Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation linemen and visiting crews continue working this morning to restore power to members affected by Thursday night's snow storm in the North Carolina mountains. Days of heavy rain followed by last night's heavy wet snow and high winds caused downed trees and power lines, particularly in Ashe County where more than 400 damaged locations of the electric system needed repair—from broken poles to downed power lines. A total of 9,000 members were affected at the height of the storm.

As of 9 p.m., 1,649 members remain without power: 1,518 in Ashe County, 65 in Watauga County, 60 Alleghany County and six in Wilkes County. The cooperative advises members in Ashe County to be aware that full outage restoration for this area may not be possible until late Saturday due to extensive damage to the system. The cooperative thanks members for their patience as linemen work to restore power to all members as quickly and safely as possible. Members should report all outages by calling the cooperative's PowerLine at 1-800-448-2383.

Assisting Blue Ridge crews to restore power are 75 additional linemen who arrived today from: Rutherford EMC, Union Power, French Broad EMC, York Electric, Haywood EMC, and EnergyUnited, as well as from Sumter, Pike and Carter utility contract crews. Blue Ridge Electric also warns the public that downed power lines can still be energized and therefore dangerous or even deadly! Stay far away from downed power lines and report them immediately to the cooperative.

To check outage status at any time, Blue Ridge Electric provides an online outage map at www.BlueRidgeEMC.com. Information is also available on the cooperative's Facebook and Twitter sites: www.facebook.com/blueridgeemc and www.twitter.com/blueridgeemc.