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Southwest Power Pool issues new energy emergency alert due to extreme cold

Little Rock, Ark. — Extreme cold weather has created energy deficiencies in the Southwest Power Pool's (SPP) region. SPP declared an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) Level 2 beginning at 7:22 am central time Monday, Feb. 15.

An EEA Level 2 requires SPP to direct its member companies to issue public conservation appeals. This EEA2 alert will remain in effect until further notice to mitigate the risk of more widespread and longer-lasting outages.

An EEA2 is the second of three EEA levels. An EEA3 would be triggered if SPP has to utilize operating reserves below the required minimum or ask our members to implement controlled service interruptions.

SPP declared a period of conservative operations for our entire balancing authority area at midnight central time on Feb. 9. Then, on Feb. 14, we declared an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) Level 1 effective at 5:00 am central time on Monday, Feb. 15.

The declaration of conservative operations signaled to SPP's member company utility operators that they should operate conservatively to mitigate the risk of worsening conditions. To bolster system reliability, SPP may require generating units to be available for upcoming operating days with notifications for commitment issued multiple days in advance. SPP took these steps in preparation for the extreme weather conditions already experienced and expected over the next couple of days.

An EEA1 signaled that SPP foresees or is experiencing conditions where all available resources are scheduled to meet firm load obligations and that we may be unable to sustain its required contingency reserves.

Operating conditions may continue to tighten over the next several days because of this widespread and extreme cold winter weather event, as well as an inadequate supply of natural gas required to power some gas powered electric generation units. SPP is coordinating closely with our members and market participants to respond to high electricity demand and ensure the power grid remains reliable.

Consumers in the SPP region should follow their local utilities' instructions regarding local outages and energy conservation. We thank the public for their cooperation during this power grid emergency.

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About SPP: Southwest Power Pool, Inc. is a regional transmission organization: a not-for-profit corporation mandated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to ensure reliable supplies of power, adequate transmission infrastructure and competitive wholesale electricity prices on behalf of its members. SPP manages the electric grid across 17 central and western U.S. states and provides energy services on a contract basis to customers in both the Eastern and Western Interconnections. The company's headquarters are in Little Rock, Arkansas. Learn more at SPP.org.

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