



How are “planned outages” planned?

Ever wonder why Dawson PPD has planned outages and why they choose the dates and times? We thought we'd share some of the factors that are considered before the decision is made.

Can we safely work with the line energized? Sometimes linemen are able to make repairs to a line without turning off the power. Linemen are trained to do “hot work” and equipped the proper personal protective equipment. However, there are times that working a line with power running through it can pose too much risk to the workers. In other circumstances there is just no way to get the work done without having an outage.

How do you choose the date and time of the outage? Most of our planned outages will be during the week and during regular daytime working hours. If we need to work in a town we choose the date and time in an effort to disrupt as few people as possible – this may mean planning an outage on a weekend. For example, we prefer a date when school is not in session and at least some of the businesses are closed. During harvest, we try not to disrupt the hours the elevator will accept grain from farmers.

Another factor that is considered when choosing an outage time is the amount of daylight available. While the summer is suitable to some early morning outages, as the days grow shorter some of the work must wait until later in the morning when there is adequate light.

The time of year is also considered. During irrigation, Dawson PPD's electrical system is running at full capacity so we try to avoid scheduling large-scale outages. We also try to avoid the coldest times of the winter. With that said, there are times when repairs are necessary and delaying them may cause bigger problems. Each situation is considered carefully before the decision is made.

How long will the outage really last? The amount of time we plan for the outage depends on what work must be done. We try to ensure that we give ourselves enough time to complete the job and often we are finished early. However, there are times when the scheduled work does not go according to plan and the outage may last longer.

Once you choose the date and time, do you ever change your mind? Yes, but we try to stick to the original plan to avoid confusion. Some of our work may require that there is no precipitation. If the work planned depends on the weather, we try to let customers know it.

How do you notify people? Dawson PPD uses an automated calling system to contact customers who will be affected by the outage. The system works well for most customers and is cost effective. However, we need to have updated contact information in our computer system. If you change your phone number or disconnect your land line, please let us know your new number. You can call us at 308-324-2386. Many of our planned outages are announced on FaceBook as well. If an outage will affect a whole community, flyers are distributed and a press release is sent to the local media.