



October 10, 2024

Via Electronic Mail

New Orleans City Council  
Room 1E09, City Hall  
1300 Perdido Street  
New Orleans, LA 70112

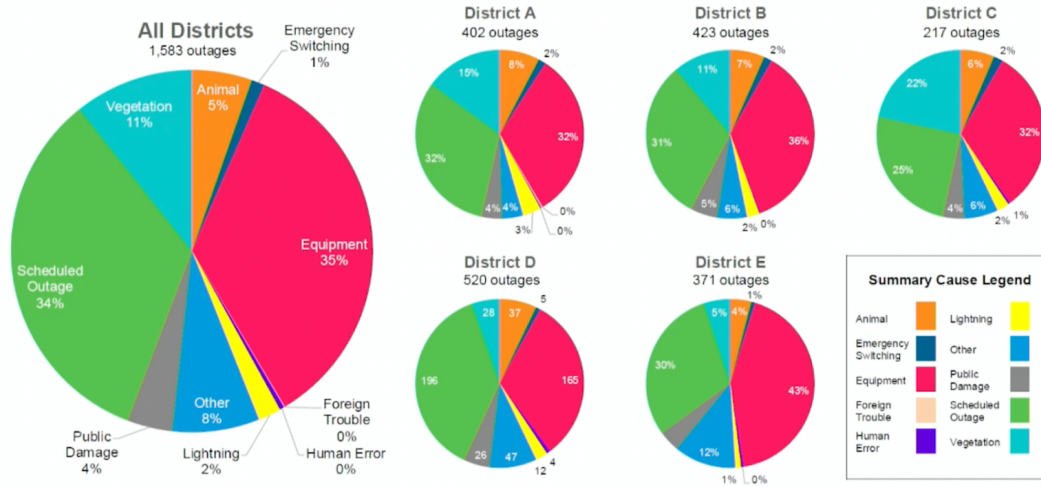
RE: RESPONSE OF ENTERGY NEW ORLEANS, LLC TO HURRICANE FRANCINE

Dear Council,

We, the undersigned members of the Energy Future New Orleans Coalition, are writing to you to express our concerns around Entergy New Orleans, LLC's response to Hurricane Francine. Despite two Council hearings – on September 16 and September 25 – ENO still has not provided an estimate of storm recovery costs from Francine. Storm recovery cost estimates produced within a few days after a major disaster are essential and common practice. Entergy's failure is inexcusable and suggests major flaws in how Entergy tracks and accounts for infrastructure. Ratepayers, who were just hit with both electric and gas rate increases under ENO's formula rate plan and who are paying historically high bills, cannot bear the costs of propping up ENO's decrepit infrastructure once again. Accurate and timely storm damage estimates are necessary to ensure that Entergy does not use storm damages to cover for poor system design and maintenance.

Despite the significant amount of time devoted to the discussion of tree trimming and vegetation management at each of the recent Council hearings, ENO's outage data indicates that vegetation has played a relatively minor role--causing about 11% of customer service interruptions this year. ENO's own equipment failures have accounted for more than a third--35%--of recent outages. In District E, the percentage of outages due to equipment failures was 43%. While the Council should consider the adoption of a Unified Tree Policy in accordance with the New Orleans Reforestation Plan, it is not clear that drastic changes to utility vegetation management policies are necessary. Rather, the high proportion of service interruptions attributed to ENO's equipment failures – including 35 failed feeders during Francine – and its history of using operations and maintenance dollars to pay shareholder dividends more reasonably indicate substandard maintenance of ENO's infrastructure.

## Number of YTD Outages by Summary Cause



This information is based on preliminary data and is subject to change during the outage-review process. The charts present data for feeders that serve each district (in whole or in part), so some included outages may not have affected customers in the reported district and some outages may be reported in multiple districts.



The Council should require ENO to immediately file a detailed report of storm recovery costs, as well as information regarding the number of vegetation-related outages during Hurricane Francine. The Council should also demand of Entergy more information regarding the replacement of faulty lightning arresters to ensure that ratepayers are not paying twice for the same equipment. Furthermore, the Council must look for ways to mitigate the ratepayer impact of yet another climate disaster.

As the Council begins to consider decisions on resilience and storm hardening spending, it must tie approval of any ratepayer-funded projects to: 1) clear resilience targets, 2) robust evaluation metrics, and 3) enforcement mechanisms to ensure that promised resilience benefits actually materialize. We cannot afford to continue the cycle that began almost 20 years ago after Hurricane Katrina--repeatedly giving ENO millions and millions of ratepayer dollars to rebuild the same inadequate grid. Our lives and livelihoods depend upon it.

Sincerely,

Rev. Gregory Manning  
 Pastor  
 Broadmoor Community Church

Katherine Prevost  
 President  
 Bunny Friend Neighborhood Association

Emory Hopkins  
Campaign Organizer  
Sierra Club

Peter Digre  
Secretary  
Greater New Orleans Interfaith  
Climate Coalition

Brent Newman  
Program Director - Mississippi River  
Water Initiative  
National Audubon Society

Martha Collins  
Executive Director  
Healthy Gulf

Jack Reno Sweeney  
Co-Chair  
New Orleans DSA

Jesse S. George  
New Orleans Policy Director  
Alliance for Affordable Energy