



## Grid Improvements Reduced Prolonged Outages in Arkansas May Storm

November 15, 2021



*OG&E crews restored power to 27,000 customers in three days following severe weather and tornadoes in western Arkansas in May.*

**FORT SMITH (November 15, 2021)** - A recent report from OG&E indicates customers can expect fewer storm-related outages going forward.

Many Ft. Smith-area residents remember the severe storms on May 3 of this year, which included three EF-1 tornadoes – one of which carved a path through Van Buren, damaging homes, businesses and a government building. While the storm left 27,000 OG&E customers in the Fort Smith area without power, a new report shows recent proactive maintenance measures and electric grid improvements installed during the Grid Modernization Program saved an estimated additional 20,000 customers from sustained outages. Improvements to the grid include upgrading and installing new equipment on overhead and underground power lines to reduce outages caused by wildlife, severe weather or equipment failures, meaning fewer outages in good weather and bad.

"These results are exactly what we expected and wanted to see from strengthening the grid," said Andrea Dennis, OG&E Vice President of Transmission and Distribution Operations. "OG&E recently installed technology in the Ft. Smith area that senses and isolates disruptions on our system and reroutes power for as many customers as possible. During the May storms, automation technology isolated and restored power where possible, preventing several sections from undergoing circuitwide, sustained outages. Our report shows that these grid modernization investments reduced the power restoration process by an estimated 1 to 1.5 days."

In addition to the technology upgrades, since October 2020 OG&E has performed significant maintenance and repairs across the company's service area including:

- Trimmed or removed approximately 121,000 trees
- Replaced nearly 9,000 poles and 4,000 transformers
- Changed out more than 500 miles of overhead and underground power lines

"Overall, Arkansas customers are experiencing a 40% reduction in number of service interruptions and 33% decrease in outage duration as a result of our grid modernization work," continued Dennis. "These investments help us meet the needs of customers today and in the future, while allowing us to maintain the most affordable rates in the nation."

To view OG&E grid improvements in your area, visit [oge.com/GridEnhancement](https://oge.com/GridEnhancement).

### About OG&E

Oklahoma Gas and Electric Company, a subsidiary of OGE Energy Corp. (NYSE: OGE), is Oklahoma's largest electric utility. For more than a century, we have provided customers in Oklahoma and western Arkansas the safe, reliable electricity needed to power their businesses and homes at rates below the national average. Our employees are committed to generating and delivering electricity, protecting the environment and providing excellent service to our 871,000 customers. OG&E has 7,081 MW of electric generation capacity fueled by low-sulfur coal, natural gas, wind and solar. OG&E employees live, work and volunteer in the communities we serve. For more information about OG&E, visit our website at [oge.com](https://oge.com) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).