

USEA Virtual Press Briefing: How Supply Chain Chaos Is Upending the Electric Utility Industry

For electric utilities, supply chain bottlenecks have the same two impacts: delay and cost

WASHINGTON DC, USA, June 24, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The electric utility industry is roiled by supply chain chaos. Across the industry, there are tales of operation and maintenance delays



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Llewellyn King

and workarounds, shortage-induced rescheduling, and crews standing idle, waiting for something as ordinary as bolts.

The supply chain crisis threatens the orderly switch to renewables and the brave new world of net zero by mid-century.

It is severe and getting worse, according to contractors who can't fulfill their commitments. The delay in getting a new bucket truck, for example, can be as long as three years. Suppliers are rationing needed day-to-day supplies

between their best customers. There isn't just one bottleneck, there are many -- and they all have the same two effects: delay and cost.

The American Public Power Association and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association have written to Congress and the Biden administration, drawing attention to the shortage of transformers. The crisis is particularly severe for these and other bulk electric supply goods, many of them sourced in Asia. The Biden administration has responded by invoking the National Defense Production Act.

“For several months, America's electric cooperatives have raised serious questions about supply chain disruptions to materials necessary for reliable operation of the nation's electric infrastructure. In particular, shortages of transformers pose a risk to normal electric grid operations as well as recovery efforts for systems disrupted by a natural disaster,” Jim Matheson, CEO of NRECA, said in a statement.

This is a crisis that has seized the electric utility sector at a time when it already is grappling with extreme weather early in the summer, portending a need to have plenty of spare parts on hand to tackle the restoration engineering.

To examine the crisis, to learn how it can be managed now and to see what the long-term impact might be, the [United States Energy Association](#) has scheduled another in its ongoing series of virtual press briefings. As with previous briefings, a panel of experts will be questioned by some of the most knowledgeable reporters in the field.

The briefing is scheduled for Wednesday, June 29, at 11 a.m. Eastern Time. It will be introduced by USEA Acting Sheila Hollis, and it was organized and will be moderated by veteran journalist Llewellyn King.

The experts are:

Ray Kowalik, Chairman and CEO, Burns & McDonnell, the major engineering, construction and architecture firm

Joy Ditto, President, American Public Power Association

Rudy Garza, Interim President and CEO, CPS Energy in San Antonio, Texas

Scott Aaronson, Senior Vice President, Security and Preparedness, Edison Electric Institute

The reporters are:

Ron Kuckro, Energy Policy News.

Jennifer Hiller, The Wall Street Journal

Ken Silverstein, Forbes

Robert Walton, Utility Dive

[Register](#) here for the briefing:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dpgvb6EySq6fuHgnpxHj3g

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