



Public Utility Commission of Texas

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PUC and ERCOT Provide Update on Winter Preparations and Expectations

Taking critical steps to more aggressively manage the grid

Austin, TX – In a joint press conference today, Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Chairman Peter Lake and Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) Interim President and CEO Brad Jones provided an update on the grid operations and the significant actions their organizations are taking to improve grid reliability this winter.

“The PUC is working at light speed to enhance our grid and ensure reliability for this winter,” said Chairman Lake. “As a result of the combination of these efforts, the ERCOT grid today is stronger than ever.”

Chairman Lake and Interim President Jones detailed the ongoing reforms and aggressive actions underway to ensure a stronger and safer grid, including:

- ERCOT will continue policies put in place this summer that operate the grid in a conservative manner with an abundance of power reserves.
- ERCOT’s Emergency Response System that allows large electric consumer to curtail their usage under direction from ERCOT can now be used before the grid encounters emergency conditions.
- To protect consumers, the PUC has reduced the cap on high prices that can be charged when supply is tightest, lowering the cap from \$9,000 per megawatt/hour (MwH) to \$5,000 per MwH.
- Along with the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC), the PUC has adopted a rule to designate natural gas facilities that are critical to the operation of the electric grid.
- PUC rules required the weatherization of power plants in Texas by December 1. This will be verified by ERCOT inspections of power plants.
- Penalties for violating weatherization rules have increased to \$1,000,000 per day per violation. PUC enforcement staff are already seeking penalties against 8 companies for failure to file reports. [See the prior press release.](#)

The PUC will continue to improve reliability going forward, working on significant changes to the wholesale electricity market to provide for a reliable mix of generation resources into the future. The PUC also continues working with the RRRC to map the supply chain between natural gas and electricity. The Texas Energy Reliability Council, led by the Texas Division of Emergency Management, is enhancing communication and planning between the state agencies, the electric industry and natural gas industry.

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About the Public Utility Commission

Our mission is to serve Texans by regulating the state’s electric, telecommunication, and water and sewer utilities, implementing respective legislation, and offering customer assistance in resolving consumer complaints. Since its founding in 1975, the Commission has a long and proud history of service to Texas, protecting customers, fostering competition, and promoting high quality infrastructure. To learn more, please visit <http://www.puc.texas.gov>.