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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### **Washington Electric Cooperative Receives FEMA Funding For October 2017 Storm Repair and Approval for Hazard Mitigation Help**

*E. Montpelier, Vt:* The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is reimbursing Washington Electric Cooperative (WEC) nearly \$372,000 for repairs, emergency restoration and debris removal required by the electric co-op after the wind storm of October, 2017. FEMA's reimbursement represents 75% of WEC's restoration and repair costs needed to put the electric system back together after this intense storm swept through the Northeast.

The storm's high winds caused significant damage to WEC's rural infrastructure and it took a week to restore power to all members. Following the storm, the electric co-op's crews removed and replaced 22 broken poles and 259 spans of line conductors.

"WEC operates in a very rural and heavily forested part of Vermont. The tree damage in a storm like this wreaks havoc on our poles and lines," said General Manager Patty Richards. "But as a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we are eligible for help from the federal government. Thankfully these costs aren't borne solely by our member-owners."

WEC is eligible to receive federal reimbursement for disaster recovery from FEMA's Public Assistance program. WEC's service area includes three counties deemed disaster areas by presidential declaration following the storm.

WEC also was approved to receive financial help for Hazard Mitigation work. This project work will proactively reduce risk to people and property caused by future storms. According to FEMA, spending on these projects saves four dollars in future damage mitigation for each dollar invested. WEC's project involves placing 32 new poles on the electric co-op's three-phase distribution line through Duxbury and Fayston. Adding new poles shortens previously long distances between conductors, increasing reliability and reducing risk. WEC was approved for over \$140,000 for this project.

Washington Electric Co-op is a member-owned, not-for-profit electric utility founded in 1939. WEC serves approximately 10,800 member-owners in 41 towns throughout Washington, Orange, Caledonia and Orleans counties with power generated from 100 percent renewable sources. WEC is an equal opportunity

provider and employer. For more information please visit [washingtonelectric.coop](http://washingtonelectric.coop)  
or call 802-223-5245.

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