

Storms' strong winds spawn outages, damage from San Luis to Phoenix

August 8, 2008

For the second time in three days, the Phoenix metropolitan area was pummeled by high winds, lightning and heavy rain. At the height of the storm activity, about 21,000 customers in the Phoenix metro area were without power. By about 4 a.m., that number had decreased to 5,200.

Of those 5,200 customers, 3,800 are located in Buckeye and the southwestern edges of Maricopa County. The remaining 1,400 customers are located in central Phoenix, where the powerful winds downed lines and blew tree branches into lines. Most of the central Phoenix customers had their power restored by 9 a.m. today.

The Buckeye-area outage — centered near State Route 85 and Baseline Road, east of Arlington — is due to 60 downed or damaged poles. Approximately 3,550 customers remain without power. Power is expected to be restored soon to about 530 customers but the remainder are not expected to have their power restored until late Saturday afternoon.

Dry ice has been delivered to the company's Buckeye office, located at 615 North 4th Street, and distribution to customers is under way.

In Southwest Arizona, outages were reported in Somerton, however, San Luis bore the brunt of the storm that rolled through around 4 p.m. A total of 4,564 Somerton customers were without power, while 4,907 customers in San Luis lost power. As of earlier this morning about 50 or 60 customers remain out of service.

The weather also brought down seven power poles that support a sub-transmission line that delivers power to the San Luis Substation. As a result of the damage to that line, San Luis customers are being asked to reduce electric use today to help limit potential power outages.

APS expects area customers to experience outages throughout the day as crews from Yuma, Casa Grande and Phoenix work to complete system repairs. Full power restoration is expected to occur late this afternoon.

Dry ice distribution is under way at the Fernando Padilla Community Center, located at 800 E. Juan Sanchez Blvd.

Photos: above right, crews replace poles near Buckeye (courtesy of Phoenix 3TV); left, downed power line near San Luis (courtesy of the Yuma Sun).