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News Releases

FPL delivers best-ever service reliability in 2018, plans to harden all main power lines within six years

-Day-to-day, the average amount of time a customer experienced an outage was less than ever before

-Company moves forward with three-year Storm Secure Underground Program pilot, focusing on cost-effective ways of undergrounding neighborhood power lines, and to enhance reliability and resiliency

Mar 1, 2019

JUNO BEACH, Fla. – Florida Power & Light Company’s (FPL) more than 5 million customers experienced the best-ever service reliability in 2018 due to the company’s efforts to make the energy grid stronger and more storm-resilient, and the company plans to make similar investments over the next three years that will continue to benefit customers, according to information filed today with the Florida Public Service Commission.



The average amount of time that an FPL customer experienced an outage was less than ever before, thanks in part to the nearly \$4 billion in investments FPL has made to the energy grid since 2006. The company also achieved best-ever performance for the average number of momentaries or flickers, which are most commonly caused by animals or tree limbs touching power lines, experienced by each customer. FPL was named the winner of the 2018 ReliabilityOne™ National Reliability Excellence Award presented by PA Consulting. This is the third time in four years that the company has received the national award for providing superior service reliability to the more than 10 million people across Florida that it serves.

"We continue to build one of the nation’s strongest, smartest and most storm-resilient energy grids to provide our customers with reliable service year-round, while keeping our typical residential bills among the lowest in the country," said Eric Silagy, president and CEO of FPL. "Our ongoing investments in strengthening the grid and using advanced smart grid technology continue to help us deliver electricity our customers can count on in good weather and bad. And, over the next three years, we plan on continuing these efforts as they have demonstrated their value to keep lights on for customers in everyday operations and help speed the efforts to restore power during severe weather."

In addition, the company provided its plans to continue hardening the energy grid over the next three years by investing approximately \$2 billion, which includes hardening its main power lines and replacing all remaining wooden transmission structures.

By the end of 2022, FPL expects that all of its transmission structures will be steel or concrete. By the end of 2024, the company expects to have hardened or undergrounded all main power lines within its distribution system, including those serving critical and key community facilities.

Hardening means that FPL is installing power poles, which can be a combination of wood and concrete, that will be able to withstand major hurricane-force winds. Hardening includes shortening the span between poles by installing additional poles and possibly placing some sections of power lines underground.

In addition to being more storm resilient, hardened power lines perform 40 percent better in day-to-day operations than those power lines that are not hardened, which means fewer outages experienced by customers.

FPL’s proposed three-year hardening projects are in addition to the nearly \$4 billion of investments FPL has made to the energy grid since 2006. These investments minimized damage and sped restoration efforts during 2016’s Hurricane Matthew and 2017’s Hurricane Irma, as well as improved overall service to customers. These investments include:

- Hardening or undergrounding 98 percent of main power lines serving critical community functions and services, such as police and fire stations, hospitals, ports and 911 centers

FPL Media Line

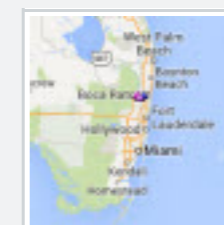
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How-to guide for working with FPL during a storm restoration (3.5 MB)

- Clearing vegetation – a major cause of power outages – from more than 15,000 miles of power lines each year, which is equivalent to a round trip flight from Miami to Tokyo
- Inspecting all of the company’s 1.2 million distribution power poles within an eight-year cycle, and upgrading or replacing those that no longer meet FPL’s industry leading standards for strength (approximately 150,000 poles inspected annually)
- Installing more than 5 million smart meters and more than 110,000 intelligent devices to help predict, reduce and prevent power outages, and restore power faster if outages occur
- Replacing transmission structures, such that 93 percent are concrete or steel

Last year, the company started the Storm Secure Underground Program, a three-year pilot that focuses on using new technologies and processes to find less expensive ways to underground neighborhood power lines, which will further enhance customers’ service reliability and the energy grid’s resiliency. The pilot is focusing on areas that experienced an outage during Hurricanes Matthew and/or Irma, and have a history of outages caused primarily by vegetation, which in Florida grows year-round.

Historically, reliability results indicate that, on average, customers served by underground main power lines tend to have fewer outages compared to overhead main power lines. Nearly 40 percent of FPL’s 68,000 miles of distribution power lines are already underground.

“The Storm Secure Underground Program is the result of one of the lessons learned from Hurricane Irma, which demonstrated that underground power lines generally operate better than overhead power lines during a storm where trees and wind-blown debris caused the majority of power outages,” said Manny Miranda, FPL senior vice president of power delivery. “We have already completed a handful of these innovative projects and are gearing up to bring this program and its benefits to customers throughout the state.”

Florida Power & Light Company

Florida Power & Light Company is the largest energy company in the United States as measured by retail electricity produced and sold, serving more than five million customer accounts or an estimated 10 million+ people across the state of Florida. FPL’s typical 1,000-kWh residential customer bill is approximately 30 percent lower than the latest national average and among the lowest in the U.S. FPL’s service reliability is better than 99.98 percent, and its highly fuel-efficient power plant fleet is one of the cleanest among all electric companies nationwide. The company was recognized in 2018 as one of the most trusted U.S. electric utilities by Market Strategies International for the fifth consecutive year. A leading Florida employer with approximately 8,700 employees, FPL is a subsidiary of Juno Beach, Florida-based NextEra Energy, Inc. (NYSE: NEE), a clean energy company widely recognized for its efforts in sustainability, ethics and diversity, and has been ranked No. 1 in the electric and gas utilities industry in Fortune’s 2019 list of “World’s Most Admired Companies.” NextEra Energy is also the parent company of Gulf Power Company, which serves more than 460,000 customers in eight counties throughout Northwest Florida, and NextEra Energy Resources, LLC, which, together with its affiliated entities, is the world’s largest generator of renewable energy from the wind and sun and a world leader in battery storage. For more information about NextEra Energy companies, visit these websites: www.NextEraEnergy.com, www.FPL.com, www.GulfPower.com, www.NextEraEnergyResources.com.

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