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Vandalism to Transmission Lines Results in Countrywide Power Outages

Belize Electricity Limited (BEL) advises the general public that a series of vandalism acts to the Company's power lines recently, have resulted in numerous power outages countrywide.

While the duration of some outages has been as short as five minutes, in other cases, large areas have been without power for up to two hours. The most recent act of vandalism on the power line near Buena Visa in the Corozal District, could have resulted in a 12 to 24 hour power outage, which would have affected the entire country, had BEL not been notified of the damage by a concerned customer. However, BEL crews have been working tirelessly in the field to restore power and minimize the inconvenience these acts of vandalism are causing customers.

“Our main focus is always to provide customers with reliable electricity service,” said BEL's Corporate Communications Manager Dawn Sampson. “These ill-intentioned acts are disrupting service not only to our residential customers but also to critical service providers in the community such as hospitals and water services that depend on us for their operations. Given the difficult circumstances facing the country, we are especially concerned to maintain power for streetlights from a safety point of view and to the radio and television stations. Persons carrying out these acts should be aware of the severe impacts these outages can have on life support systems and the general well being of our customers.”

BEL also advises that the perpetrators of these criminal acts are putting their safety and that of the general public at risk by tampering with energized power lines. In addition, the resulting power outages carry cost implications, as damaged equipment needs to be replaced; efforts to provide the most economical power available are affected and crew time spent on emergency repairs is time lost for scheduled operations and capital works.

The Police Department is currently investigating all cases of vandalism to BEL's power lines. In the meantime, the Company thanks the general public for reporting these cases and encourages concerned persons to continue calling in these reports, by contacting the nearest Police Station or telephone BEL's toll free number at 0-800-BEL-CARE or 0-800-235-2273. A reward will be offered to any person who makes a report on the perpetrators of these acts, which leads to an arrest and conviction.

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