



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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--- CRITICAL SITUATION UPDATE ---
ELECTRICAL POWER RESTORATION IS UNDERWAY IN MEXICO BEACH
Credentials will be required for access to City during restoration

MEXICO BEACH, FL - Just 11 days after Hurricane Michael devastated the City of Mexico Beach, the City has good news to share. Beginning today, Duke Energy will be working to restore electrical power availability to Mexico Beach. The City is welcoming hundreds of utility trucks and linemen to begin rebuilding the electrical infrastructure from the ground up.

"While many people predicted this process would take months or even years, thanks to our local and state leaders, as well as our private sector partners, we are making tremendous progress," said City Administrator Tanya Castro.

Duke Energy Florida State President Catherine Stempien said "Rebuilding Mexico Beach is a momentous task, but we're all in this together. Our rebuilding work includes installing new poles, transformers, main power lines and all the equipment we will need to provide power to our customers when they are ready for service."

City officials stressed that an undertaking like this requires that crews are not delayed by unnecessary or hazardous traffic or roadway obstacles.

"In order for hundreds of utility trucks to work in and around Mexico Beach, we need to strictly limit access to the city. This will allow Duke Energy to do its work without delay and prevent potentially dangerous situations for citizens or workers," City Administrator Castro said. "Fewer people and fewer cars means faster work," she said. "That's what all of us want."

Therefore, beginning Tuesday, October 23, 2018 Mexico Beach will implement a strict credential system to control the number and types of vehicles and people in Mexico Beach. The City will only be open to the following:

- **Residents, Property Owners and Property Management Companies:** You must have evidence of property ownership or residency (driver's licence, deed, utility bill, etc) to get your credentials. The City will provide you with a pass for your vehicle and a wristband that should be worn while in Mexico Beach. If you are already in the city, you can get a wristband and vehicle permit at City Hall beginning Tuesday, Oct. 23 in the afternoon.
- **Insurance Adjusters:** Insurance adjusters must have a copy of their state-issued license, evidence of the company they work for and the specific appointment they are going to. Insurance adjusters will be given a single day pass.
- **Debris haulers who are part of the team** contracted through the City of Mexico Beach: No other debris haulers will be credentialed or admitted. Credentials will be provided to the main contractor.
- **Credentialed volunteer teams** and charities who have been approved to be in Mexico Beach: Credentials will be provided by the Volunteer Coordinator.
- **Federal, state and local credentialed recovery officials:** You will need to show evidence of your credentials but you will not need a specific Mexico Beach credential.

Anyone other than those in these approved groups **WILL BE TURNED AWAY** at the checkpoints. To facilitate rapid restoration, **the entrance to Mexico Beach at Highway 98 and CR 386 checkpoint will only be accessible for Duke Energy and city-contracted debris haulers** at this time. We will be closely monitoring the traffic and access, and as soon as we feel it is safe to allow additional access, we will open it up.

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Q&A Regarding Credentials

HOW CAN I HELP?

If you can avoid being in the City or on the road during the next two weeks, please do so. Stay out of the way of utility trucks and off of the easements where they are working. Be patient with us and thank City and Duke Energy workers who

are tirelessly working to rebuild our Mexico Beach. By working together, we can speed recovery of our beloved community.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO GET ELECTRICAL POWER RESTORED?

Everyone is working as fast as they can to restore electrical power availability throughout Mexico Beach and we are much further ahead than most predictions. Depending on your particular situation and the extent of the damage at your home, the time will vary. Bringing power to neighborhoods will go much more quickly if we are able to keep non-essential people out of Mexico Beach and off of the roads. Mexico Beach and Duke Energy will be in constant contact throughout the process and the City will begin opening sections of the community to contractors and other necessary personnel just as soon as we possibly can. Please keep up with our City of Mexico Beach Facebook page for updates and announcements.

WHAT IF I HAVE AN URGENT NEED OR AN EXISTING APPOINTMENT FOR A CONTRACTOR?

Contractors for individual homeowners (tree services, roofing contractors, etc) will NOT be allowed into Mexico Beach beginning Tuesday, Oct. 23. If you feel there is an absolutely critical need for a contractor, such as a life or death situation, please come to City Hall and discuss the issue with city staff. We will work through those on a case by case basis. The property owner or resident is the only one who can make this appeal - not the contractor.

MY PROPERTY WAS DAMAGED. IS IT SAFE TO RESTORE POWER?

If your home or business sustained significant damage, it will be red-tagged by the City utility department. This indicates that the building is unable to receive power. Until power is restored, we ask that all residents turn off the breakers in their home or business. This is critical in preventing electrical fires.

Once the damaged electrical in your home or business is repaired, you must contact City Hall to schedule an inspection with the building department. You must be at your property during the inspection. If your meter is approved upon inspection, it will be green-tagged for power restoration.

Schedule your inspection in-person at Mexico Beach City Hall, located at 201 Paradise Path. Mexico Beach City Hall phones are not operational at this time.

MY PROPERTY WAS NOT DAMAGED. HOW QUICKLY CAN I GET POWER?

If your home or business did not sustain damage, it may have already been inspected and green-tagged by the City. Homes where the owner or occupant is not present will not be inspected. If your property did not sustain damage but received a red tag, you must contact City Hall to schedule an inspection. If your meter is approved upon inspection, it will be green-tagged for power restoration.

Schedule your inspection by going to City Hall, located at 201 Paradise Path, Mexico Beach.

DO I HAVE TO PAY AN INSPECTION FEE FOR THE CITY TO INSPECT?

No. The City will begin inspecting properties Monday, Oct. 22 and is waiving the regular inspection fee.

HOW CAN I MEET WITH DUKE ENERGY AND GET MY QUESTIONS ANSWERED?

Duke Energy has several customer service representatives available this week at the First Baptist Church for any questions regarding individual properties or businesses.