Media Release
Capacity Supply Sufficient for Winter Demand; Prolonged Cold Weather, Fuel Availability among Reliability Risks

December 12, 2018

ATLANTA – NERC’s 2018/2019 Winter Reliability Assessment finds that system operators continue to focus on winter preparedness and that anticipated resources for the upcoming winter are sufficient to assure the reliability of the bulk power system across North America.

Adequate generation resources and transmission are in place in all assessment areas to keep reserve margins at or above NERC-recommended levels, the assessment finds. Additionally, winter preparedness programs continue to receive significant attention to minimize risks against cold weather-related issues.

“From a capacity perspective, there is more than enough generation supply in service for the upcoming winter,” said John Moura, director of Reliability Assessment. “However, energy supplies in some areas can be quickly depleted during prolonged and extreme cold weather conditions.”

The assessment recognizes the efforts of industry to closely monitor fuel and energy supplies and increase coordination with natural gas pipeline operators. In addition, the assessment identifies other key findings, including continued focus on market mechanisms to incentivize generator performance during cold weather events; strategies to improve fuel assurance; and gas constraints in southern California that have the potential to impact generators in extreme conditions.

NERC continues to work with industry on winter preparation through webinars, workshops, seasonal studies and operator checklists to share best practices and lessons learned from previous winter operations.

NERC’s role as the Electric Reliability Organization is to assure the reliability and security of the North American bulk power system. To that end, this assessment provides an evaluation of generation resource and transmission system adequacy during the winter peak demand and also identifies potential reliability issues.