87R10808 JXC-D

By:  Bucy H.B. No. 4224

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 A, Chapter 35, Utilities Code, is amended by adding Section 35.0025 to read as follows:

Sec. 35.0025.  WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS. (a) The commission by rule shall establish best practices and procedures for providers of generation in the ERCOT power region for:

(1)  winterization, including supplies, equipment, personnel, and preventative action checklists for preparations for extreme weather events;

(2)  plant design for new plants and modifications to existing plants to ensure the plants can operate at the lowest recorded ambient temperature for the nearest municipality for which historical data is available;

(3)  maintenance and inspections, especially of freeze protection elements;

(4)  heat tracing;

(5)  thermal insulation;

(6)  the erection of adequate windbreaks and enclosures;

(7)  annual winter-specific and plant-specific operator awareness and maintenance training;

(8)  prioritizing winter preparation each fall;

(9)  establishing personnel accountability and audit procedures; and

(10)  updating facility procedures at least annually as needed.

(b)  The commission by rule shall require each provider of generation in the ERCOT power region to:

(1)  prepare, submit to the commission, and update as necessary a plan for:

(A)  using the best practices and procedures to provide adequate electric generation service during a winter weather emergency;

(B)  conducting regular preventative maintenance for freeze protection elements;

(C)  inspecting freeze protection elements before and during the winter;

(D)  testing and evaluating freeze protection elements after winter to identify potential improvements, required maintenance, and any necessary component replacement; and

(E)  making any needed repairs or improvements before the next winter; and

(2)  implement the plan submitted under Subdivision (1).

(c)  The commission shall regularly inspect facilities of providers of generation for compliance with rules adopted under this section.

SECTION 2.  Subchapter D, Chapter 38, Utilities Code, is amended by adding Section 38.074 to read as follows:

Sec. 38.074.  WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS. (a) The commission by rule shall establish best practices and procedures for electric cooperatives, municipally owned utilities, and transmission and distribution utilities providing transmission or distribution service in the ERCOT power region for:

(1)  winterization, including supplies, equipment, personnel, and preventative action checklists for preparations for extreme weather events;

(2)  maintenance and inspections, especially of freeze protection elements;

(3)  heat tracing;

(4)  thermal insulation;

(5)  the erection of adequate windbreaks and enclosures;

(6)  annual winter-specific operator awareness and maintenance training;

(7)  prioritizing winter preparation each fall;

(8)  establishing personnel accountability and audit procedures; and

(9)  updating facility procedures at least annually as needed.

(b)  The commission by rule shall require each electric cooperative, municipally owned utility, and transmission and distribution utility providing transmission or distribution service in the ERCOT power region to:

(1)  prepare, submit to the commission, and update as necessary a plan for:

(A)  using the best practices and procedures to maintain service quality and reliability during a winter weather emergency;

(B)  conducting regular preventative maintenance for freeze protection elements;

(C)  inspecting freeze protection elements before and during the winter;

(D)  testing and evaluating freeze protection elements after winter to identify potential improvements, required maintenance, and any necessary component replacement; and

(E)  making any needed repairs or improvements before the next winter; and

(2)  implement the plan submitted under Subdivision (1).

(c)  The commission shall regularly inspect facilities of electric cooperatives, municipally owned utilities, and transmission and distribution utilities providing transmission or distribution service in the ERCOT power region for compliance with rules adopted under this section.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.