



NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Electric System Update: Sunday August 17, 2003, 5:00 p.m.

The electric transmission system is now operating reliably. All electric power transmission lines that were removed from service during the blackout on August 14, 2003, have been returned to service with one exception. The lines between Michigan and Ontario remain out of service due to operational security reasons; however, they are expected to be returned to service later this evening.

Most of the electric generating units that were removed from service during the blackout have now been returned to service (the exact number of units that went out of service is not yet known). Twenty-one of these remain out of service. A number of these generating units are expected to return to service either this evening or Monday morning. All but one of the units are expected to return to service during the coming week.

No rotating blackouts are currently underway and none are expected for Monday. Public appeals for conservation have been issued in Ontario and are expected to remain in place for next week. No public appeals have been issued for the systems in the United States. New York will evaluate the need for public appeals tomorrow morning as they would during any day where high demand levels are expected.

Pinpointing the exact cause of the blackouts will be a challenging task; events that occurred on one utility's system may have been affected by events on utility systems elsewhere in the Eastern Interconnection. "What we really need to focus on now is why protective schemes that should have localized the impact of various events did not work," said Michehl R. Gent, NERC President and CEO. "We have a great deal of digging to do. Although we may have identified the area where the cascading outages began, any attempt on our part to identify the cause of the outages at this point would be speculative and premature," he underscored.

NERC is collecting and analyzing all information relevant to the investigation in order to determine the exact cause of the outages. We will need to analyze thousands of event records from all of the systems that were affected and examine system conditions across the region earlier in the day that may bear some relationship to the events that followed. That analysis is underway.

NERC's mission is to ensure that the bulk electric system in North America is reliable, adequate, and secure. Since its formation in 1968, NERC has operated successfully as a voluntary organization, relying on reciprocity, peer pressure, and the mutual self-interest of all those involved. Through this voluntary approach, NERC has helped to make the North American bulk electric system the most reliable system in the world. NERC membership comprises ten Regional Reliability Councils that account for virtually all the electricity supplied in the United States, Canada, and a portion of Baja California Norte, Mexico.