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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Rocky Mount prepares for Hurricane Idalia

Rocky Mount, N.C. – The city of Rocky Mount is currently monitoring Hurricane Idalia and making preparations for the potential of inclement weather.

With the possibility of heavy rain and wind also comes the threat of power outages due to flying debris and fallen trees and limbs. Therefore, the city is closely monitoring the storm, performing system checks on critical transmission and distribution equipment and ensuring the availability of critical materials, such as fuel and other supplies. City crews also are preparing to respond any flooding that may occur.

City of Rocky Mount Energy Resources staff will continue to monitor the storm and make appropriate adjustments. Work is prioritized to ensure the largest number of customers are restored as quickly as possible. Customers may download a copy of the illustration, “How We Restore Power,” at <https://rockymountnc.gov/outages-emergencies> for information on our order of restoration.

IF YOU LOSE POWER

Before an outage occurs, it’s important to make sure the city has your most current telephone number on file so the outage can be accurately recorded. Please call (252) 467-4800 to update your number.

If you do lose power, first check your neighborhood. If you are the only one without power, check for tripped circuit breakers or blown fuses. If that’s not the problem, call (252) 467-4800 to report a power outage, downed power lines or any electric, gas, water or sewer emergencies.

The city uses an automated system to handle customer calls as efficiently as possible. Customers who get an automated response when calling are encouraged to use it, as it is designed to route their calls to the right destination. If you have specific information regarding damage to wires, transformers or poles, the city asks that you stay on the line to speak with a representative to provide that information.

If an extended power outage occurs, restoring power at once can cause an overload on the system, and power may be lost again. During a power outage, customers should disconnect any appliances or electronics plugged into a power source. Customers should leave one light on to detect when power is restored. This will let repair crews know what services have been restored. Customers are encouraged to gradually reconnect appliances once power has been restored.

Customers may check restoration progress on Facebook by following us at facebook.com/RockyMountEnergyResources. However, please DO NOT report outages through the city's social media pages. Customers who experience a power outage or any utility emergency should call (252) 467-4800. Dispatchers are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

DOWNED POWER LINES

Downed power lines may appear dead but should always be considered energized. **STAY AWAY FROM ALL DOWNED POWER LINES.** Do not approach or drive over a downed line. If a power line falls on a vehicle, passengers should stay in the vehicle until help arrives. If a limb has fallen on a line, do not attempt to remove it. Additionally, parents are urged to check for downed lines in areas where their children might play. Please call (252) 467-4800 to report a downed power line, or tree limbs that have fallen on a line, and the nearest cross street to the line.

WHEN YOU DRIVE PAST OUR WORKSITES OR VEHICLES

North Carolina's Move Over law protects emergency personnel and utility workers stopped on the side of the road restoring electrical service during an unplanned event. Please slow down and approach cautiously when utility crews are stopped on the shoulder of the roadway. Motorists are required to move over to another lane (on a multi-lane highway) or slow down (on a two-lane highway) when they can do so safely. Driving too fast can endanger employees and hamper their ability to perform important work. Employees use work area protection (i.e. traffic cones, utility work signs and flaggers) to allow them to do their jobs safely. Follow safe driving techniques to prevent fender-benders or more serious collisions that could delay our service technicians as they respond to customer calls or emergencies.

CUSTOMERS WITH LIFE-SUSTAINING EQUIPMENT

Individuals who rely on electricity to operate life-sustaining electronic equipment, such as a respirator or dialysis machine, should inform their rescue squads and fire departments of their needs in case of emergency. Customers with life-sustaining equipment should also have emergency back-up equipment on hand since immediate restoration cannot be guaranteed.

GENERAL SAFETY INFORMATION

- Customers should never use a generator indoors. Follow manufacturer's instructions to prevent accidents.
- Any indoor heaters, wood stoves or kerosene heaters should be properly ventilated to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- DO NOT use outdoor grills indoors.
- Keep emergency supplies on hand, such as batteries, flashlights, a battery-operated radio, an emergency generator, a first aid kit, a non-electric can opener, and extra blankets.
- Prepare an emergency kit that includes several days' supply of the following items:
 - Non-perishable food items that do not require cooking or refrigeration, such as bread, crackers, cereal, canned foods, and dried fruits. Remember to store baby food and formula if you have young children.
 - Water stored in clean containers or bottled water (5 gallons per person)
 - Medications and personal care supplies
- If you have pets, bring them indoors. If you cannot bring them inside, provide adequate shelter and make sure they have access to water.
- Know the signs of a natural gas leak: vegetation over or near a pipeline appears dead or discolored; persistent bubbles in streams, ponds, or wet areas; strong "rotten egg" smell; shrill blowing or hissing sound; dirt blowing up from a hole.
- If you detect a gas leak, DO NOT operate electrical switches or appliances, use a telephone or cell phone, smoke or strike a match, pull plugs from outlets, or use a flashlight or lighter. Leave the home immediately and call 911 or (252) 467-4800. Dispatchers are available 24/7.

About Rocky Mount

The city of Rocky Mount, located in the Coastal Plains of North Carolina, was incorporated in 1867 and lies in Edgecombe and Nash Counties. Rocky Mount is a two-time All-America City on the Tar River. The city was recognized as one of 10 winners nationwide of the 2020-21 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize. Serving as the Gateway to Eastern North Carolina, the city's 875 employees serve approximately 54,000 residents daily.

The city's mission is to advance community well-being, safety and quality of life by delivering excellent public services and actively collaborating with the community toward a fulfilling and inspired future for its citizens. As a publicly owned utility, the city of Rocky Mount is committed to safe, reliable service for its customers and operates in Nash and Edgecombe counties, providing customers with electricity, natural gas, water, wastewater (sewer), refuse, recycling and/or stormwater services. To learn more, visit www.rockymountnc.gov for news and updates.

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