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For Immediate Release

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BEMC continues preparations for hurricane season, runs tabletop exercise

SUPPLY, N.C. (June 14, 2022) — This afternoon, Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation (BEMC) completed its annual hurricane tabletop exercise to simulate its response to severe weather. During the exercise, employees reviewed and discussed the actions they would take during a hurricane, testing their emergency plan. The tabletop exercise was used to clarify roles and responsibilities, and to gauge the effectiveness of BEMC’s severe weather preparedness.

“As the season starts, we conduct hurricane exercises and drills to ensure an organized and methodical response,” said Josh Winslow, CEO of BEMC. “Preparation is key to our operations running smoothly, especially in a tumultuous situation. We don’t want anything to catch us off guard. That’s why our tabletop exercise is so important. It gives our entire team visibility in the planning process and allows us to analyze all possible scenarios. – it ensures that we’ve got all our bases covered.”

For the 2022 hurricane season, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is forecasting 14-21 named storms, including 6-10 hurricanes and 3-6 major hurricanes with sustained winds of at least 111 miles per hour.

“Our crews are ready,” continued Winslow. “Our linemen, right-of-way crews and support teams are prepared to take action when our members need power restored.”

In addition to its tabletop exercise, BEMC has a multi-year strategy to strengthen and improve its electric grid, making it more resistant to power outages from severe weather and more resilient for a faster recovery when storms strike. These efforts include upgrading poles and wires, relocating outage-prone lines underground, and managing vegetation near power lines.

“Hurricane preparation is a year-round activity,” said Winslow. “We have ongoing steps to make our grid more resilient and reliable, so that hurricane-related damage is likely to be less widespread or disruptive. We’re constantly monitoring and evaluating our system, and making upgrades to provide the best possible service to our membership. Also, our line crews are top notch. They practice and train throughout the year so they are proficient in operating our system. All of these practices help keep the number of outages and duration to a minimum.”



BRUNSWICK ELECTRIC
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BEMC is encouraging its members to make their own preparations now. Members are urged to discuss their emergency plans and update their supplies for potential situations like extended power outages, mandatory evacuations, and flooding. Information on the items for a disaster preparedness kit can be found by visiting www.bemc.org/storm-checklist.

In the event of a hurricane, members can follow BEMC on Facebook, for real-time updates on major outages and post-storm restoration progress.

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BEMC is a locally owned and operated not-for-profit corporation. It is the second largest electric cooperative in North Carolina and serves more than 100,000 meter locations in Brunswick, Columbus, and parts of Bladen and Robeson counties. Founded in 1939, BEMC has a longstanding commitment to the communities it serves, providing support for a wide variety of activities that contribute to the quality of life for all citizens.

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