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WESTAR ENERGY CONTINUES RESTORATION EFFORTS

Ice storm damages hundreds of poles across the service territory.

WICHITA, Kan., March 28, 2009 — Crews continue restoration efforts in areas hardest hit by the recent winter storm. Weather and road conditions Saturday and the level of damage have caused Westar to refine its restoration estimate. The company expects to have most customers restored by late Monday night. Some customers may experience outages beyond Monday.

Westar has restored power to more than 60,000 customers since the storm began. Some of those customers may have experienced multiple outages. As of 8:25 p.m. Saturday, 12,692 customers were without power across the service territory with the majority of outages in the southwest region of Westar's territory, including Sedgwick, Butler, Cowley and Greenwood counties. Melting ice may cause additional outages initially but is expected to aid restoration of power overall.

Westar experienced considerable damage from this storm with between a half inch and one inch of ice accumulation. The ice and wind, as well as trees in the lines caused many of the outages. Damage includes 145 distribution and 140 transmission poles throughout the territory that need to be replaced.

Westar line crews from unaffected areas, as well as additional line and vegetation contractor crews were called in to assist with clearing lines and restoring power. Crews from western Kansas, Illinois and Missouri are being called in to assist with replacing damaged poles.

For safety reasons, crews will work until 11 p.m. and continue work again at 6 a.m. Some crews will be available during the overnight hours for emergencies.

Westar encourages customers to keep safety in mind while outdoors. In addition to reporting and avoiding downed power lines, people should also be aware of low-hanging power lines. The weight of the ice may cause lines to sag. If people see a downed power line or one sagging dangerously low, they should report it to Westar Energy or call 911. Also, stay out from under trees and power lines as melting ice chunks may fall causing injury.

If the meter box on a home or building is pulled away from the house, it will need to be repaired by a licensed electrician before power can be restored. This repair is the responsibility of the home or building owner.

The counties with more than 1,000 customers without power and the number of outages in that county include:

- Butler – 3,677
- Cowley – 1,991
- Greenwood – 3,186
- Sedgwick – 1,573

The current number of outages by county is available at www.WestarEnergy.com.

The most effective way to notify Westar Energy of a power outage is by calling 1-800-LIGHT-KS (1-800-544-4857). This automated phone line can receive up to 30,000 calls per hour making a busy signal or extended wait unlikely.

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Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest consolidated electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to more than 675,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has about 6,500 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates more than 33,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

For more information about Westar Energy, visit us on the Internet at <http://www.WestarEnergy.com>.