

# USEA To Hold National Press Briefing on Electric Utility Resilience

*Threats to the system multiply as the need for reliability grows.*

WASHINGTON DC, UNITED STATES, July 26, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New uses for electricity switch on every day, from electric vehicles to electric air taxis to delivery drones to data mining.



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*Llewellyn King*

Smart cities, interconnectivity and cleaner transportation all signal greater electricity use.

At the same time, threats to the electric system are aplenty and growing. Cyberattacks, floods, hurricanes, tornados, monsoons, wildfires, and drought are in precipitous rise. These all threaten electric utilities just when they have become even more essential to the smooth running of the nation.

The electric utility industry response is "resilience." That word is heard everywhere now, from utilities to their big customers.

What do utilities mean by resilience? How resilient are they, and is that resilience measurable? How quickly and with how little disruption can misadventure be overcome by utilities, big and small, across the country?

The disastrous deep freeze in Texas in mid-February pointed up weaknesses in the resilience of the ERCOT system. Wildfires -- whether initiated by utility line failure or other causes -- continue to trigger blackouts in California.

The industry has remarkable, coordinated response strategies, sometimes sending crews 1,000 miles to help restore service. But is it enough in the new instability? It has stockpiled vital, hard-to-procure equipment. but is this enough? Does it guarantee resilience?

The [United States Energy Association](#) (USEA) has scheduled a virtual press briefing on resilience for July 30 at 11 a.m. EDT. It has been organized by Llewellyn King, executive producer and host of PBS's "[White House Chronicle](#)." The press briefing will be held on Zoom and is free of charge.

"Four top-notch experts will be questioned by four knowledgeable reporters in front of a virtual

audience of journalists and the public," said King, who will moderate the press briefing.

The experts are:

- Paula Gold-Williams, president and CEO of San Antonio-based CPS Energy, who dealt firsthand with the Texas deep freeze.
- Richard Mroz, past chairman of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, who has vast knowledge of the resilience issue from a regulator's point of view.
- Mark McGranaghan, who looks at resilience worldwide as vice president and fellow of the Electric Power Research Institute.
- Joseph Fiksel, a pioneer in resilience and risk analysis and professor emeritus of integrated systems engineering at Ohio State University, now lecturing at George Washington University.

The experts will face questions such as these from the panel of reporters: How sure are the utilities of their resilience strategies? How right are they in having that confidence? Does the decision of PG&E to underground 10,000 miles of transmission to prevent fires point the way to a more secure, but more expensive, future?

"USEA Acting Director Sheila Hollis will give opening remarks at the press briefing. We are proud of the range of experts," King said, adding, "All registrants are welcome to submit questions via the Zoom Q&A function, but media will be given preference in the questioning."

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