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THE COMMUNITY NEWS

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It was not really the amount of snow that fell, but the depth and duration of freeezing weather that made life difficult for Texans this week.

RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Winter storm plows through Texas

By Brandi Addison The Community News

A once-in-a-generation winter storm took over U.S. southern states late last week, leaving Texas with half a foot of snow, a failed power grid, a low water supply, and angry residents.

Millions of Texans have been forced to live in below-freezing homes for days, while others have stressed about unsafe water and The power had returned for others, earlier Tuesday, but was shut off again just hours later.

Even city facilities faced damages, she said, adding that one building has now been flooded by busted pipes. She suggested, when the storm has passed, that residents inspect their homes for long-term effects.

"If they can spot a problem early, it's going to be less of a problem," Kertok said.

Uri – a gut-punch from Mother Nature

By Randy Keck The Community News

Winter storm Uri brought disaster conditions all across Texas this week, leaving millions of Texans without power for days. As power began to be restored, water supplies were limited in numerous areas due to pipe breaks, frozen wells, and frozen pipes.

The storm caught the state unprepared in terms of electric supply, and The Community News reached out to industry people and government officials to gain an understanding of why the problem happened and how to fix it. "I think one of the things to keep and understand is the variables," said Darryl Schriver, president and CEO of Tri-County Electric Co-Op. "So let's talk about the act of God first. The act of God is that we woke up on Monday morning, and there was snow in Galveston, snowing out in Amarillo, snow in El Paso, and snow in Texarkana. How many times has that type of weather hit,



damages caused by burst pipes.

With a climbing death toll, hospitals around the states have reported an influx of patients experiencing hypothermia and hundreds of cases of, and even some deaths by, carbon monoxide poisoning, as residents become desperate for warmth.

More than one-third of Parker County was still without electricity on Wednesday evening -62hours after the Electric Reliability Council of Texas began issuing controlled blackouts in an effort to conserve electricity and prevent an uncontrolled blackout that would leave the state without electricity for up to a month.

Many of these residents had been without electricity throughout this entire duration; ERCOT could no longer rotate the blackouts, but only control them, as so many grids experienced unplanned outages.

Willow Park communications director Rose Kertok said early Tuesday afternoon about half the city had experienced long-term power outages, and some had not seen power for more than 30 hours at that point. The city's electricity is supplied by Oncor, which at one point, reported more than one-third of its Texas customers without electricity.

"I would like to give a huge shout out to our staff, particularly public works, who rose to the occasion and worked around the clock to keep city services running," Kertok said. "Some of them didn't even have water or power in their own homes but they got the job done."

Hudson Oaks residents experienced similar issues, stacking unsafe drinking water on top of the crisis. The city issued a boil water notice on Tuesday, as it became unsafe for residents to consume water due to power outages at the treatment plants.

At the time, it was home to the first and only warming center available for Parker County residents to visit for a warm night's sleep. As it closed, five new centers across the county opened, as city and county staffs worked their second 12- to 14-hour day this week.

The water issues continued into Wednesday evening, and residents *Turn to* **WATER**, page 3

RANDY KECK/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Playground equipment at McCall Elementary School looked like it was waiting for spring.

and has lasted for more than three or four days? And so that's number one.

"Number two, understand that in Texas, with oil production and *Turn to* **URI**, page 3

HERE'S TO THE LINEMEN

When power is affected after a storm, it is the linemen who work for the electric companies that restore it.

This past storm was no exception. There are two main companies that supply current to the local area — Oncor and Tri-County Electric Co-Op, which has a headquarters in Aledo.

FDIC

Darryl Schriver, the president and CEO of Tri-County, explained some of the unique issues the winter storm brought to the linemen.

"Remember that it's been in sub-zero weather," Schriver said. "This actually affects how long they can be in the cold, which is a big change for our linemen."

The extremely cold weather not only dries the skin, but can lead to dehydration, Schriver said. "As cold as you are, you really don't expect that you need water the way you do, but you do — almost worse than when it's extremely hot."

Other factors the linemen contended with were road conditions. "Especially when you get off the main roads, where a lot of our services are, the ability to move across the system is somewhat slower than what we're used to,

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William Barclay

William "Dr. Bill" Barclay, a long-time resident of Aledo, passed away early Sunday morning, February 7, 2021. He was 84.

Dr. Bill was born on December 20, 1936, in Duncan, Oklahoma to Ralph O. and Rachel Barclay. In his youth, he earned the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America, an accomplishment he was always proud of. Dr. Bill married Lana Stansell on June



5, 1960, and together, they had three children, Todd, Lance and Traci. Upon receiving his PhD from Oklahoma State University in electrical engineering, Dr. Bill worked his entire career for Lockeed Martin/ General Dynamics from 1967 until his retirement in 2003.

During his professional career, he traveled around the world while enjoying his passions for engineering and aviation. He worked on several airplane programs throughout his 36-years with Lockheed. He enjoyed numerous hobbies, including woodworking, outdoor activities, hunting, and running numerous half marathons. Additionally, he enjoyed watching old John Wayne movies and football, as well as listening to classical music. He adored his six grandchildren, who affectionately referred to him as GrandDad. Perhaps most of all, Dr. Bill will be remembered as a man of faith who cherished time spent with his family and was always willing to give advice and support.

Dr. Bill is survived by his wife, Lana, of 60 years; his children, Todd and wife, Ruth Barclay, Lance and wife, Michelle Barclay, and daughter, Traci Cottrell; and by his grandchildren, Kate, Kieffer, Emma, Paige, Riley, and Avery.

Dr. Bill was preceded in death by his parents and older sister.

A celebration of life was held on February 10, 2021, at The Well Church.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to The Well Church in Aledo.

> The Community News February 19, 2021

Dennis Conner

Obituaries

Ira Dennis Conner, 74, of Aledo, passed away peacefully at his home on Wednesday February 3, 2021.

Dennis was born to Lola and Leonard Conner on February 4, 1946, in San Antonio, Texas. He was the oldest of three children, always getting into mischief with his brother, Perry, and looking out for his little sister Julie.



Dennis Conner

On December 27, 1969, he married Mary Francis Briggs and together they had three children, Clinton, Cynthia, and Tiffany. Dennis joined the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War, serving at Marine Corps Air Station El Toro in California. After his honorable discharge in 1972, Dennis attended Texas A&M University, where he earned his degree in aerospace engineering. His nearly forty-year career in the aerospace industry included roles at Mitsubishi, Beechcraft, and twenty-six vears with Lockheed Martin (originally General Dynamics), where he worked on the F-16 and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

He was a founding member of the Parker County Cowboy Church in Aledo, a community which he cherished. Dennis considered himself a servant of God and always sought to serve Him in his words and actions. Dennis will be best remembered for his steadfast faith, humble spirit, and quiet wisdom, and for his deep love for his family.

Dennis is survived by his children, Clinton Conner (and wife Sheri Proppe), Cynthia Conner, and Tiffany Conner (and fiancé Delain Dinh), and by his sister Julie (and husband Jim).

Dennis was preceded in death by his wife of 50 years, Mary, his brother Perry, and his parents.

A memorial service celebrating his life will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, February 27, 2021 at the Parker County Cowboy Church, 5050 FM 5 in Aledo.

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could have been worse. "We were fortunate we did not

LINEMEN

have a lot of physical poles and cross arms break this time in this extreme cold weather, which enabled us to really concentrate on the smaller outages device problems that you have like fuses, transformer fuses, breakers, things like that on our

system. They do get affected by the cold or by load, but are somewhat, I would say, quicker to repair than if you have to go get another pole, dig that one up, put a new one in the ground, reframe it and put the line back on it."

Wesley Scheets, Tri-County's chief operating

officer, was once a lineman himself, so he has a grasp of how they can best be deployed.

Scheets told The Community News that the co-op's linemen were deployed in three shifts of 16 hours on and eight hours off.

The second shift began about four hours after the first shift, the the third shift began four hours after that.

"That way we can give our linemen an eight-hour break," Sheets said. "So the first guy to come on, they'll work 16 hours, we'll turn them loose and they'll get about eight hours of rest. That leaves me two shifts continuous work. And then by the time the second shift gets an eight-hour break our first shift comes back on - that way it keeps two shifts available pretty much 24-7. That way we can actually run all week long and he keep our guys as fresh as possible."

"Wes is really good at shifting us quick enough so that the linemen are not exhausted from attacking a storm, Schriver said. And he's

The co-op's linemen were deployed in three shifts of 16 hours on and eight hours off

already got them staged in there. So Wes had everyone moved and staged by Saturday, midday. And so we've been in storm mode, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, obviously today

(Wednesday), and will be in storm mode through Friday. So by doing that, we feel like we're probably as strong as we can be on a 24-7, through this entire period and not losing any ground.

"When that storm hits you, you hit it right back with your workers, your resources, and you attack it as soon as you can. That way your members or your consumers are able to get their power or their resources back."

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Brittany Stevens honored by Grand Lodge

Brittany Michelle Stevens, a 2019 graduate of Aledo High School, was honored to give greetings at the 185 Grand Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Texas in Waco on Thursday, Jan.14.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this was Brittany's first official duty in person as Grand Worthy Advisor of Texas of the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls. This non-profit youth organization is for girls from 7 - 20 years of age that teaches girls leadership, confidence, and citizenship with an emphasis in charity and service work to give back to their communities.

Brittany was installed as the Grand Worthy Advisor of Texas on July

11, 2020 during a virtual ceremony. She had her first in-person Honor Meeting at the Fort Worth Rainbow Assembly on Thursday, Jan. 7, and has several more in-person activities and honor meetings scheduled in the near future.

Brittany attends Abilene Christian University and is finishing her sophomore year. She has been accepted to the School of Education and is pursuing a degree in Elementary Education with a minor



in Special Education. She has also made the Dean's list in the College of Education and Human Services for the Spring 2020 semester and has been invited for membership in Phi Eta Sigma, a national honor society for freshman students. Due to current COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, the ceremony has been delayed to the Spring Semester 2021.

Brittany is the daughter of Tim and Tina Stevens.

URI

from page one

natural gas production, due to the geographic region of Texas and our location in the North American continent, it's very rare that the temperatures in our area, our state, across the state becomes so cold that it can freeze the natural gas pipelines at the wellhead. And there again, that's an anomaly that's created by an act of God. So those two things that were created, not by anybody, the governor, the legislature, Darryl Shriver, the CEO, anybody, but we, as a state took two punches, we got a punch with a cold front, arctic front, and it's a very long one, it had several hits at us before it dumped what it did. And then the second hit is it was so cold that it actually stopped the flow of natural gas in the State of Texas."

Schriver said sudden demand was a third factor:

"By all calculations of all utilities, no one had ever imagined everybody turning on their heat from Galveston to Amarilla, El Paso to Texarkana. If they turn their heaters on at the same time and you have all this industrial influx that we've suddenly had a demand of usage in a state that no one had ever dreamed of, that amount of usage is not abnormal, but super critically abnormal. No one foresaw that the extreme cold weather would actually limit the generators that are interconnected into ERCOT across the entire state."



The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) manages the flow of electric power in Texas. ERCOT is a non-profit corporation subject to oversight by the Texas Public Utility Commission (PUC) and the state legislature.

"Sometimes cold weather can cause the power plants in north Texas or west Texas to be out, but the ones in South Texas can run extra big or extra heavy, and pick up the slack, Schriver continued. "The fifth thing that you see is, and we all know this in the power industry, when the weather gets extremely cold, in one part of the state or another, most likely the wind turbines are not going to run. They're made of fiberglass and extreme cold will not allow those wind turbines to run. So, therefore, you will see the lack of generation from wind turbines. But there again, we have never experienced that if we lose the wind turbines in West Texas, it actually will be so cold in South Texas, that the South Texas nuclear plant would come

offline or not be able to produce the extra power. So the tables have been unbalanced. More importantly, by the way that Mother Nature has affected not only the state of Texas but the entire state all at once."

State Rep. Phil King's analysis was very close to Schriver's.

I think we're going to find that there were probably three main causes," King said:

"One, I think we're going to find a lot of our power plants' water intake systems froze up. The way you make electricity, the same way you made it 100 years ago, you heat up water, you turn it into steam, and use it to turn a turbine. And, and I think we're gonna find that a lot of the power plants did not have their water intake systems winterized as they should have. And those systems froze up and they couldn't get water in to heat up.

"The second thing I think you're going to find is a lot of our gas-fired plants had not done a good job of Turn to URI, page 4

WATER

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were asked to conserve, as frozen lines were only allowing for minimal water flow.

Also suffering from long-term power outages, Aledo residents

were issued a boil water notice, on Thursday morning, as the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality faced concerns with a loss of

water system pressure.

Mayor Kit Marshall, who serves as the emergency management officer for the county, said earlier in the week she does not expect there to be any long-term issues within the city infrastructure or facilities.

We are in unprecedented times in the history of the state of Texas," Marshall said.

City administrator Bill Funderburk said there was back-up problems in some of the sewer lines, and there had been several water breaks in houses, but the city did not face many other damages.

Next week, he said, the city staff will begin an internal discussion to evaluate the things that could have been different - and if there

were other ways city staff could have helped citizens.

"Looking at the overall picture, Aledo is in good shape right now," Funderburk said.

Check The Community News' Facebook page for updates or alerts for local residents.







Medical Oncologist and Hematologist

Dr. Riaz is excited to be in North Texas where he will be close to his family and looks forward to helping and providing its community members with exceptional care. Dr. Riaz and his wife Dr. Bismah Siddiqui are parents to one daughter and are thrilled to be starting their new chapter in life here. In his spare time, Dr. Riaz loves to travel with family and friends, enjoys music, and is also a huge soccer fan (Fan of Liverpool FC).



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URI from page three

ensuring that they had adequate natural gas provision. In other words, they have to have that natural gas to heat it to fuel the power plant to create the heat to turn the water into steam, right? And so I think we're going to find out that they did not make sure that they had either good contracts to provide that, or that they didn't have good guarantees that the companies they were buying natural gas from could get it to them. There's a compressor somewhere that's pushing that gas through the pipeline. I think we're going to find out a lot of those compressor stations that drive that push the pipelines that push the gas in the pipelines to the power plants froze up because they're not properly winterized, or they were electricity-driven. And when their electricity went out, they didn't have the power to push the natural gas to the power stations. So I think we're gonna find out that many of the gasfired plants just lost their fuel source."

responsibility lay with the plant operators.

"That's on them," King said. "It was their job to make sure that they had an adequate provision of fuel coming to them. Now, they buy it from different places, of course, but it's their job to make sure that it's coming from sources that can deliver in extreme weather.

"And then the third thing I think you'll find is that there was too much reliance on wind power of about 25,000 megawatts of wind in Texas. At one point, half of the turbines had frozen. Somebody should have anticipated that, that when propellers get iced up that are 180 feet up in the air in West Texas, that they're going to get iced up and they're going to freeze and the turbines will get iced up and frozen as well. And so, that went down."

King said at one point half of the electricity generation capacity in the state was down – about 45,000 megawatts.

While providers attempted to make sure critical facilities like hospitals, police stations, and other public safety facilities were supplied, Texas Health Resources was

King added that the without service for about a day and ran on diesel-powered generators.

> King and Oncor worked to get the power restored when THR was no longer able to obtain diesel.

> Likewise, Hudson Oaks' water system lost its service, and King helped get service restored to it.

"But right now, there's just not enough generators online in the state to provide the electricity to everyone. And there's no excuse for that. And it's very frustrating," King said.

ERCOT's Role

Many fingers around the state have been pointed at ERCOT, and Texas Governor Greg Abbott has said all members of the ERCOT board should resign.

"ERCOT is an independent grid policeman. Their sole function is to make sure that transmission lines are available so generation plants can run and power can be moved across the state so that utilities can use that power to serve their consumers," Schriver said. "And ERCOT, who is in charge of the grid, was not ever aware that the



grid would be impacted all at King said. "And its job is to when you walk in, it's a lot once the way it was."

"ERCOT is is the agency that is supposed to have oversight over all the electric power generation, transmission, and delivery in the state,"

manage the market on the of adjustments and monitors engineering end because the and activating power plants frequencies have to be bal- and meeting the demand anced. And it's a constant loads as it changes through process. If you go to their the day." facility, it looks like NASA,

Turn to URI, page 6





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Commentary

Capital Highlights

Snow, ice, single-digit temps blanket the state



Gary Borders gborders@ texaspress.com

Texans from Lubbock to Longview shivered under single-digit temperatures as their week began, with snow and ice creating dangerous road conditions throughout the state. Gov. Greg Abbott issued a disaster declaration for all 254 Texas counties and urged residents to stay alert to changing weather conditions. The Texas **Division of Emergency Management** deployed resources from various state agencies to prepare roadways, assist motorists, remove downed trees and perform search-and-rescue operations if necessary.

State officials with both the Electric Reliability Council of Texas and the Public Utility Commission asked residents to conserve as much power as possible due to the record demand for electricity caused by the record low temperatures.

"The lowest temperatures Texas has seen in decades necessitate a shared response across the state, from households to factories," said PUC chairman DeAnn Walker. "Along with the tools ERCOT uses to maintain the reliability of the grid, common-sense conservation also plays a critical role in our state's endurance of this challenge."

Take precautions when using space heaters

The harsh weather, which in much of the state could continue until the weekend, means more Texans are relying on space heaters. "But be cautious," said Orlando Hernandez, the state fire marshal. "In the past few years, several fatal Texas fires were started by space heaters."

Hernandez offered four tips for space heater safety:

 Inspect a heater before you use it. Make sure there are no cracked or broken plugs or loose connections.

• Plug space heaters directly into a wall outlet.

 Keep your space heater at least three feet from anything that can burn.

• Turn off your space heaters before you leave the room or go to bed. Look for models that shut off automatically when tipped over.

About 80% of home heating fire fatalities nationally involve space heaters, according to the National Fire Protection Association.

More than 1 million Texans fully vaccinated

The state passed the one million mark of Texans who have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. More than 2.8 million have received the first dose.

The state, as it did last week, is receiving more than 400,000 doses. The vaccine is being shipped from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to 302 providers in 158 counties. In addition, the federal government has shipped 80,000 doses across the state to 376 pharmacies, including CVS, H-E-B, Walmart and a group of independent pharmacies. Details of the allocations are available on the DSHS vaccine allocations page (https://tinyurl.com/1klvcfip).

The number of new cases of COVID-19 continues to drop, with 73,888 reported statewide last week, down more than 50% from the record high of nearly 159,000 recorded Jan. 10-16. However, weekly fatalities continue to hover just below 2,000, not far below the record high of 2,311 set the week of Jan. 17.

COVID-19 rental relief program unveiled

Renters hard hit by the pandemic with job losses now can seek

relief through the Texas Rent Relief Program, which was rolled out on Monday, Feb. 15. More than \$1 billion has been allocated to Texas through the latest COVID-19 federal stimulus bill to assist tenants in paying rent and utilities. It will be administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.

To qualify, households must be at or below 80% of the area median income. Preference will be given to households with income below 50% of the area median income, and households where one or more members have been unemployed for at least 90 days.

Applications can be submitted online at TexasRentRelief.com, or by calling 1-833-9TX-RENT (1-833-989-7368) from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Deadline nears for Texas Tuition Promise Fund

Texas parents have until the end of February to enroll their children in the state's prepaid college tuition fund. Enrollment for children under 1 year continues through July 31. The Texas Tuition Promise Fund allows parents to lock in current undergraduate tuition rates and fees at the state's public colleges and universities.

Earnings from money placed in the fund are tax free. The next enrollment period begins on Sept. 1. For more information, go to https:// www.texastuitionpromisefund. com/.

Texas ranked top exporting state for 19th straight year

Once again, the Lone Star State leads the nation in exports. Its \$279.3 billion in exports outpaced California and New York combined. The state also led the United States in tech exports for the eighth straight year.

"Texas' exporting prowess is a testament to our business-friendly climate, strong trade partnerships, and most of all, the millions of hardworking Texans in communities across our state," Gov. Abbott said in a press release.

Petroleum-related products dominated the top 10 list of exports, occupying six of those spots, according to the Census Bureau.

Gary Borders is a veteran award-winning Texas journalist. He published a number of community newspapers in Texas during a 30-year span, including in Longview, Fort Stockton, Nacogdoches and Cedar Park. Email: gborders@texaspress.com.





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"The sun did not shine. It was too wet to play. So we sat in the house. All that cold, cold, wet



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Special Female Sale, Sat. Feb. 27, noon, Hallettsville Livestock Commission Co., Hallettsville, TX. Available to buy & bid online: LiveAuctions.TV 2.0, Margo Paeltz (937) 515-1194. Kim Hagan: (361) 293-4720, Mark Hagan: (361) 293-8116, Mike Heller: (361) 293-4949. David Heller: (979) 743-0436

EVENTS

Southeast Texas Boat, Sport & RV Show. March 5-7 Ford Park, Beaumont, TX. See over 50 brands in 1 location! SETXBOATRVSHOW.COM.

Golden Triangle Home & Garden Show, March 5-6-7, Ford Park, Beaumont, TX. See a multitude of Home Improvement Professionals in 1 location! GoldenTriangleHomeAndGardenShow.com.

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THE COMMUNITY NEWS

URI from page four

King and Schriver both pointed to a similar circumstance in 2011.

"We had an incident like this where we lost about 8,000 megawatts of power," King said. "And the legislature convened some hearings and came back with basically a directive to ERCOT to ensure that proper winterization was conducted or was in place. And apparently, that did not happen, or it did not happen to the degree that it should have. And so ERCOT is the one that ultimately is responsible as well as the Public Utilities Commission.

"And maybe we'll find they didn't have the authority and enforcement power they needed. If that's the case, they should have been standing on the Capitol steps with a bullhorn, you know, bringing it to the legislature for the last 10 years that they did not have what they needed to make sure that the electric power industry could respond to this type of weather crisis."

Schriver pointed out that ERCOT's number one mission is to make sure the electric grid in Texas doesn't go down. "The fear is if the grid entirely comes down, it will take a long time for them to bring the grid back up. So safety features that all utilities have had in place since the 2003-4 era are called 'load shedding.'

"We have devices on all utility systems that say if the generators trip off while we're running, these devices will kick off part of your consumers. So the grid will not have more users than what generations are there. There's also a

0



safety feature beyond that called 'manual load shift.' So that when power plants, multiple power plants cannot produce the power and the usage is way up, ERCOT can call orders out to utilities - they start at the transmission level, like Oncor Transmission, Brazon Transmission, Centerpoint Transmission. And then from there, those transmission companies send the orders down to the distribution utilities like Tri-County to say this is your portion of the overall grid responsibility that we need you to load shed or move around."

Schriver said that on Wednesday, ERCOT's order to Tri-County Co-Op was to "shed" 134 megawatts.

"We have to go find 134 megawatts of power on our system and we have to turn it off. What we do so that we do not take one set of our members and leave them off entirely, we go find 134 megawatts and we turn them off. Then they go

find another group of our members that's 134 megawatts. We turn them off as well. But then we turn the previous 134 back on, and that's rolling blackouts or rolling outages that occur across our system. We've been doing that since ERCOT called those orders out to us on Monday morning (about 1:30 a.m.).

"Until ERCOT gives that order, we'll be in rolling blackouts."

Schriver declined to comment on the extended, days-long outages experienced by many Oncor customers in the area.

Where do we go from here?

Schriver said "there'll be a lot of blame and finger-pointing. But, from a safety standpoint, we're very, very fortunate we didn't lose the entire grid. We're pretty fortunate that those people that were able to have power or that were able to keep it on, the 911, the fire stations,

whatever else we had, we were fortunate that we didn't lose the entire grid because I think it would have been the darkest day in anybody's history that if we'd had this state completely blocked out say from Sunday or Monday on, what that would have done.

"I don't mean to undervalue the number of people who have had to sit without power since Sunday or Monday; I'm very sorry for them as well. But can you imagine if the safety protocols at ERCOT were not enacted, we would have probably lost the grid. There will always be room for improvements and adjustments, and what are we going to do when this much generation cannot produce. We noticed that several generation fleets are not running within even 50% of their capacity in ERCOT. Something's got to change there, we're relying on plants to be run. I think you're gonna see maintenance changes and how power plants are maintained; I think you're going to see standards that power plants have to exercise better maintenance so their pipes don't freeze. I think you're gonna see a concerted effort to say, 'what are we going to do to keep natural gas from ever freezing like that again?' So I think there'll be a lot of armchair quarterbacking going on when this is over with. And there probably be some pretty significant changes to all of us on how we operate on the grid going forward."

King said there would be hearings on the issue in the Texas legislature starting Thursday of next week.

"I suspect we're in for several weeks of hearings and we'll peel away all the layers of the onion and I think we'll find that ERCOT did not do its job," King said. And I think we'll find that the Public Utility Commission did not do its job. And I think we'll find that's probably what caused the shortages were those three things I mentioned, water intake systems freezing up, running out of fuel for the natural gas plants, and in this over-reliance on green energy wind generation, which you can control.

In the near term, King said the next couple of weeks would be devoted to getting all of the generating plants operational.

"Over the next few months, I think we'll be making sure that ERCOT and the Public Utility Commission has the authority they need to require the electric power industry to be fully prepared for catastrophic events. We've done a good job of being prepared for hurricanes and tornadoes and things like that. They have not done a good job of preparing for winter storms like this And this has happened twice in the last 10 years. It's not like there's a problem that people don't know how to solve. The problem has been that in Texas, we haven't given the attention that they have in Minnesota or Wisconsin where they deal with this every winter. Here, we're just going to have to get the Texas power grid and power plants up to those standards."

King, whose own power was off at the time of the interview, said he felt fortunate to have a generator.

"We're fine even if everything goes out completely," King said. "I worry about our homeless in our and our poor and our medically fragile – those are the people who are really hurting.



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<u>Sports</u> Too hot to handle

Lady Falcons' 3-point shooting scorches Aledo

By Micah McCartney

The postseason for the Aledo Ladycats came to an abrupt end in the 5A Region I bi-district round Thursday at Bridgeport High School.

After finishing in a three-way tie for second in District 5-5A, the Ladycats lost the coin flip and fell to the fourth seed, drawing a first-round matchup against the 6-5A champion Lake Dallas Lady Falcons.

Aledo trailed Lake Dallas by three after the first frame, 11-8. The Lady Falcons flew past the Lady Cats with a strong shooting performance behind the arc, nailing nine 3-pointers en route to a 64-35 win.

Aledo's season ended with an 8-16 record and 5-5 in league play.

"Our team fought really hard," Aledo coach Nikki Hyles said. "Lake Dallas is a really good team — they've got some size and really good shooters. We knew it was going to be an uphill battle coming into the game. I'm proud of my kids for executing to the best of their ability tonight. They never gave up, worked hard, fought and competed. That's all I could have asked for.

"They were just on fire with their 3-pointers," she continued. "I'd have to imagine their shooting percentage was over 50 percent from the outside. They've got several shooters, so it was hard to account for all of them. Obviously, we need to get in there and work on our man-to-man defense, find those shooters and extend."

Lake Dallas raced ahead with an 11-8 opening statement. Junior guard Mackenzie Buss started the game with six points in the first eight minutes. Junior guard Jorja Elliott added five.

Aledo's offense was braced in the first frame by sophomore forward Claire Byars' five points.

The Ladycats could not stop the Lady Falcons from deep. Lake Dallas sophomore guard Camryn Richardson caught fire on the team's 24-11 run with three 3-pointers and nine points.

At the intermission, Lake Dallas led



ON THE Spring Sports

FEBRUARY 23

Boys' Soccer - Covid Make-Up

JV Tennis at Grapevine Tournament, Away

Softball vs. Lakeridge, Away, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5 p.m.

JV Boys' Golf at Buzzy Open, Away, JV - 8 AM

FEBRUARY 24

JV Girls' Golf vs. Burleson HS Tournament, Away

FEBRUARY 25

Track & Field at 4 Teams JV & Var, Away

Softball at Var Mansfield Tournament, Home

FEBRUARY 26

Boys' Soccer vs. Azle, Home, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5:30 p.m.

Girls' Soccer vs. Azle, Away, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5:30 p.m.

Varsity Tennis at Grapevine Tournament, Away

Var Boys' Golf at Bearcat Brawl, Home, VAR - 8 AM

Var Girls' Golf at Burleson Tournament, Away, VAR - 8 AM

MARCH 2

Boys' Soccer - Covid Make-Up

Softball vs. Waxahachie, Away, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5 p.m.

MARCH 3

JV Tennis at Chisholm Tr Tournament, Away

MARCH 4

Track & Field at Brewer JV, Away

Softball vs. Var Coppell Tournament, Away

MARCH 5

Boys' Soccer vs. WF Rider, Home, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5:30 p.m.

Girls' Soccer vs. WF Rider, Home, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5:30 p.m.

Varsity Tennis at Chisholm Tr Tournament, Away

Var Girls' Golf at Lady Pirate

Aledo, 35-19.

Aledo junior guard Addyson Hebel attempted to keep her team in the contest with six points in the second quarter. Junior forward Kylie Anderson added nine.

Hebel led Aledo's offense with a teamhigh 13 points on the night.

Out of the break, Aledo's offense was stymied by the Lake Dallas defense. Hebel netted all of the Ladycats' six points in the third frame.

Lake Dallas continued its shooting success with four deep shots by Elliott (2), Richardson and junior guard Bailey Broughton. The Lady Falcons added an 18-6 push to increase their lead heading to the fourth, 53-25.

In the final frame, Lake Dallas closed the game with an 11-10 attack led by sophomore post Shadiamond Wilson's four points. Aledo's Byars led the Ladycats' closing statement with five points.

Byars helped Aledo's efforts with 10 points. Junior forward Kylie Anderson added five.

"It's been a daily battle and a grind all season long," Hyles said. "We've had kids quarantined during the season, and we actually had one that had to miss tonight.

"It's been a battle coming to practice every day, trying to stay healthy and do the right things, and wearing the masks and social distancing," she continued. "But I'm proud of everything these girls have fought through. They've done a great job this season."

 Aledo
 8
 11
 6
 10
 35

 Lake Dallas11
 24
 18
 11
 64

Addyson Hebel 13, Claire Byars 10, Kylie Anderson 5, Sophie Smith 3, Kandle Boggus 2, Presley Hull 2



MICAH MCCARTNEY/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Claire Byars goes to the basket in traffic against Lake Dallaas in the Ladycats' bi-district loss. Byars had 10 points in the game.



Reagan Davis drives around a Lake Dallas defender.

MICAH MCCARTNEY/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Tournament, Away, VAR - 8 AM

MARCH 6

Softball vs. JV Hillsboro Tournament, Away

Track & Field at Brewer Var, Away

MARCH 8

JV Girls' Golf at Burleson Centennial Tournament, Away, JV - 8 AM

MARCH 9

Boys' Soccer vs. Wichita Falls, Home, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5:30 p.m.

Girls' Soccer vs. Wichita Falls, Away, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5:30 p.m.

Softball vs. Brewer, Away, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5 p.m.

MARCH 10

JV Boys' Golf at Chick-Fil-A Tournament, Away, JV - 8 AM

Track & Field at Bearcat Relays JV, Home

MARCH 11

Varsity Tennis at Timbercreek Tournament, Away

Track & Field at Bearcat Var, Home

Softball at JV Brock Tournament, Away

MARCH 12

Boys' Soccer - Covid Make-Up

Softball vs. Granbury, Home, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5 p.m.

Var Girls' Golf at Burleson Tournament, Away, VAR - 8 AM

MARCH 16

Softball vs. Azle, Away, VAR - 7 p.m., JV - 5 p.m.

MARCH 22



THE COMMUNITY NEWS





Presley Hull

MICAH MCCARTNEY/THE COMMUNITY NEWS

Addyson Hebel

MICAH MCCARTNEY/THE COMMUNITY NEWS





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