

By: Sherman, Sr.

H.B. No. 3213

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the winter weather emergency preparedness of facilities for providing electric service.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 86, Natural Resources Code, is amended by adding Section 86.044 to read as follows:

Sec. 86.044. WEATHER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS. The commission by rule shall require an operator of a gas well to implement measures to prepare the well to operate during a weather emergency.

SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 35, Utilities Code, is amended by adding Section 35.0021 to read as follows:

Sec. 35.0021. WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS. The commission by rule shall require each provider of generation in the ERCOT power region to:

(1) ensure that adequate maintenance and inspection of freeze protection elements is conducted on a timely and repetitive basis;

(2) inspect and maintain generating unit heat tracing equipment;

(3) inspect and maintain generating unit thermal insulation;

(4) make a plan to erect adequate windbreaks and enclosures, where needed;

1 (5) develop and annually conduct winter-specific and
2 plant-specific operator awareness and maintenance training;

3 (6) ensure that winterization supplies and equipment
4 are in place before the winter season;

5 (7) ensure that adequate staffing is in place for cold
6 weather events;

7 (8) take preventative action in anticipation of cold
8 weather events in a timely manner;

9 (9) install insulation and heated pipes as necessary;

10 (10) use crushers to break up frozen coal;

11 (11) ensure that equipment can withstand ambient
12 temperatures of -40 degrees Fahrenheit for at least two days; and

13 (12) heat any wind turbines and ensure that the
14 turbines can withstand temperatures of -22 degrees Fahrenheit for
15 at least two days.

16 SECTION 3. Subchapter D, Chapter 38, Utilities Code, is
17 amended by adding Section 38.074 to read as follows:

18 Sec. 38.074. WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS. The
19 commission by rule shall require each electric cooperative,
20 municipally owned utility, and transmission and distribution
21 utility providing transmission or distribution service in the ERCOT
22 power region to:

23 (1) ensure that transmission facilities are capable of
24 performing during cold weather conditions;

25 (2) ensure that communications responsibility is
26 placed on more than one system operator or on several key personnel
27 during an emergency;

1 (3) consider using persons who are not otherwise
2 responsible for emergency operations for communications during an
3 emergency or likely emergency;

4 (4) conduct critical load review for gas production
5 and transmission facilities and determine the level of protection
6 such facilities should be accorded in the event of system stress or
7 load shedding;

8 (5) train operators in proper load shedding procedures
9 and conduct periodic drills to maintain load shedding skills;

10 (6) install insulation and heated pipes as necessary;
11 and

12 (7) ensure that equipment can withstand ambient
13 temperatures of -40 degrees Fahrenheit for at least two days.

14 SECTION 4. Subchapter D, Chapter 39, Utilities Code, is
15 amended by adding Section 39.159 to read as follows:

16 Sec. 39.159. INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATION COMMUNICATION. An
17 independent organization certified under Section 39.151 for the
18 ERCOT power region shall:

19 (1) communicate with transmission and distribution
20 utilities, municipally owned utilities, and electric cooperatives
21 about deteriorating weather conditions in a timely manner; and

22 (2) provide transmission and distribution utilities,
23 municipally owned utilities, and electric cooperatives with access
24 to information about loads on the systems of the utilities and
25 cooperatives that could be curtailed by the organization to provide
26 operating reserves or as emergency interruptible load service.

27 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.