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FERC, NERC Release Final Report on Lessons from Winter Storm Elliott

FERC and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) today released the [final report](#) on Winter Storm Elliott, the Christmas 2022 storm that contributed to power outages for millions of electricity customers in the Eastern half of the country.

The 167-page report recommends completion of needed cold weather reliability standard revisions initially identified after 2021's Winter Storm Uri, and improvements to reliability for U.S. natural gas infrastructure. The report's release today comes two days before FERC convenes its Annual Reliability Technical Conference.

"The FERC and NERC teams analyzed what happened, what went wrong, and the steps utilities, grid operators and stakeholders must take to avoid this in the future," FERC Chairman Willie Phillips said. "I want everyone to take time during this Reliability Week to read this report and begin implementing these recommendations, particularly those addressing the interdependence of gas and electricity. The report highlights what I've called for before: Someone must have authority to establish and enforce gas reliability standards."

"Winter is upon us, and the energy sector needs to implement these recommendations as quickly as possible. As the report lays out, we narrowly dodged a crisis last year. Had the weather not warmed up on Christmas Day, it is highly likely that natural gas service would have been disrupted to New York City," said Jim Robb, NERC President and Chief Executive Officer. "I echo the Chairman's call for an authority to set and enforce winterization standards for the natural gas system upstream of power generation and local distribution. The unplanned loss of generation due to freezing and fuel issues was unprecedented, reflecting the extraordinary interconnectedness of the gas and electric systems and their combined vulnerability to extreme weather."

The report calls for robust monitoring of how the industry is implementing cold weather Reliability Standards. Also, NERC should obtain an independent technical review of the causes of cold-related mechanical and electrical generation outages to identify preventive measures.

The report also states that congressional and state legislation or regulation is needed to establish reliability rules for natural gas infrastructure to ensure cold weather reliability.

Finally, the report recommends the North American Energy Standards Board convene a meeting of gas and electric grid operators and gas distribution companies to identify any needed communications improvements and suggests an independent research group analyze whether additional gas infrastructure is needed to support grid reliability.



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News Release



FERC and NERC will host a webinar for industry at the end of November to discuss the recommendations in more depth. Details will be sent out closer to the event date.

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