

## **“On the Scene at Sam Houston EC”**

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This has been an amazing experience for me. The hundreds of electric utility trucks just dominate the roads. I never knew there were this many contractors and other utility companies. They say the Sam Houston Electric Cooperative outside worker crew may grow to 3,000.

There are crews here from across the United States. I talked with a large contract crew from Nebraska. "We've never seen anything like this, where we come from there is maybe a tornado or an ice storm, but this hurricane stuff is in a class by itself," said one of the linemen.

On the member side of this, I got some shots in Cold Springs, a small rural town, where they were giving out ice and other necessary items. The line of cars waiting their turn stretched farther than I could see. There was National Guard and DPS to keep things orderly, but there was no tension. Folks were visiting like it was old home week.

I talked with a number of Sam Houston Electric Cooperative members today. One group was in a house in the woods where a big tree had crashed down on their roof. One of the contract crews cleared it for them. They were grown brothers and sisters who came to take care of "Mom and Dad." The lady said, "I guess it takes a hurricane to bring us all together."

That was a common theme. I noticed more folks walking around. Limited gas, no school, no power, no video games or TV, but we can visit each other.

The mayor of the Cold Spring tent city had a difficult day. All his tents did not get built, but the cooking tent did and the Florida cooks were expecting to feed 600 tonight. The crews will have to sleep in their trucks or on the ground, but at least it will be with a full stomach.

There were very few places where the lights came on. The crews began work all over, but there is so much damage that even getting the main feeder lines energized is painfully slow.

These folks know what they are doing, both with power restoration and communications. Having me here has freed them to get the emergency operation centers updated (they have ten to deal with), radio stations, their own web site and the ten thousand other things.

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