



## Office of the Mayor

P.O. Box 1089  
Athens, AL 35612  
Phone (256) 262-1399  
Email: hhollman@athensal.us

WILLIAM R. MARKS  
Mayor

HOLLY HOLLMAN  
Grant Coordinator/Communications Specialist

Jan. 5, 2022

### **Athens crews prepare for next round of weather**

Public Works and Athens Utilities crews that have been responding to weather-related issues since Saturday are preparing for another round of weather.

The National Weather Service has issued a winter weather advisory for our area for 4 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 6.

Public Works and Athens Utilities will have crews on standby. If needed, Public Works will sand city bridges and sand city streets in critical areas, such as around Athens-Limestone Hospital.

Electric Department Manager Blair Davis said his crews continue to work on the power transformer damaged by a lightning strike either during Saturday's severe weather or Sunday's winter storm. Bushings on the transformer, located at the Greenbrier Substation, were burned to a crisp and pieces shattered.

Davis said Athens Utilities utilizes devices such as shield wires, to redirect lightning strikes.

"Usually it hits the line and the devices direct it away from our equipment," Davis said. "But lightning is powerful, and a strike to equipment can happen."

Davis said much of the load carried by Greenbrier Substation has been moved to other sources to help keep it stabilized.

"We'll also have someone onsite during this weather event, and staff monitoring the system online to watch for any anomalies and to take action to address those," he said. "Our dispatchers worked throughout both storm events we just experienced, and we'll have dispatchers ready to work if this next round of weather causes issues."

The City of Athens offers several options to obtain updates on day-to-day news, weather issues and emergencies. Citizens can sign up for Nixle alerts that will send texts and emails. Go online at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) to sign up and follow "City of Athens and Utilities."

The Nixle alerts and other news are also shared on:  
City of Athens Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/AthensAlabama>  
City of Athens Twitter page at: @AthensAL

The City of Athens also sends updates to local news media including newspapers, TV and radio.

Contact information for various departments can be found on the City of Athens website at: [www.athensal.us](http://www.athensal.us).

Homeowners can also make preparations for severe weather. The Federal Emergency Management Agency advises homeowners to take preparations before an emergency or weather event occurs. For winter weather, FEMA advises people to have emergency supply kits in their homes and vehicles.

In the home install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups. Keep enough supplies for everyone in the household, including pets, such as non-perishable food, water and medication. Also have extra batteries, a battery-operated radio and flashlights.

*Athens is...Classic. Southern. Character.*

In the vehicle kit keep jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water and non-perishable snacks. Keep a full tank of gas.

Here is FEMA's "be prepared" list:

- Take an inventory now of the items you need that rely on electricity. Make backup plans, including relocation plans, if you have medical equipment or assistive technology devices that are dependent on power for life-sustaining purposes.
- Plan for batteries and other alternatives to meet your needs when the power goes out.
- Install battery-powered smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors in central locations on every floor of your home and outside of bedrooms. Electric detectors with battery backup are also acceptable.
- Keep mobile phones and any battery-powered devices charged, and make sure you have backup charging methods such as a car charger.
- Keep your car's gas tank full. If you use your car to charge devices, do not leave the car running in a garage, partly closed space, or near a home to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- During a power outage, only use flashlights for lighting. Avoid using candles, as they could be a fire hazard.
- Review your household power outage supplies. Ensure you have at least one flashlight with extra batteries per household member and a ready supply of nonperishable food and water.
- Turn off or disconnect appliances and other equipment to protect them from quick power surges. Whenever possible, use surge protectors.
- Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning. Generators, camp stoves, or charcoal grills should always be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows. Never use a gas stovetop or oven to heat your home. Follow manufacturer instructions.
- Do not use heat sources inside that are designed for outside use because they produce carbon monoxide and are not designed with ventilation. Maintain ventilation when using kerosene heaters to avoid build-up of toxic fumes, resulting in carbon monoxide poisoning. Refuel kerosene heaters outside and keep them at least three feet from flammable objects.
- Check on your neighbors. Older adults and young children are especially vulnerable to extreme temperatures.
- Keep perishable food cold to avoid illness. Keep a thermometer in your refrigerator and freezer to monitor the temperature. When in doubt, throw it out! Throw away any food that has been exposed to temperatures 40 degrees or higher for two hours or more, or that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.
- If the power is out for more than a day, discard any medication that should be refrigerated, unless the drug's label says otherwise.