



NORTH AMERICAN ELECTRIC RELIABILITY COUNCIL

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The Electric Utility Industry is Y2k Ready

Washington, D.C. (August 3) — If the transition to the year 2000 occurs tonight, the electric utility industry would operate reliably with the resources that are Y2k Ready now. That is the bottom line in the North American Electric Reliability Council's (NERC) final quarterly report to the U.S. Department of Energy on the industry's Y2k readiness.

"More than 99% of all the critical elements of the U.S. and Canadian electricity supply systems are ready for Y2k," said Michehl R. Gent, President of NERC. "If New Year's Day 2000 was tomorrow, we believe the lights would remain on in North America."

"North America's electric grids are in excellent shape for the transition to 2000," he said. Y2k remediation and testing are complete at all but a handful of facilities that have late-1999 scheduled maintenance outages or are awaiting delivery of hardware or software from vendors.

The report includes a list of 251 entities that meet NERC's Y2k Ready or Y2k Ready With Limited Exceptions criteria. Most of these organizations operate the high voltage transmission lines or provide electricity to the grids and submitted to NERC monthly reports of the progress of their Y2k remediation programs.

NERC's findings in this report mirror those published in its earlier reports: The Y2k errors found produce nuisance errors, such as incorrect date displays. Fewer than 3% of mission-critical components were found to have any Y2k-related problems. In most cases, Y2k was found not to affect functions related to keeping power generators and delivery facilities in service and electricity flowing to customers.

As part of contingency planning for Y2k, electric utilities will have extra personnel on hand over the holiday weekend to handle any unexpected events. The report has a discussion of contingency plans reviewed by NERC and the ten Regional Reliability Councils. These contingency plans provide further assurance that electric utilities will be able to operate reliably into the Year 2000.

Although this is the last comprehensive quarterly status report to DOE, NERC will continue to provide to DOE periodic status updates on remaining issues identified in the report and on operational preparedness activities of the electric power industry.

A copy of NERC's report, *Preparing the Electric Power Systems of North America for Transition to the year 2000: A Status Report and Work Plan, Second Quarter 1999*, is available from the NERC web site, <http://www.nerc.com/y2k>. This site also includes additional information on the electric industry's Y2k program.

NERC is a not-for-profit industry group that works with all segments of the electric industry as well as customers "to keep the lights on" throughout North America. It does this by setting reliability standards for interconnected electric transmission system operations.