



White River Valley Electric Cooperative News Release

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For immediate release: September 9, 2020



Back row, left to right: Mark Visnosky (Branson); Cody Blankenship (Branson); Sam West (Branson); Nick Pitts (Ava); Joe Morgan (Ava); Front row, left to right: Bobby Gross (Branson); Aaron Michel (Branson); Jason Crouch (Branson)

WRVEC travels to Louisiana for Hurricane Laura restoration

Branson, Missouri – On Wednesday, September 9, eight linemen from White River Valley Electric Cooperative travel to Louisiana to help restore power in the wake of Hurricane Laura. They will join 126 other linemen from Missouri’s electric cooperatives to assist Beauregard Electric Cooperative, which serves 42,000 members in an area just north of where the storm made landfall.

The hurricane left the area ravaged, with much of the electric grid destroyed. Transmission is a big problem as many large towers crumpled by the powerful hurricane. To date, Beauregard Electric has restored power to 4,200 meters – only 10% of their membership. Officials say members are looking at four to six weeks before power is completely restored.

“The crews are making progress,” says Rob Land, who oversees the mutual assistance program at the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives. “They have a total of 640 cooperative linemen working. Including contractors there are 1,180 people working to restore power.”

The work conditions -- 90-degree heat and near 100-percent humidity -- have proved challenging, added with the need to maintain social distancing between crews. However, every step possible has been taken to protect them from COVID-19. Special air filters capable of removing 99.4% of the virus have been installed on the HVAC equipment and beds have been spread out farther than would normally be done. Bathrooms are being sanitized after every use and meals are served in separate containers and eaten apart from others.

As one of Missouri’s electric cooperatives, WRVEC linemen are just returning a favor. Louisiana cooperatives sent assistance to the area during the ice storms of 2007 and 2009. “Cooperation among Cooperatives” is one of seven guiding principles under which cooperatives operate.

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[White River Valley Electric Cooperative](#) is a [Touchstone Energy Cooperative](#) dedicated to ensuring our members receive safe and reliable service in their homes and businesses across five southwest Missouri counties including Ozark, Taney, Stone, Christian and Douglas.