

When will power be restored in Polk?

<https://www.newschief.com/story/weather/hurricane/2024/10/11/lakeland-electric-says-it-could-be-7-days-duke-outages-grow-in-polk/75625587007/>

Ledger staff

10/11/24

(This story was updated to include new information.)

A full day after Hurricane Milton knocked out power to 44% of Polk County customers, most electric utilities said they were in assessment mode and the numbers of customers reporting outages grew all day Thursday. The tally could still rise on Friday even as restoration efforts continue.

But even on Thursday, the utilities were reporting progress in restoring power and the process is expected to accelerate over the next few days.

Bartow reports 3,900 electric outages

"Our crews and mutual aid help are working around the clock to restore service," the City of Bartow website said on Friday morning.

"At this point, fewer than 3900 customers are without power," the city said. "Additional linemen from Texas and Alabama just arrived and will be assisting in the effort.

"While the root causes of the outages are varied and require different approaches, the goal is to have all power restored by the end of the weekend. Obviously, this has been a herculean task, and we appreciate the patience of our residents.

Bartow residents can report downed power lines to 863-534-0134.

Residential trash pickup for Thursday in Bartow has been moved to Saturday, the city said. As of Friday, residential pickup will return to normal days.

"Please separate loose debris from yard waste in bags and keep bulk trash or furniture in separate piles," the city's website said..

Thursday commercial pickup will occur on Friday and Friday's commercial pick-up will move to Saturday.

For questions, contact the Bartow Solid Waste Department at 863-534-0181 or email solidwaste@cityofbartow.net.

TECO reports thousands of power outages in Polk

According to the TECO utility website, there are 533,148 customers remaining without power from Tampa to Polk County along Milton's path as of 10 a.m. Friday.

"Due to the extensive storm damage and debris, we anticipate that restoration may take days, if not weeks in some of the hardest-hit areas," TECO's website said. "As we complete damage

assessment, we will be able to provide a timeframe in which we expect to restore power to the majority of customers who can safely receive it.”

While the most customers without power appear to be closer to the Tampa Bay area, there are still more than 10,000 of TECO customers in Polk County, mainly in the Winter Haven, Polk City and Mulberry areas, who reported outages, [the utility’s map shows](#).

Duke Energy outages remain at 850,000

While damage assessment is ongoing, Duke Energy Florida is now beginning power restoration in many areas impacted by Hurricane Milton and will issue estimated times of restoration for all customers by Friday afternoon, the utility said in a Friday morning press release.

As of 9 a.m. nearly 350,000 outages have been restored, and more than 850,000 outages still exist throughout the company’s service territory, Duke Energy said. In Polk County, the [company’s outage map](#) showed 64,000 without power Friday morning.

“From downed trees and branches falling on our power lines to storm surge flooding our equipment – which causes almost immediate corrosion – our infrastructure was severely damaged by Hurricane Milton,” said Todd Fountain, Duke Energy Florida storm director.

“We’re making repairs where we can, but we anticipate we will need to rebuild in many areas,” he said. “Despite that, our crews are doing all they can, even working through the night, to get the lights back on for as many customers as possible as quickly as possible.”

Duke Energy Florida has 16,000 resources supporting power restoration.

Lakeland Electric restore half of its customer power outages

“Due to the extensive wind and flood damage, we estimate that power restoration will take at least 7 days, the Lakeland Electric website said.

“Hurricane Milton heavily impacted our community,” the utility said. “Some parts of our system are severely affected by flooding, which may cause delays in our restoration efforts. We will provide more information on restoration timeframes as they become available.”

Lakeland Electric said it had nearly 500 field personnel working tirelessly to restore power. “So far, we have restored more than 50% of outages from Hurricane Milton,” the municipal utility said.

“We started with nearly 90,000 customers without power and at the end of yesterday (Thursday), we had 39,000 customers remaining without power,” said Cathryn Lacy, the utility’s marketing manager.

At 9:50 a.m., [Lakeland Electric’s power outage map](#) showed 36,426 of the utility’s 138,664 customers were without power. On Thursday morning, immediately after the storm, more than 86,000 were without power.

“This achievement was partly due to pre-staging mutual aid line workers, tree crews, and damage assessors to immediately assist our employees in restoring power after the storm,” Lacy said.