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## **WESTAR SENDS CREWS TO HELP AFTER FREAK SNOWSTORM**

### **Crews are headed to Massachusetts to assist in restoration.**

TOPEKA, Kan., Oct. 31, 2011 — Westar Energy received a call for assistance from Western Massachusetts Electric, a Northeast Utilities company, near Springfield, Mass. The Northeast was hit by a freak snow storm with some areas receiving more than 2 feet of snow. The storm left about 1.8 million customers without power and Westar Energy crews are being dispatched for a two-week deployment to help in the restoration efforts.

Crews are on the way to help Western Massachusetts Electric, a Northeast Utilities company, near Springfield Mass.

Westar has released 67 contract linemen, 25 tree trimming crews and is sending 77 Westar linemen, supervisors, safety and support personnel to assist with restoration efforts.

Westar Energy is a member of the Midwest Mutual Assistance Group. This group allows Westar to call upon neighboring utilities and their contractors for help to restore service in the event of a significant event, such as severe storm. In return, Westar will send line and tree crews to assist neighboring utilities when they are in need. In the event of catastrophic damage utilities reach out for assistance from across the nation.

Westar Energy, Inc. (NYSE: WR) is the largest electric utility in Kansas, providing electric service to about 687,000 customers in the state. Westar Energy has about 7,100 megawatts of electric generation capacity and operates and coordinates more than 35,000 miles of electric distribution and transmission lines.

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