

## Dominion Virginia Power is Positioned for Official Start of 2010 Hurricane Season

RICHMOND, Va., June 1 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- Dominion Virginia Power has been preparing for the arrival of the 2010 hurricane season, which begins June 1, by working closely with local, state and federal emergency response organizations. The company also is providing storm training for key responders, conducting emergency response drills, and strengthening its service restoration processes.

"Dominion Virginia Power employees throughout the company work around-the-clock to keep the lights on," said Rodney Blevins, vice president – Distribution Operations. "Equipment inspections and maintenance are important, as is our program of preventing trees and other objects from coming into contact with electric lines.

"When severe weather brings extreme conditions and causes outages, we strive to be ready to respond. Without a doubt, we have many opportunities to practice and refine our outage restoration program," Blevins said. Storm restoration information, including an interactive outage viewer, is available online at <http://www.dom.com/storm-center/index.jsp>. *(Note to editors: A video of Blevins describing Dominion's storm response organization in the operations center is featured below and is available online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5sesdsPdec>. B-roll is also available.)*

Within Dominion's 30,000-square-mile service area are more than 800,000 utility poles, 500,000 transformers and 62,000 miles of distribution and transmission lines. This area is affected by anywhere from 250 to 500 thunderstorms and more than 200,000 lightning strikes in a typical year. Moderate hurricanes that cause up to 200,000 power outages occur about every two years, while major hurricanes affecting 800,000 or more customers take place every four to six years.

"We encourage our customers to be prepared and keep themselves safe during significant weather events, just as our crews are ready to work safely in restoring power," Blevins said. "It's best for both our company and customers to understand the severe challenges summer thunderstorms and hurricanes can present."

Dominion reminds its customers to call toll free **1-866-DOM-HELP (1-866-366-4357)** to report outages, downed power lines and trees or other objects near downed lines. The company's outage reporting system, which consists of call-center representatives and an automated voice response unit, can handle up to 100,000 calls an hour. Using the voice-response unit is the quickest way to report outages and downed power lines.

In-house weather forecasters in Dominion's Weather Center in its Richmond office constantly monitors all approaching weather systems to enable the company to prepare for potential operational problems before inclement weather strikes.

The company asks its customers to pay attention to weather reports including those provided by the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#). If severe weather is expected, take these common-sense steps to prepare for possible outages:

### **Before the storm**

- Read the hurricane evacuation guidelines available at the Virginia Department of Transportation's Web site: [http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane\\_default.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane_default.asp)
- Develop an emergency plan that addresses any special medical needs you have. Information is available on the Virginia Department of Emergency Management's Web site at: <http://www.vaemergency.com/threats/hurricane/index.cfm>
- Establish an online account with Dominion at [www.dom.com](http://www.dom.com) so you can easily report your outage and obtain outage updates on-line without having to call in (keyword: **reporting outages**).
- If you don't have computer access or prefer to report by phone, be sure to update your account with the phone number you plan to use when reporting your outage. This simple step will ensure immediate access of your account for faster reporting without having to speak to someone. Phone numbers can be updated on-line or by calling our special phone number update line - 1-800-222-0401.
- Make sure you have a battery-operated radio, multiple flashlights, and a battery-operated clock and fan, along with extra batteries.
- Have at least three gallons of fresh water per person on hand. This is especially important for those who rely on well water.
- Have a good supply of canned and other non-refrigerated foods available.
- If you have pets, make sure you have provided for them as well.

### **During the storm, if electricity is interrupted**

- Turn off major appliances such as heat pumps, water heaters and stoves. Unplug other appliances such as TVs, stereos, microwaves and computers. This will prevent damage to appliances and possible overloads to the company's system when power is restored.
- Leave one lamp or light on so you will be able to recognize when power is restored.
- Post a list of contents on your freezer to minimize the number of times you open it.
- Frozen food can last up to three days. It is safe to eat if it still has ice crystals at the center.
- If using portable or camp-type stoves or lanterns for cooking and lighting, ensure that the area is adequately ventilated.

### **After the storm**

- Listen to your local radio station on your car or battery-powered radio for regular news and weather updates. Don't rely on your neighbors to report your outage. Call Dominion at 1-866-DOM-HELP.
- Stay away from fallen wires, flooded areas and debris. ***Treat all fallen wires as though they are energized.***
- Follow safe operating procedures for generators. Never operate one inside your home or in an enclosed space, such as a garage.

- Do not hook portable generators directly to the electrical system of your home. Electricity could flow backwards onto our power lines and endanger repair crews. Either have a qualified electrician perform the work or plug directly into the generator with the proper-sized extension cords.
- Exhaust fumes contain carbon monoxide and can be deadly, so run your generator outside with proper ventilation. Store the fuel for your generator safely.
- Visually inspect the area around your electricity meter. If you detect or suspect any damage, call us at 1-866-DOM-HELP.

**Some useful links for the public and media during the summer storm season are:**

- Dominion Virginia Power Storm Center: <http://www.dom.com/storm-center/index.jsp>
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management: <http://www.vaemergency.com/index.cfm>
- Federal Department of Homeland Security: <http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>
- National Weather Service: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>

Dominion is one of the nation's largest producers and transporters of energy, with a portfolio of more than 27,500 megawatts of generation. Dominion operates the nation's largest natural gas storage system and serves retail energy customers in 12 states. For more information about Dominion, visit the company's Web site at [www.dom.com](http://www.dom.com).

***Follow us on Twitter at:*** <http://www.twitter.com/DomVAPower>

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