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BURKE COUNTY

Crews still working to restore power

Duke Energy: Majority expected to have power back by Friday evening

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While around 13,000 Duke Energy customers in Burke County remained without power Tuesday morning, company representatives say multiple crews were working to get power restored to the county.

Jeff Brooks, a spokesman for Duke Energy, said he was driving through Burke County on Monday and saw downed trees everywhere, miles of downed power lines and a lot of broken power poles.

“So some of those were in hard-to-access areas, so those will be the kind of challenges that they’re working to restore,” Brooks said. He said the company expects the majority of customers will have power by Friday evening.

Most power will be restored much sooner than that, he said.

He said on Monday evening that 18,000 line and tree workers were working in western North Carolina and Upstate South Carolina, and more were on the way.

Restoring power to lines that have been downed by trees is a multi-stage process, Brooks said.

He said it first requires a tree crew to remove all the trees from the lines and then install new poles and new equipment.

Duke Energy typically restores power from some of the main transmission lines to bring power to the region, and then crews work to restore emergency services’ power first, including fire departments, hospitals and police departments. Crews then work to restore as many customers as possible with each restoration, meaning outages on a line that has the largest number of customers get repaired first, Brooks said.

“Sometimes the scope of the damage requires more resources,



Fallen trees and power lines were downed on Powerhouse Road in Glen Alpine after Helene moved through Burke County late last week.



People help cut a tree up on U.S. Highway 70 after Helene hit Burke County Friday.

and that may cause us to move to a different one first, but that’s generally the process to follow as we’re working to restore power,” Brooks said.

He said it’s encouraging to see more roads opening up, which

means Duke Energy workers will be able to get crews into more areas.

“We appreciate our customers’ patience during this time,” Brooks said. “We know that this is a challenging time for many people and

that being without power is not only inconvenient, but that it removes some security that we have when we have power available. So, we’re working really hard.”

Brooks said Duke Energy crew members live and work in the

area as well and many of them are dealing with the same situations at home that its customers are, but they’re all working to get power back up for everybody.

“This is, certainly in my 17 years of working storms, this is one of the worst I’ve ever seen,” Brooks said. “And I think given the terrain in the foothills and the mountains, it makes that work even more challenging. But we continue to bring in resources to help, and we’ll keep at it until we get everybody back up.”

On Tuesday, the city of Morganton said its electric crews were working on Old N.C. Highway 18, Mount Home Church Road, Dale Circle off of Enola Road, Willowbrook Drive and Alexander Avenue.

“We will try to keep you updated with new locations when we are told,” the city said. “We understand that your neighbor may have power, but due to the nature of the circuits you may still be without power. Please be patient as we continue to make repairs.”

Boil water advisory in Morganton

As for water use, the city of Morganton said on Tuesday the boil water advisory has been lifted for the areas served by the Valdese Avenue, Dale Circle, Astro Drive and the Salem water tanks. It said water tests have confirmed that the water is safe in those areas.

“We will be announcing other areas of our customer base that can proceed with normal water consumption once test results are received,” the city said.

Town of Valdese and Icard Township water customers remain under a boil water advisory as of Tuesday.

The city of Morganton also announced Tuesday afternoon that all city parks are closed until further notice, including the Catawba River Greenway. Parks and recreation staff are out today in the parks, assessing damage, the city said.

Burke County schools out all week due to storm

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Burke County Public Schools will be closed through Friday for students, the school system announced on Monday.

The closure includes YMCA before- and after-school sites, a

news release from Burke County Public Schools said.

“As emergency crews continue to work to restore power and water throughout the county, we are carefully evaluating the condition of our 24 school campuses,” the

release said. “Decisions about reopening schools next week will be made based on the status of water, power and the ability to provide meals at our schools.”

Thursday and Friday this week will be optional work days for

teachers and staff, the school system said.

“We want our staff to know that family and personal situations take precedence,” the release said. “We will have separate messaging for staff on facilities that are open

for optional work.”

Area schools

Caldwell County Schools are off Tuesday, Oct. 1, due to road conditions and power outages, the school system said in a release.

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