Duke prepares for latest round of winter weather

BY NORMAN CANNADA
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SENECA — As Duke Energy officials brace for another round of cold weather that is expected to begin today, plans are in place in hopes of minimizing any power outages that might come from an overloading of the system.

Paige Sheehan, a Duke spokeswoman, said officials feel better about the situation in the Keowee Key area, where thousands of homes went without power earlier this month during a "polar vortex" system that swept across the nation. About 2,500 of those customers electricity for more than

id during that outage one nsmission lines serving the area had already been taken down before the storm for scheduled maintenance, leaving the community served by only one line. The line was brought back up early and is now fully functioning as temperatures are expected to dip below freezing again in Oconee.

"Essentially, the folks in that area should be in much better shape now," Sheehan said. "We believe we're in very good shape when it comes to the Lake Keowee area. The challenges were significant. It was a very unusual circumstance and it was very important to the people there and very important that we address it quickly."

In addition, she said the colder temperatures brought record-setting

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Seneca resident Brenda Fisher serves the ball while playing a game of tennis with friends on a windy day at South Cove Park this week. Colder temperatures are scheduled to return to the area beginning today, and Duke Energy officials have made plans to minimize disruptions in service.

WINTER: Weather returning

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demand and caused the line that was working to shut down in much the same way a breaker would trip in a home when the circuit is overloaded.

Sheehan added that "the system performed very, very well during some extraordinary temperatures a few weeks ago" but that the company has made "tweaks" to provide better service to customers.

She said Duke officials are encouraging customers to conserve energy when colder temperatures come to keep the system from overloading and keep their electric costs down.

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