

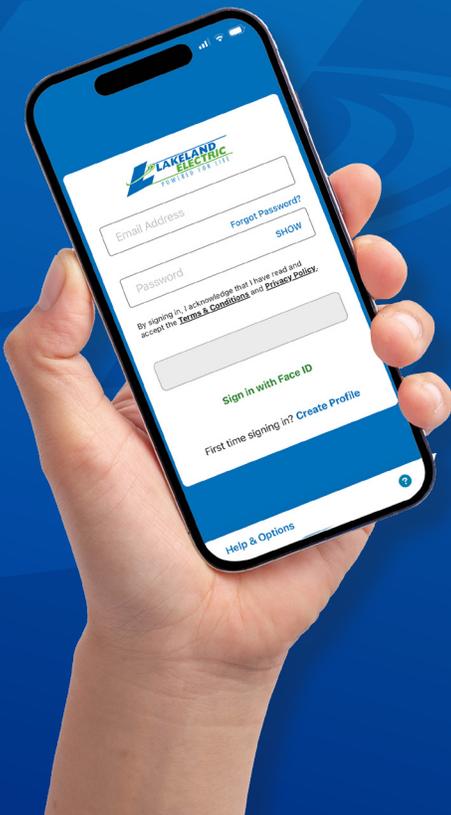
# HURRICANE GUIDE

2025

During storm season and throughout the year, Lakeland Electric is ready.

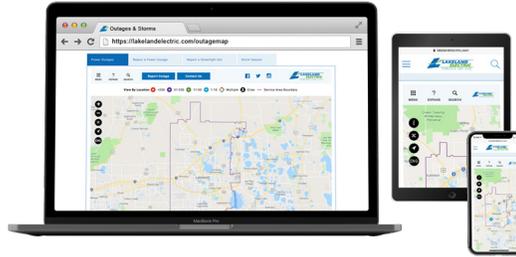


# DOWNLOAD THE LAKELAND ELECTRIC APP TODAY!



## INTERACTIVE OUTAGE MAP

Stay informed with our outage map. The map provides customers with detailed outage information, estimated time of restoration, crew status and live weather radar. **Scan the code** below for our outage map, or visit **LakelandElectric.com/outagemap**.



## OUTAGE NOTIFICATION ALERTS

Customers who list their mobile phone number will be notified by text, phone or email when power is out at their home. That way, even if you're not home, you know what's happening with **Outage Notification Alerts**, we'll send you outage status updates and let you know how long it will take to restore your power. \*Text **REG** to **21592** to register.

Change your preferences or opt-out of this service in your online account settings at **LakelandElectric.com/MyAccount**, or by calling **863-834-9535**.

## IF YOUR POWER GOES OUT

1. Turn off or disconnect an electric range or any other heating or cooking device you were using.
2. Do not store items on top of a heater, range, or other cooking devices.
3. Keep blinds and curtains closed to help reduce the interior heat of your home.
4. After your service is restored check your breaker panel or fuse box to ensure that individual breakers or fuses do not need to be reset.

\*Message and data rates may apply.



## REPORTING AN OUTAGE

**First, determine if the outage is a household problem by checking all circuit breakers and fuses.** You may be able to restore your own power by resetting the breakers or replacing the fuses.

**Our smart meter system lets us know the moment your home or business is out of power without you needing to call.** This helps us respond quickly to problems and get your power back on as quickly and safely as possible.

You can report outages on **Lakeland Electric's** automated system at **863-834-4248**, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. (Out-of-area, please call toll free at 1-866-834 4248.) Or **text OUT to 21592**.

**Most importantly:** Bypassing this system to speak to a representative **will not** make your restoration faster.

**Lakeland Electric's** automated telephone system can recognize your phone number when you call, matching it to your address to help us locate outages quickly.

Always remember, if there are downed power lines or potential hazards **call 911**.



**Q. Does Lakeland Electric ever disconnect power to facilities because of anticipated damage or flooding?**

**A.** Lakeland Electric does not de-energize facilities because of anticipated damage such as flooding or high winds. The protective, disconnect devices on all electrical equipment remain energized until adverse conditions cause them to shut off. The devices will not be switched on until they're inspected to ensure safe re-energizing.



**Q. What if I incur significant damage to my home or business that requires me to temporarily or permanently relocate?**

**A.** Contact **Lakeland Electric Customer Service** by calling **863-834-9535**. You can also update your information online at **[www.LakelandElectric.com/MyAccount](http://www.LakelandElectric.com/MyAccount)**.

## BEFORE HURRICANE SEASON

If your phone number has changed, call 863-834-9535 today - so we can better serve you when it matters most.

**Our outage notification system relies on the number we have on file.**

- Update your 7-Day Emergency Kit.
- Determine safe evacuation routes.
- Identify where the closest shelter is, especially if you require special medical or pet-friendly accommodations.
- Have a plan for essential medicine or medical equipment that require power, such as oxygen concentrator, CPAP machine, insulin, etc.
- If special medical attention is needed, call the Polk County Special Needs Program to pre-register at 863-298-7027.
- Review your insurance policy.
- Make sure your yard is tidy. For example, trim trees and shrubbery and clear clogged gutters.
- Identify your fuse box or electric panel and know how to shut it off in case you need to evacuate.





## 7-DAY EMERGENCY KIT

Plan to be self-sufficient for at least 7 days. Anticipate not having access to any utilities.

To ensure the comfort of your family, assemble the following items using this **7-Day Emergency Kit Checklist**:

- Battery-operated items (NOAA radio, flashlight, etc.) and extra batteries.
- Canned, non-perishable food, and can opener. Include specialty food if needed.
- Drinking water in non-breakable containers (one gallon per person per day).
- Fully charged cell phone, car charger, and/or back-up battery charger.
- First aid kit, prescription medicine, masks, and personal aids such as eyeglasses, hearing aids, etc.
- Identification, credit cards, extra cash, extra car keys, and valuable papers and policies in a waterproof container.
- Special items for infant, elderly, disabled, etc.
- One sleeping bag or blanket per person.
- A change of clothes and pair of shoes per person.



**Q. Will my service be turned off if I am unable to pay my utility bill due to the hurricane?**

**A.** If a hurricane approaches the service territory, the utility suspends cut-offs for the affected area. Cut-off and collection activity resume upon returning to normal business operations.

## **WATCH AREA VS. WARNING AREA**

A Watch Area means the potential exists for the development of severe weather. A Warning Area, however, indicates severe weather is imminent in your area or is already occurring. Tune in to Polk County's emergency broadcasting stations **WONN 1230 AM & 107.1 FM / WPCV 97.5 FM** to stay up to date on severe weather changes.

### **If you are under severe weather watch, take action and prepare!**

- Make sure family vehicles have been serviced and are fueled up.
- Have extra cash on hand.
- Make sure cell phones are charged.
- Bring light-weight yard objects, such as garbage cans or furniture, inside.
- If you have a boat, move it close to the house. If it is in the water, check the mooring lines.
- Put important documents in a water-tight container.
- Check battery operated radio, TV or NOAA weather radio.
- Prepare to cover all windows with plywood.
- Unplug major appliances.
- Fill your bathtub and other containers with water. It can be used for cleaning, washing dishes, or flushing the toilet.

### **If you are under a warning always be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice!**

- If you're evacuating, take important documents with you.
- If you evacuate, shut off electric, gas, and water at the main panel(s).
- Call the Citizens Information Line to make sure shelters are open at 863-401-2234 Local / 866-661-0228 Toll Free.
- Do not stay in a mobile or manufactured home.
- Notify family members that you have evacuated.

## **WHEN THE STORM HITS**

**When the storm hits, stay indoors and away from windows.**

**If the eye of the storm passes over your area, do not go outside during the calm - the calm from the eye of the storm is usually brief.**

## AFTER THE STORM PASSES

Severe storms can cause damage to limbs or entire trees. Broken limbs and fallen trees are a major cause of damage to power lines and utility poles. Restoring power to our customers will be our primary focus.

Please be patient as we evaluate and prioritize our workload.

- Do not attempt to trim any limbs near the power lines.
- Do not attempt to pull out debris from under or near fallen power lines.
- Do not assume a fallen power line has no electricity; fallen power lines can be deadly.

In a time of disaster, a fast recovery is our goal, but **safety is our first priority**. Even though **Lakeland Electric** is ahead of the curve when it comes to trimming trees near power lines, vegetation debris can travel longer distances during a storm with high winds and cause electric outages.

- If possible stay indoors; debris clean up can wait until crews are finished restoring power.
- Check for electrical damage inside your home, such as frayed wires, sparks, or the smell of burned insulation. If you find damage, do not turn the power on. Call a licensed electrician.
- Drive or walk as little as possible to avoid flooded areas and down power lines.
- Don't drink tap water until you receive the official word that it's safe. Always boil water used for cooking, drinking, etc. Use your emergency supply.
- Replenish your 7-Day Emergency Kit (batteries, water, non-perishable food, etc.)

Following a hurricane, it may take several days to restore services and clear roads. It may even take months to remove all debris from neighborhoods. We can't guarantee things will be fixed overnight, but we can guarantee we won't rest until they are.



SCAN FOR VIDEO



# PORTABLE GENERATOR SAFETY

Portable generators can be deadly to you and our crews!



NEVER



ALWAYS

- ✗ Operate a generator indoors, within an enclosed space. Generator engines emit deadly carbon monoxide fumes that are odorless and can kill.
- ✗ Feed power from a generator directly into your electrical system or any wall outlet. This type of connection can cause a dangerous electrical backfeed into Lakeland Electric's power distribution system that can cause **serious injury or death** to a Lakeland Electric employee!
- ✗ Operate a generator near combustible materials or expose it to water or rain.
- ✗ Leave excessive lengths of cord coiled while carrying current. **This can cause a fire!**
- ✗ Refuel a generator while it's running; allow it to cool before refueling.
- ✗ Store fuel indoors.
- ✗ Leave a running generator unattended.

- ✓ Keep children away from generator.
- ✓ Run a generator in an open, well ventilated area.
- ✓ Use good condition electrical cords, rated for the current required by your connected devices.
- ✓ Use an isolation device between your generator and Lakeland Electric's service conductor.
- ✓ Read and follow the generator owner's manual.
- ✓ Have a qualified, licensed electrician make any electrical wiring modifications.
- ✓ Call your local electrician if you have any questions.
- ✓ Perform proper generator maintenance.



**Q. What circumstances might prohibit Lakeland Electric from turning the power back on?**

**A.** Once winds reach 40 miles per hour, Lakeland Electric does not attempt to restore service when conditions endanger the safety of employees. After the storm passes, assessments are made and crews are deployed as soon as possible.

## TREE DEBRIS

Tree debris on your property is your responsibility. Our crews are responsible to clear limbs only as needed to repair the high voltage power lines.

To arrange for a bulk pick-up in the City of Lakeland jurisdiction, call Solid Waste Office **863-834-8773**. If your house is in Polk County jurisdiction, call Polk County Solid Waste **863-284-4319**.

- Crews will not be able to organize or remove the tree trimming debris from your property.
- Your solid waste provider may have specific requirements for debris disposal.
- Please do not stack or pile debris near utility poles or transformers.

If a tree poses a danger to your electric service entrance cable, it may be necessary to **temporarily** disconnect the service cable. There is no charge for this service. Disconnecting the service cable will provide a safety zone so a private tree service can proceed with the tree work. Consider hiring a qualified professional to trim or remove storm damaged trees near your house.

- Do not pay in advance for tree trimming or debris removal.
- Ask for proof of insurance and verify the coverage with the insurance company.
- Get more than one estimate.



**Q. What should you do when a traffic light is completely out?**

**A.** Any intersection with a traffic signal that is completely dark should be treated as a stop sign intersection. Yield to the driver on the right if you reach the intersection at the same time as another vehicle. Yield to any vehicle that reaches an intersection before you.



### Q. How long will I be without power?

A. We work aggressively to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. If necessary, we also bring in crews from other areas to assist. Even with all this, it is very difficult to guarantee or even estimate when your service will be restored because of variables like weather, equipment, etc.

## WATCH OUT FOR ENERGIZED LINES

**Always remember, power lines are deadly! Stay clear of them!**

Report down power lines to the automated system **863-834-4248**. It's impossible to tell if a power line or any other line is energized by just looking at it. Treat all lines as if they were energized. Never go near down power lines and always treat them as energized and extremely dangerous.

- If a down power line is arching and sparking, **call 911**.
- Do not touch or move any object in contact with or near a down power line.
- Do not trim trees or remove debris around a down power line.
- Do not step in water puddles, in case a down line is in the water. You could get electrocuted!





## IDENTIFYING DOWNED POWER LINES

During major storms and hurricanes, **Lakeland Electric** may have more downed power line locations than crews can immediately get to and repair.

For these locations, special warning tape will alert First Responders and the general public that there is a potential hazard and to stay away. As these locations are identified, and crews become available, they will perform whatever work is needed to make the location safe.



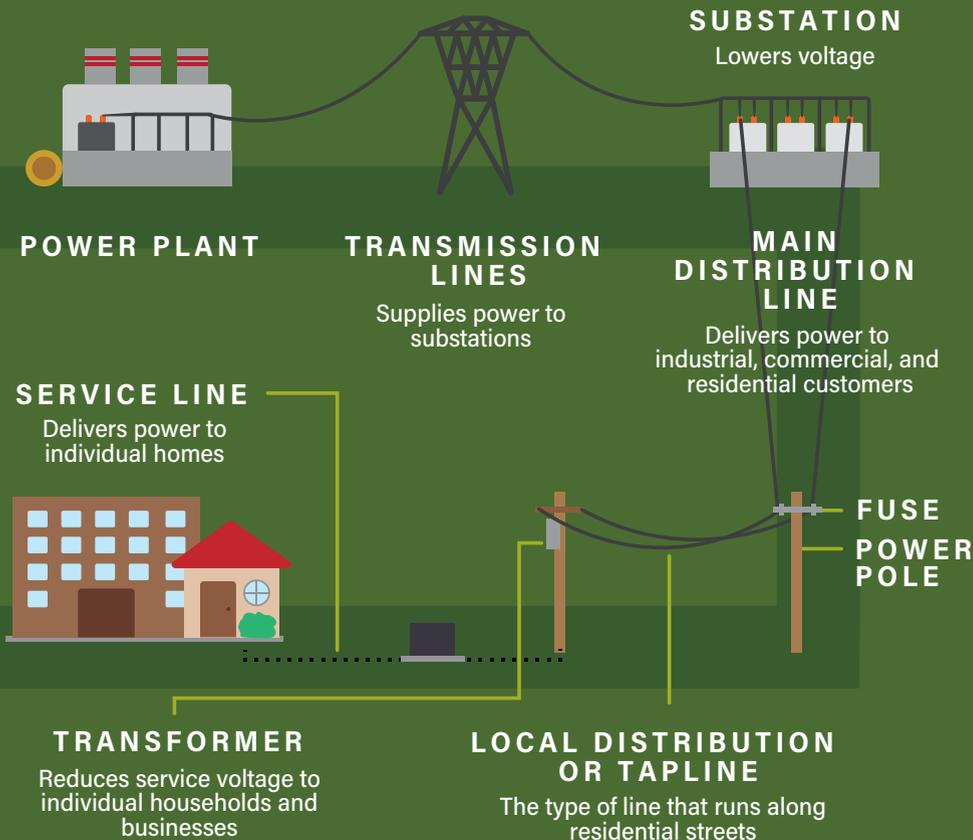
**Q. Why does my neighbor have power and I don't?**

**A.** Damage can affect main power lines, individual circuits, and or equipment. Your home could be on a different circuit or piece of equipment than your neighbor, causing you to be out of power and not your neighbor. It is also possible that your home needs internal electrical repairs before you can receive service.



SCAN FOR VIDEO

**Remember to always check your main breaker or fuse panel to see if you can reset the breaker or replace a fuse to restore power yourself.**



## RESTORATION PRIORITY

After we repair **Lakeland Electric's** facilities and the lines that carry electricity from them, we restore customers who provide essential services to the community, such as hospitals, police stations, and fire departments. Then, we repair damage that will return power to the greatest number of customers in the least amount of time. Finally, we restore small groups and individual customers.



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**Restoration depends on the weather, available crews, material, and extent of damage to the area.**

## HOW WE RESTORE POWER

This diagram illustrates the major components the electrical system uses to deliver electricity to **Lakeland Electric** homes and businesses.

**NOTE:** If you are having electrical issues after power has been restored, you should turn off the main breaker and call us. You could have damage to your equipment. **863-834-9535**

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REPAIRS

If your electrical components are damaged, you may be responsible for repairs. Identify your type of service connection below to learn **your** responsibilities, indicated in **blue** and **Lakeland Electric's** responsibilities indicated in **red**.

- 1. Weather Head
- 2. Attachment Hardware
- 3. Riser
- 4. Meter Can
- 5. Ground Wire

- 1. Service Line
- 2. Meter

You must repair damage to your home's electric system before **Lakeland Electric** can restore your power. If you feel your home may be unsafe to carry power, call a licensed electrician. We're not permitted to repair damage to other electrical wiring, the weather head, or your riser.

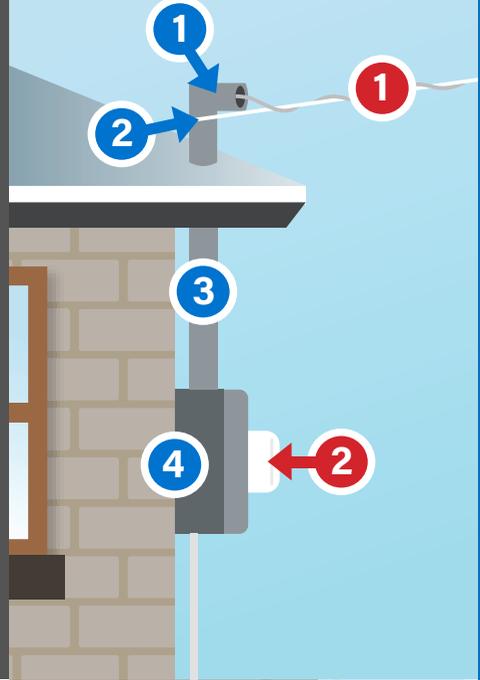
**NOTE:** Mobile home poles are owned by the customer.



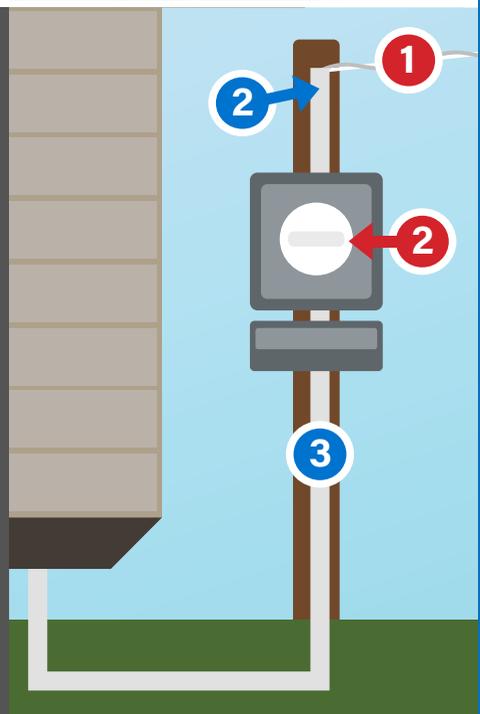
**Q. What is the difference between overhead and underground electric service?**

**A.** Overhead service is mostly exposed to high winds and flying debris. Underground facilities are subject to flooding or damage by uprooted trees. Both have unique complexities involved with restoration.

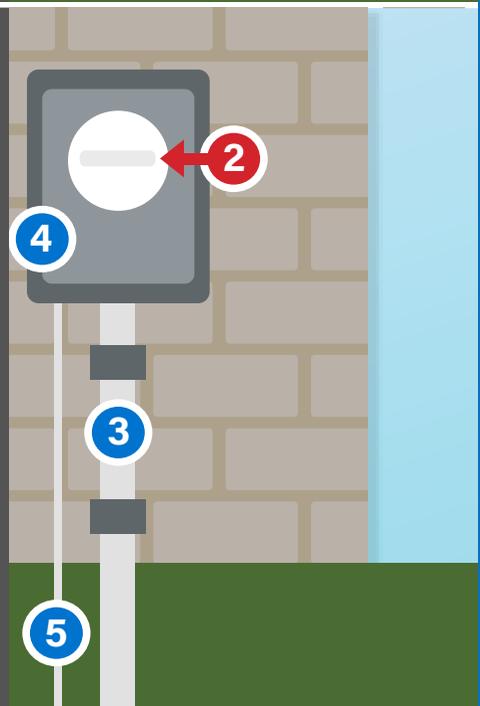
ABOVE GROUND SERVICE



MOBILE/MANUFACTURED HOME



UNDERGROUND SERVICE



LAKELAND ELECTRIC'S RESPONSIBILITIES



## EVACUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

**Polk County Emergency Management** recommends in-place shelter as the primary option during a disaster. For those unable to remain in place, **especially those in mobile homes**, the remaining choices should be considered in order of preference. Whichever of the following options you choose, be sure to have a **7-Day Emergency Kit** assembled and ready. Have a plan in place and execute it as soon as practical before the disaster hits.

### The recommended options are:

- **In-place Shelter**  
If possible, plan to remain in residence during the emergency.
- **Evacuate to Friend's or Relative's Residence**  
If forced to evacuate, it is less traumatic for all concerned to be sheltered with familiar people, in more comfortable surroundings.
- **Evacuate the Area**  
Other people leaving the areas in the projected path of the storm will also be on the road; leave at least 2-3 days before the storm is expected to strike.
- **Evacuate to a Hotel/Motel**  
Make arrangements early as rooms will fill quickly with other evacuees.
- **Evacuate to a Public Shelter**  
Call ahead to make sure the shelter is open.

## POLK COUNTY SHELTER REQUIREMENTS

All shelters are **not** automatically activated for each possible emergency. Shelters are opened as they are needed. They are not preassigned by geographic area.

- **For shelter information**, monitor local radio & TV or call the Citizens Information Line **863-401-2234 local** or **866-661-0228** toll free.
- Have a **7-Day Emergency Kit ready** to take with you.
- **Pets are allowed at designated pet-friendly sites.**  
Call the Citizens Information Line for a listing and openings.
- **NO WEAPONS** and **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES**



## POLK COUNTY SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM ❤️

Because utilities cannot guarantee continuous power during a storm or hurricane, it is recommended that anyone using medical equipment requiring electric service make prior arrangements for back-up power or plan to relocate to a hospital or other facility.

**The Special Needs Program** is designed to provide shelter at Special Needs Shelters for residents with medical or physical conditions and/or dependent on medical electrical equipment, who require assistance during an emergency.

Polk County also provides transportation to public shelters and pet-friendly shelters for those unable to evacuate on their own.

Pre-registration in the **Special Needs Program**, for a special needs shelter and/or transportation only, is preferred. **Call 863-298-7027 to pre-register.\***

\* More information and the Special Needs Registration Form can be found at [www.polk-county.net/emergency-management/special-needs](http://www.polk-county.net/emergency-management/special-needs)

## POLK COUNTY SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTERS

**McKeel Academy of Technology** | 1810 W. Parker St., Lakeland, FL

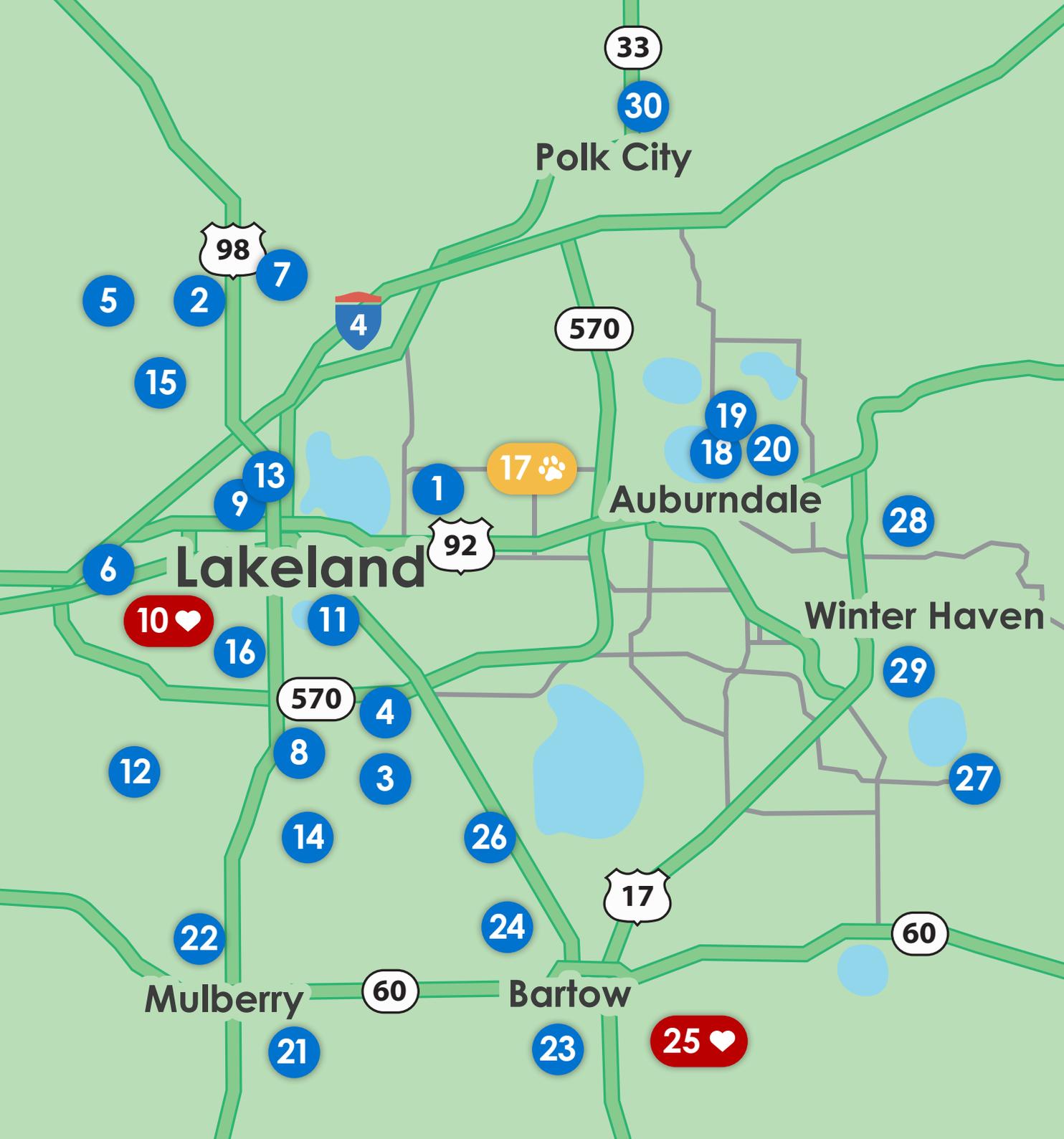
**Polk County Health Dept. (Bartow Specialty Care Clinic)** | 1255 Brice Blvd., Bartow, FL



**Q. Why do Lakeland Electric crews leave my neighborhood and I still don't have power?**

**A.** Before we begin repairs, personnel are sent to survey storm damaged areas. This speeds up restoration and helps us immediately address any dangerous situations.

**Damage Assessment Teams** are trained to assess and determine the priority and type of crew needed to make repairs. They arrange for tree and pole crews as needed, so line crews can repair the lines. We may need to work elsewhere to fix the problem that is affecting your neighborhood.



## PET SHELTERS

- Bring your complete shot records for each pet, which will be reviewed upon arrival at the shelter.
- Have an airline-approved carrying case for your animal, in which each animal will remain for the duration of their stay.
- Make sure to bring food for your pet for at least a three-day period.

Make sure you have the following required items before arriving at your pet-friendly shelter\*.

- Collar with tags and leash.
- Current photo of your pet with name, address, and email on the back.
- Cat litter, liner with pan, trash bags, and scoop.
- Toys and other comfort items.

\*Due to space limitations, these sites will be strictly pet-friendly and will be limited to providing shelter for **ONLY dogs, cats, birds, and their owners.**

## LAKELAND

- |    |                                    |  |
|----|------------------------------------|--|
| 1  | Combee Elementary School           | 2805 Morgan Combee Rd., Lakeland, FL       |
| 2  | Dr. N.E. Roberts Elementary School | 6600 Green Rd., Lakeland, FL               |
| 3  | George Jenkins High School         | 6000 Lakeland Highlands Rd., Lakeland, FL  |
| 4  | Highlands Grove Elementary School  | 4510 Lakeland Highlands Rd., Lakeland, FL  |
| 5  | Kathleen Elementary School         | 3515 Sheretz Rd., Lakeland, FL             |
| 6  | Kathleen High School               | 1100 Red Devil Way, Lakeland, FL           |
| 7  | Lake Gibson Senior High School     | 7007 N. Socrum Loop Rd., Lakeland, FL      |
| 8  | Lakeland Highlands Middle School   | 740 Lake Miriam Dr., Lakeland, FL          |
| 9  | Lincoln Avenue Academy             | 1330 N. Lincoln Ave., Lakeland, FL         |
| 10 | McKeel Academy of Technology ❤️    | 1810 West Parker St., Lakeland, FL         |
| 11 | Philip O'Brien Elementary School   | 1225 E. Lime St., Lakeland, FL             |
| 12 | R. Bruce Wagner Elementary School  | 5500 Yates Rd., Lakeland, FL               |
| 13 | Rochelle School of the Arts        | 1501 Martin L. King Jr. Ave., Lakeland, FL |
| 14 | Scott Lake Elementary School       | 1140 E. County Rd., 540A, Lakeland, FL     |
| 15 | Sleepy Hill Elementary School      | 2285 Sleepy Hill Rd., Lakeland, FL         |
| 16 | Southwest Elementary School        | 2650 Southwest Ave., Lakeland, FL          |
| 17 | Tenoroc Senior High School 🐾       | 4905 Saddle Creek Rd., Lakeland, FL        |

## AUBURNDALE

- |    |                                   |                                    |
|----|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 18 | Auburndale High School            | 1 Bloodhound Trail, Auburndale, FL |
| 19 | Jere L. Stambaugh Middle School   | 226 N. Main St., Auburndale, FL    |
| 20 | Walter Caldwell Elementary School | 141 Dairy Rd., Auburndale, FL      |

## MULBERRY

- |    |                           |                                   |
|----|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 21 | Mulberry Middle School    | 500 S.E. 9th Ave., Mulberry, FL   |
| 22 | Purcell Elementary School | 305 N.E. First Ave., Mulberry, FL |

## BARTOW

- |    |  |                                   |
|----|--|-----------------------------------|
| 23 | Bartow High School                               | 1270 S. Broadway Ave., Bartow, FL |
| 24 | Stephens Elementary School                       | 1350 N. Maple Ave., Bartow, FL    |
| 25 | Polk County Health Dept. Specialty Care Units ❤️ | 1255 Brice Blvd., Bartow, FL      |
| 26 | Spessard L. Holland Elementary School            | 2342 E.F. Griffin Rd., Bartow, FL |

## WINTER HAVEN

- |    |                           |                                     |
|----|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 27 | Chain of Lakes Elementary | 7001 CR. 653, Winter Haven, FL      |
| 28 | Jewett School of the Arts | 2250 8th St. N.E., Winter Haven, FL |
| 29 | Winter Haven High School  | 600 6th St. S.E., Winter Haven, FL  |

## POLK CITY

- |    |                                 |                                  |
|----|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 30 | Donald Bronson Community Center | 124 Bronson Trail, Polk City, FL |
|----|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|

**SCAN THE CODE**

for the full list of Polk County shelters.



## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

**Customer Service Call Center**  
863-834-9535

**Automated Outage Reporting**  
863-834-4248

**TDD Number** (Hearing Impaired)  
863-834-8333

**Medically Essential Program**  
863-834-1555

**Tree and Lawn Debris Removal**  
863-834-8773

**Lakeland Police Department**  
(Non-Emergency): 863-834-6900

**Lakeland Fire Department**  
(Non-Emergency): 863-834-8200



SCAN FOR THE  
OUTAGE MAP

## SOURCES FOR EMERGENCY INFORMATION

**Citizens Information Line**  
863-401-2234 Local / 866-661-0228 Toll Free

**American Red Cross Mid-Florida Chapter**  
863-294-5941

**United Way Information Referral Service**  
211 / 888-370-7188 or \*Text Zip Code to 898-211

**Polk County Animal Services**  
863-577-1762

**Federal Emergency Management Agency**  
800-621-3362

**National Weather Service**  
813-645-2323

\*Messages and data rates may apply

## IMPORTANT WEBSITES

[Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)

[LakelandElectric.com](https://www.lakelandelectric.com)

[Polk-County.net](https://www.polk-county.net)

[LakelandGov.net](https://www.lakelandgov.net)

[Weather.gov](https://www.weather.gov)

## POLK COUNTY

**Polk County Emergency Management**  
863-298-7000 Local / 800-780-5346 Toll Free

**Polk County Sheriff**  
863-298-6200

**Polk County Special Needs Program**  
(Pre-registration) 863-298-7027

## OFFICIAL EMERGENCY BROADCASTING RADIO STATIONS

**WONN - 1230 AM & 107.1 FM**

**WPCV - 97.5 FM**

**Lakeland Electric** works closely with media outlets to provide timely power outage and emergency updates.

**Please do not call these stations** to report outages or ask for utility status information.

**Travelers Information - 1610 AM**