

Media Release



30 September 2015

East Gippsland Electricity Network Upgrade

AusNet Services is undertaking a large-scale maintenance program on power lines connecting Bairnsdale to Mallacoota on Saturday and Sunday October 17 and 18, requiring the shutdown of electricity supply for parts of the weekend.

The weekend shutdowns will give more than 150 line workers safe access to complete almost 400 individual maintenance tasks - a more customer-friendly alternative than multiple weekly shutdowns to finish the critical work before bushfire season.

John Wills, AusNet Services' Customer Support Team Manager in Gippsland, said that efforts have been made to limit the electricity disruptions to residents and businesses.

"We understand the inconvenience of being without electricity, so we have been doing 'live line work' wherever possible, and will now pool resources from across the state to complete the work in two days," Mr Wills said.

"Condensing the work to one weekend means customers reliant on these power lines won't be inconvenienced by weeks of ongoing outages to complete the necessary work before the bushfire and the tourism seasons.

"It's been two years since we did a similar program in East Gippsland and we thank customers for their understanding as we work to further improve the safety and reliability of their electricity supply," he said.

AusNet Services has been liaising with key stakeholders in East Gippsland and the first notification letters with details of the electricity outage and tips for being without electricity were sent to customers this week. Life support customers and critical supply customers such as telecommunications networks are also being contacted directly.

"Other customers for whom supply is critical should start planning now," said Mr Wills.

Ends...

Details of the maintenance program and towns affected

Saturday October 17

- Area of work: Bellbird Creek to Mallacoota
- Duration: 8.00am – 4pm (approx.)
- Towns with electricity supply impacted for the day: Cann River, Genoa and Mallacoota
- Customers from along the Princes Highway from Toorloo Arm and Nowa Nowa to Bellbird Creek will have two brief (5 min.) outages on Saturday at 8am and 4pm to allow network switching to enable the work program. This will affect Lake Tyers, Nowa Nowa, Orbost, Bemm River, and Marlo.

Sunday October 20

- Area of work: Bairnsdale to Mallacoota
- Duration: 8.00am – 5pm
- Towns with electricity supply impacted: Nowa Nowa (part), Orbost, Marlo, Bemm River, Cann River, Genoa and Mallacoota; and Sarsfield, Granite Rock, Clifton Creek, and the NE outskirts of Bairnsdale.
- Note that Bruthen, Omeo, Buchan and surrounds will NOT be affected
- The scope of work includes almost 400 individual maintenance tasks, including the replacement of seven power poles, fire break and vegetation work, and zone substation upgrade works.
- The work program will involve 150 line workers, 30 'cherry picker' trucks, and eight cranes.