law Enforcement (ACSO, PSPD, CSP)
- Road and Bridge (water trucks, fuel truck, MOT {detour signage})
- Fire (PFPD, and other agencies as needed.)
- Ambulance (USJHD and other agencies as needed)
- Transportation
- Human Shelter (American Red Cross; public buildings including the public schools; religious organizations and churches.)
- Small Animal Shelter (HSPS)
- County Extension Service.
- Animal Rescue Organizations.
- Western Heritage.

Other Critical Resources

- Heat (LPEA, Black Hills Energy)
- Power (LPEA, rental generators, stockpiled generators, National Guard)
- Water (PAWSD, bottled water, National Guard)
- Food (Local food stores, convenience stores, stockpiles, etc.)
- Sanitation (city sanitary, local potty house suppliers: A1 Septic, Alpine Portable Toilets, G&I, Rocky Mountain Sanitation.)
- Communication (Commercial radio and television, CenturyLink, cellular providers, paging providers, amateur radio)
- Fuel (Local refueling stations, bulk plants, propane suppliers) (AAA Propane Inc, Bob's LP Gas, Selph's Propane)
- Light (rental work lights, generators)
- Resort management companies (Wyndham)

See the resource books for a complete list of available emergency resources. Do not overlook resources available in the private sector including churches, service organizations (e.g., Rotary) and others.

SPECIAL CONCERNS

Nursing homes: Nursing homes, hospital and extended care facilities need to be checked to determine their ability to maintain heat, water and emergency power; food, oxygen supplies, medications. This includes the Pine Ridge Extended Care Facility at 119 Bastille Drive and the Pagosa Springs Medical Center, Pagosa Springs / Safe Living, Visiting Angels, Archuleta County Housing Authority.

Public housing: Public housing often includes the elderly and disabled and periodic welfare checks should be done at these facilities. Arrangements need to be made to transport needful individuals to designated shelters. (Archuleta County Housing Authority)

Welfare checks: It is expected that as the outage continues, families and friends will request welfare checks on people who may need help or shelter. This is a good use of uniformed volunteer resources.

Persons-at-risk: This includes people who depend on power for some kind of priority health care, or who need help with mobility or food preparation during an outage. It includes people on oxygen, dialysis, feeding tubes, infusion machines, etc.

Other groups with special requirements: Blind, deaf, illiterate, seniors, single parents, mentally challenged, non-English speaking, tourists.

Livestock and pets: It is expected that individuals and families presenting at shelters may be accompanied by companion animals. Provisions must be made to either shelter these animals with their owners or at other facilities, being mindful of allergies and other problems. Additionally, as the outage extends beyond the first operational period, arrangements need to be made for the feeding and watering of livestock.

Alarm responses (Fire, Intrusion): Power fluctuations can be expected to cause alarms, intrusion and fire, to be activated. There is a natural tendency to give a low priority to these alarms as many of them are simply caused by the power fluctuations. However, because of the likely use of alternate heat sources and older heating plants which may not relight correctly, fire alarms need to be carefully checked. A plan for checking numerous alarms with less than full engine companies may need to be activated.

Property damage: Frozen water pipes, including those used for hydroponic heat, can be expected to be the largest source of property damage in cold weather, especially given the number of seasonal homes. Many seasonal residents will be concerned about possible damage and may call for mitigation services. Work with the water company to turn off service to known vacant buildings to limit water damage. Establish a registry of non- and seasonal-residence buildings.

FEDERAL AND STATE ASSISTANCE

A listing of contacts for Federal, BIA, and State Assistance (possibly better placed in the resource book).

ACTION ITEMS

Provide public education prior to an event

- Pamphlets
- ACSO website information
- Print media
- Internet
- PSAs

Develop a County Information Function

This would be useful for incidents such as Mass Casualty, Extensive Fire, Power Outage, and even Snow Emergencies. It should include a procedure for activation and deactivation, designation of a County PIO, and procedures for establishing a phone bank, including special numbers for Press Only. Initially, the number might ring in to 264-2131, but would be forwarded to an Information Office (at EOC or elsewhere) when the situation demands. Response can escalate from individual dispatchers through a single county official to a team of telecommunicators.

Develop a compendium of emergency resources.

See the document "RESOURCE ASSESSMENT IN ARCHULETA COUNTY; Inventorying Emergency Resources."

Involvement of "New Players"

The usual players are already involved in planning: Police and Sheriff's department, Fire, Ambulance, Hospitals, etc.

"New players" include those organizations which have not been very involved in the past. These include:

- San Juan Mounted Patrol
- Humane Society
- LaPlata Electric. They have a registry of people dependant on power. It is a voluntary registration by phone. A good point of contact might be for local medical equipment suppliers to encourage people to call them and sign up.
- Black Hills Energy
- Pubic Transportation
- School Districts, for planning, transportation and shelter.
- Rotary
- Department of Wildlife (additional security)
- Southern Ute Tribe
- LaPlata Emergency Operations
- Amateur Radio
- Medical Equipment Services

Liaise with local media including internet, broadcast and print, and agencies on the critical resources list, especially LPEA.

Determine how the power company "persons-at-risk" list works.

Establish an "Emergency Interrupt" capability with KWUF, KSUT, others.

Develop Tasking Orders for each position in the command structure.

Determine how to hold conferences by phone.

Verify that we can quickly add phone lines to EOC, even when critical telecommunication personnel are not available.

Find a way to open airport gates during a power failure. Inform EOC general staff.

Find a way to open the overhead doors to Nick's Hanger. Inform EOC general staff.

Power dependence

Determine the dependence of local services on power.

- Commercial radio & other media
- Grocery stores
- Gas stations
- PAWSD
- Black Hills Energy
- County watering stations
- HSPS
- Pagosa Springs Medical Center
- Family Medical
- Nursing home(s)
- Community Center
- EMS
- PFPD
- PSPD
- EOC
- R&B
- Schools
- Airport