



PLAYBOOK

Storm preparedness

A strategic guide for utility providers to prepare, respond, and communicate **during severe weather events.**





Turn chaos
into coordination
when every
second counts.

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INTRODUCTION

Across North America, storms and severe weather events are increasing in both frequency and intensity, resulting in widespread property damage, extended power outages, and heightened threats to public safety. As storm seasons approach, experts warn of increasing volumes and more active than average seasons year-over-year. From hurricanes and tropical storms along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts, to wildfires in the West, to ice storms and tornadoes in the Midwest and South, every region faces unique and evolving risks.¹

The impact of a major storm is measured not just by the damage it causes, but by how quickly and effectively a utility can respond. The difference between a swift recovery and prolonged disruption often lies in the quality of a utility's preparation and its capacity to respond efficiently. For utility providers, storm impacts are not solely measured in infrastructure damage or outage duration. They are also defined by the ability to protect public safety, maintaining essential services, the lives saved, and preserving the trust and confidence of the communities they serve.

Utilities that lead in storm preparedness demonstrate a commitment to operational excellence, community safety, and transparent communication. Proactive planning, rigorous training, and the integration of advanced technologies enable utilities to minimize downtime, accelerate restoration, and support vulnerable populations when it matters most. Human-centered communication strategies, delivered across multiple channels and tailored to local needs, are essential for keeping customers informed, reducing anxiety, and empowering individuals to act before, during, and after severe weather events.

At **Convey**, we partner alongside leading, award-winning utility providers across the United States, delivering purpose-built, human-centered communication strategies for utilities of all sizes. We provide solutions that transform regulatory requirements into seamless, customer-focused experiences. We go beyond providing information; we deliver actionable insights, proven protocols, and scalable workflows that support utilities through every phase of a storm; preparation, response, and recovery.

1

Why storm preparedness matters



This Storm Preparedness Playbook is designed as a comprehensive guide for utilities of all sizes and geographies. Whether you are preparing for hurricane season, wildfire threats, winter storms, or unexpected outages, this playbook will help you:

- Build operational resilience through proactive protocols and cross-functional coordination.
- Leverage intelligent workflows and high-throughput communication platforms for rapid, compliant outreach.
- Deliver consistent, empathetic, and accessible messaging to diverse communities.
- Strengthen customer trust and satisfaction through transparency and reliability.
- Position your organization as a leader in disaster readiness and community resilience.

This playbook is structured to support utilities through every stage of a storm event, from preparation to recovery, ensuring community safety while positioning your organization as a leader in resilience and disaster readiness.

Readiness is not just about restoring power; it's about being a pillar of stability and support when customers need it most. With Convey, your utility gains a partner dedicated to modernizing operations, optimizing compliance, and setting new standards for engagement and safety in regulated environments, every step of the way.



2

Internal utility readiness



Operational resilience starts before the forecast with proactive protocols to keep internal teams prepared, minimize downtime, and accelerate restoration when it matters most.

A utility's ability to deliver a rapid and effective storm response begins well before a forecast is issued. Operational resilience requires preparation, training, coordinated infrastructure, and team management. This begins with established protocols, frequent drills, pre-approved communication messaging, and the seamless integration of technology and personnel. Let's break these down:



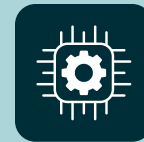
Establish protocols

Utilities should develop and maintain detailed response protocols that outline specific actions for various emergency scenarios. These protocols should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect evolving risks and lessons learned from previous events.



Conduct frequent drills and simulations

Conducting regular, realistic drills are essential for validating emergency plans and ensuring all teams are prepared to act decisively under pressure. Scenario-based exercises, such as simulating a major hurricane, extended outage, or load-shed event, help teams practice coordination, test communication workflows, and identify areas for improvement.



Integrate technology and train key personnel

Seamless integration of advanced technology platforms with field and operations teams enables real-time situational awareness and streamlined resource deployment. Tools like automated alerting systems, crew tracking, and digital dashboards support faster decision-making and enhance overall response capabilities.



Coordinate cross-functional teams

To operate efficiently during crisis conditions, utilities must unify decision-making workflows across departments. Implementing a clear incident command structure, shared situational dashboards, and regular team check-ins ensures that operations, communications, and customer support teams remain aligned throughout an event.

A well-defined incident command framework is essential:

- Clear escalation paths between operations and communications teams
- Shared situational awareness dashboards
- Biweekly check-ins with mutual aid partners to align response strategies



Prepare for load shed and issue proactive conservation appeals

During periods of grid stress, utilities must be prepared to implement load shed protocols and promote conservation to protect system stability. Utilities should:

- **Develop RED/BLACK alert escalation frameworks.**
Establish a tiered alert system (e.g., RED for voluntary conservation, BLACK for mandatory load shedding) to guide both staff and customers through escalating stages of grid stress with clear triggers and actions.
- **Create pre-approved, templated messages for conservation appeals and outages.**
Maintain a library of ready-to-send messages for conservation appeals and outage notifications, tailored for various channels and customer groups.
- **Conduct annual script reviews.**
Review and update all conservation and load shed scripts before each storm season to ensure compliance, clarity, and alignment with current best practices.



See page 22 'Conservation vs load shedding to achieve grid stability' for examples and communication guidance.



Introduction to storm season planning



Ensure staff well-being and resilience

Recognizing the physical and emotional demands of storm response, utilities should prioritize employee well-being by offering mental health resources, resilience training, and fatigue management protocols. Supporting staff helps maintain high performance during prolonged or high-stress events.



Establish mutual aid and resourcing frameworks

Establishing and periodically reviewing mutual aid agreements with neighboring utilities ensures rapid access to additional crews, equipment, and expertise during large-scale emergencies. These partnerships are vital for scaling response efforts and minimizing service disruptions.



Conduct storm drills and simulations

Utilities should conduct annual and pre-season drills that simulate high-impact events, such as Category 4+ hurricanes, multi-day outages, and load-shed emergencies. These exercises help validate:

- Emergency communication workflows
- Mutual aid coordination
- System failover capabilities

Example: Entergy's "Storm University" ran test simulations for load shed with Convey from 2021-2022, deploying over 1+ million messages in under 15 minutes to test High Throughput communication systems.

Routine drills, scenario planning, and internal simulations are essential for team readiness. These activities build muscle memory, reduce response time, and improve operational resilience when it matters most.



Plan ahead.

- Storms don't wait.
- When every minute counts, having a **clear roadmap** reduces confusion and delays.
- **Customers expect updates fast.**
- Regulatory reporting begins the moment the storm hits.



Coordinate your team.

- **Who is your storm lead?**
- Who is on the **storm team**?
- Who is on the **alternate team** to step in to provide relief to the main team?
- If the office is impacted, is there a designated **alternate work site**?



Storm messaging drills.

- **Do a storm walkthrough with designated teams and alternates from start to finish.**
- Follow the exact process you would follow for a real storm.
- **Identify gaps** – What is needed to fix them?



Review your scripts.

- **Review prior storm scripts.**
- Are scripts still **relevant**?
- Have service locations changed due to infrastructure changes?



3

Technology integration for crisis efficiency



Convey's products and solutions are purpose-built to help utilities achieve operational excellence during emergencies, combining speed, scalability, and regulatory compliance with a human-centered approach.

Leverage Convey's intelligent workflows for rapid, compliant messaging.



Pre-loaded NERC/FERC-approved scripts for rapid deployment and automated compliance checks to get the message out in under 2 minutes and ensure all communications meet industry standards, reducing regulatory risk and saving valuable time during crises.



Convey's infrastructure can manage high-volume communication needs to deliver over a million alerts per hour during crises with little to no system overload using intelligent pacing algorithms. These prevent system overload, ensuring every message reaches its destination quickly, even under peak demand.



Convey's dynamic segmentation capabilities allow utilities to tailor messages based on customer language preferences, geographic location, and vulnerability status. This ensures that every customer receives relevant, accessible information, fostering trust and engagement across diverse communities.



Capacity management of alerts by outage severity and dynamic segmentation based on location, language preference, vulnerability status means Convey can deliver a targeted approach, maximize operational efficiency and ensure that the most critical updates are delivered to those who need them most.

By integrating these advanced technology solutions, utilities can respond to emergencies with speed, precision, and empathy, **delivering the right message to the right people at the right time, every time.**





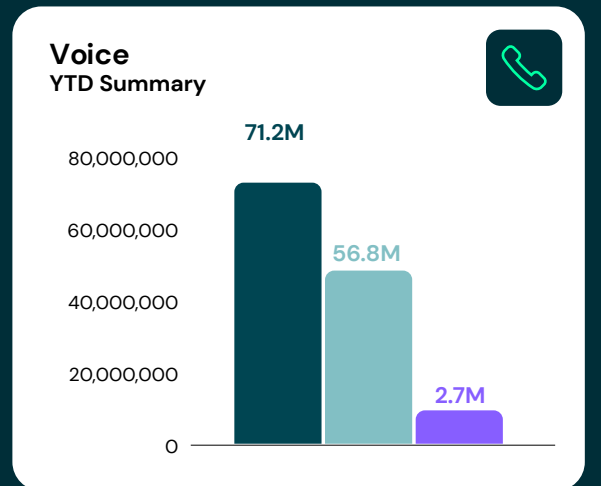
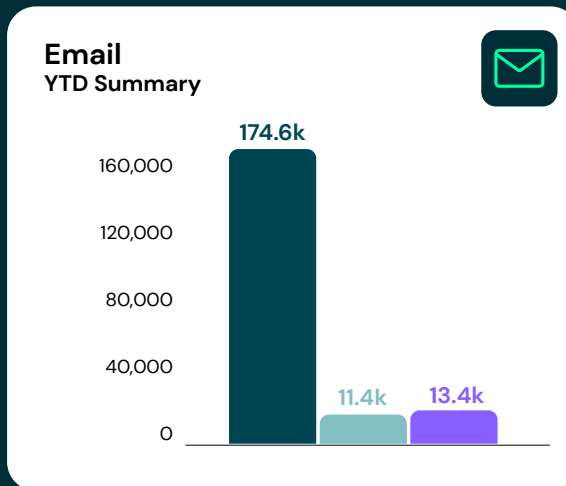
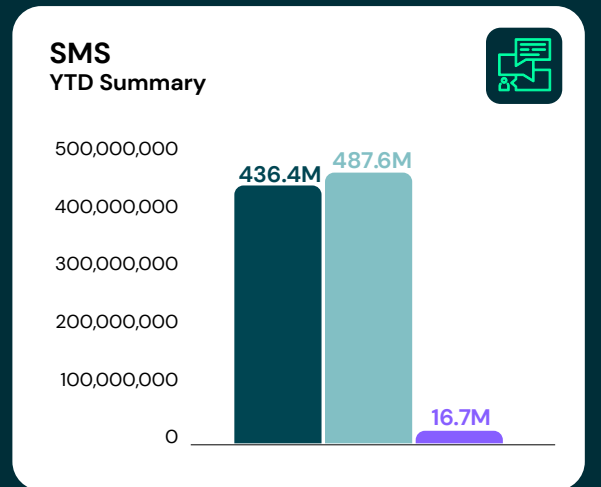
Operational visibility and performance monitoring

Convey's technology provides real-time dashboards that display message volume, segmentation breakdowns, and delivery success rates. This transparency empowers utility teams to monitor campaign effectiveness, adjust strategies on the fly, and ensure continuous improvement in crisis communications.

By integrating these advanced technology solutions, utilities can respond to emergencies with speed, precision, and empathy, delivering the right message to the right people at the right time, every time.

Messaging dashboards:

- Current year
- Prior year
- Weekly average



4


Building trust through transparency and consistency




Consistent, transparent communication is the foundation of customer trust during storm events. Drawing on best practices from industry leaders, Convey helps utilities provide proactive, dependable updates throughout the storm lifecycle.

One partnership with a leading, award-winning utility demonstrated that proactive, reliable updates throughout the entire storm lifecycle not only keep customers informed but also transforms challenging circumstances into opportunities to strengthen relationships and build lasting credibility.

Best practices in trust-building communication include:



Provide proactive updates. Customers should never be left wondering about the status of their service or restoration efforts. Regular, scheduled updates, delivered even when there is no new information, provide reassurance and demonstrate a utility's commitment to transparency.



Set and meet clear expectations, always. If customers are told they will receive an update within a certain timeframe, it is critical to deliver on that promise. This reliability, even in the face of uncertainty, establishes the utility as a dependable partner.



Empathetic messages acknowledge the stress and inconvenience that storms cause. Expressing empathy and understanding for customers' situations is a human-centered approach that fosters goodwill and reduces frustration.



Multi-channel delivery utilizes a mix of channels, such as SMS, email, voice calls, two-way chat conversations, mobile apps, and digital signage, ensuring that all customer segments, including those who are vulnerable or have accessibility needs, receive timely and relevant information.



Transparency about restoration provides clear, honest information about restoration timelines and the challenges crews are facing. This includes daily status updates, explanations of restoration priorities, and dedicated support for customers with critical needs.



Dedicated support for vulnerable customers gives special attention to those who rely on electricity for medical equipment or who may be at greater risk during outages. This ensures that they receive tailored communications and prioritized restoration when possible.

Case study:

After a major hurricane caused widespread damage and outages, a leading, award-winning utility restored power to 90% of its customers within three days. The utility's approach included daily status updates, transparent restoration timelines, and dedicated outreach to vulnerable populations. This consistent, reliable communication set a benchmark for the industry and turned a crisis into a trust-building opportunity.

Key takeaways for utilities:

- **Make communication a core** part of your storm response strategy.
- **Develop a robust library of scenario-based messages** to cover every phase of a storm, from initial alerts to final restoration.
- **Invest in technology** that enables rapid, targeted outreach and supports two-way engagement, allowing customers to ask questions or report issues in real time.
- **Train teams to respond with empathy and clarity**, ensuring a consistent brand voice across all touchpoints.

By prioritizing consistency and transparency, utilities can not only manage expectations and reduce anxiety during severe weather events but also reinforce their reputation as trusted partners in community resilience and safety.





5

Proactive customer communication, before the storm

Utilities should launch pre-storm campaigns as soon as a threat is forecasted; escalating cadence as landfall approaches.³

Before a storm, utilities should distribute a comprehensive customer preparedness checklist via all channels, including SMS, email, and web. Ensure all materials meet accessibility guidelines for customers with disabilities, following CDC and ADA recommendations.⁴



See page 32 'Recommended customer-facing communications' for full messaging and guides.

Comprehensive messaging cadence



Multi-channel delivery (SMS, two-way chat conversations, email, IVR, app notifications, digital signage) ensures maximum reach, while segmentation by geography, customer type, and vulnerability status allows for targeted, relevant messaging.

Recommended messaging cadence



Utilities can streamline communication by using pre-approved, event-specific messages.

Pre-storm (72+ hours)

- Storm preparation checklists (water, batteries, chargers, non-perishable food, medications, critical documents, pet supplies, hygiene items).
- Property protection tips (securing outdoor items, trimming trees, installing storm shutters).
- Energy conservation guidance (adjusting thermostats, unplugging devices, delaying appliance use).



Pre-storm (24-48 hours)

- Evacuation orders, generator safety, flood avoidance ("Turn Around, Don't Drown").
- Reminder to charge devices and prepare emergency contacts.



Landfall imminent

- Real-time shelter in place and generator safety.
- Final reminders for property and personal safety.



See page 32 'Recommended customer-facing communications' for full messaging and guides.



Personalization and accessibility



- Translate all communications into customers' preferred languages.
- Use geolocation and segmentation to ensure messages are relevant and actionable for each recipient.
- Leverage Convey's products & solutions for rapid delivery and dynamic segmentation.



See page 32 'Recommended customer-facing communications' for full messaging and guides.

When hit by seven back-to-back storms, one large utility implemented Convey's solutions to deliver timely notifications at scale to over 1.3 millions customers. The utility used proactive messaging throughout the duration of multiple storms, making sure their customers were informed and safe. After this event, the utility earned a **Net Promoter Score of +37**, with customers touting its service and outage response.

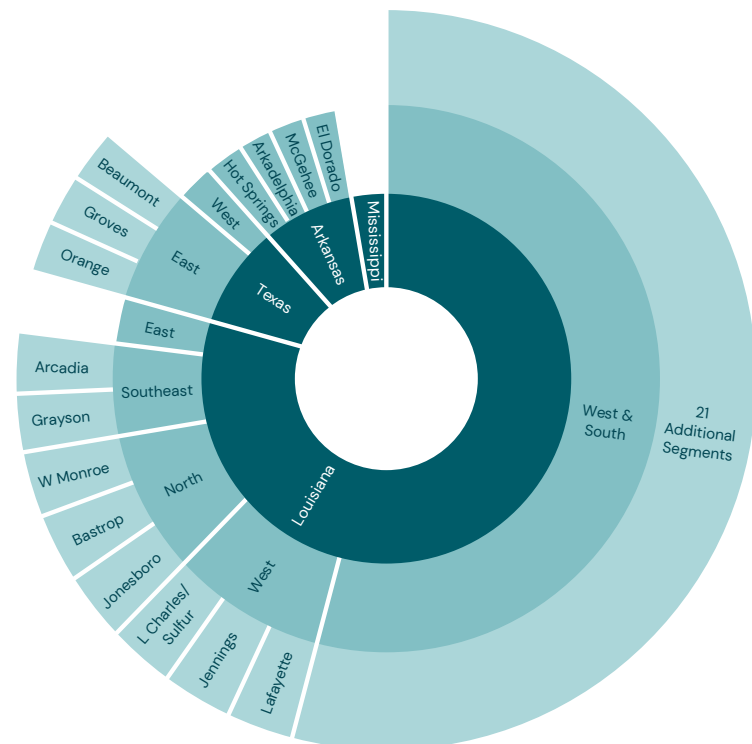
Multiple event duration:
146 days

Customers:
1.3 million

SMS messages:
13.6 million

Automated phone calls:
4 million

Conversations:
56 separate segmented journeys



6

Real-time communication, during the storm

When severe weather strikes, utilities must prioritize safety, clarity, and transparency in every customer interaction. The ability to deliver timely, accurate, and empathetic communications, at scale and across multiple channels, is essential for protecting lives, maintaining trust, and supporting operational efficiency.



Multi-channel messaging for all segments that meets customers where they are

Different customer segments respond to different channels. Utilities should deploy a multi-channel communication strategy to ensure every customer receives critical updates in their preferred format:

- **SMS:** Delivers immediate, high-open-rate alerts, which is ideal for urgent safety and restoration updates. SMS is especially valuable for customers who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities, providing clear, accessible information without relying on audio.
- **IVR and voice calls:** Effective for seniors, customers with visual impairments, or those who prefer auditory updates.
- **Email:** Best for detailed and longer updates, safety tips, and resource links.
- **App or push notifications and digital signage:** Provide real-time information in public areas, shelters, and community centers.
- **Two-way chat conversations:** Enable customers to self-serve with intelligent chat workflows for billing questions, outage reports, and service requests while your team focuses on complex cases.

Messages should be automatically routed based on customer preferences, ensuring the right information reaches the right audience at the right time.



See page 32 'Recommended customer-facing communications' for full messaging and guides.



Proactive, personalized, and inclusive messaging

No two communities are the same. It is important to ensure there is equitable access to storm information by supporting translation and accessibility features.

Convey's products and solutions empower utilities to deliver advanced storm warnings and restoration updates to millions, enhancing trust and operational agility during extreme weather.

Convey's key capabilities include:

Language-specific messaging

All notifications are automatically translated into each recipient's preferred language, ensuring non-English speakers receive timely, accurate information. This feature is critical for reaching linguistically diverse communities and meeting regulatory requirements for inclusivity.

Segmentation and location-based features

Alerts are tailored by location, customer role, or community, so the right people get the right information at the right time. Utilities can target specific neighborhoods, business districts, or vulnerable populations, increasing the relevance and effectiveness of each message.

Prioritize safety and transparency. Location-based alerts should direct customers away from hazards.



DANGER: Downed line at Maple/River. Stay 30ft away. **Report: 1-800-ENERGY**

Accessibility and equity for all

Adhering to accessibility standards (including ADA compliance) guarantees all customers, regardless of ability, can understand and act on critical updates. Utilities must ensure their communication strategies are accessible to all, including customers who are hearing impaired, visually impaired, or have limited English proficiency.

- **SMS messaging** is particularly beneficial for customers who are hard of hearing or have speech disabilities, as text-based alerts provide clear, accessible information without relying on audio.
- **IVR and voice calls** for those who prefer or require auditory updates, such as older adults or those with visual impairments.

- **App or Push notifications** and digital signage are for real-time updates in public spaces, shelters, and community centers.
- **Translation and ADA-compliant** formatting ensure that all customers receive actionable, understandable information.

Example messages

Safety alert



DANGER: Downed line at Maple/River. Stay 30ft away. Reply **OUT** to report an outage or **HELP** for urgent assistance.

Outage update



Crews are working in your area. Estimated restoration: **3:45 PM**. Reply **1** if you have power, **2** if you do not.

Check-in



Are you safe and have what you need? Reply **YES** if safe, **HELP** if you need assistance.

Two-way engagement

A modern emergency communication strategy goes beyond simply broadcasting information; it empowers customers to respond, report, and interact with their utility in real time. Drawing on leading industry case studies:


A national utility recognized for its storm response implemented two-way SMS and app-based communication, allowing customers to:


1. Report downed lines or hazards instantly, which improved crew dispatch and reduced response times.
2. Confirm their safety or request wellness checks, enabling utilities to prioritize support for medically vulnerable or isolated individuals.
3. Receive personalized restoration estimates and updates based on their specific address or account status.


Utilities that enable two-way engagement to see higher customer satisfaction scores, faster resolution of issues, and improved operational visibility during major events.




Sample two-way messaging workflow:

Outage notification  Severe weather has caused outages in your area. Reply **OUT** if you are without power, or **SAFE** if you have power. For urgent needs, reply **HELP**.


Address verification  To ensure we send updates for your specific address, reply **YES** if you are located at [address], or **NO** to update your information.

Check-in  How satisfied are you with our updates? Reply **1** (Very Satisfied) to **5** (Very Dissatisfied).


Convey's two-way engagement capabilities transform storm response from a one-way alert system into a dynamic, customer-driven conversation. Benefits of two-way engagement:




Faster damage assessment
When customers can quickly report outages, downed lines, or hazards via SMS, app, or web portal, utilities gain immediate, location-specific insights. This crowdsourced data helps dispatch crews more efficiently, prioritize restoration efforts, and reduce downtime for affected areas.



Building trust and transparency
By inviting and acting on customer input, utilities demonstrate responsiveness and accountability, strengthening trust and fostering a sense of partnership with the community.



Enhanced customer safety and welfare
Two-way communication allows utilities to check in with customers, especially those identified as vulnerable or medically dependent. Customers can easily confirm their status or request urgent assistance, enabling utilities to proactively identify and support those most at risk during severe weather.



Continuous feedback loop
Real-time customer feedback—such as restoration confirmations, satisfaction ratings, or communication preferences—enables utilities to refine their messaging cadence, content, and channel mix on the fly. This adaptability ensures that communications remain relevant, timely, and accessible throughout the storm lifecycle.

Convey's platform makes two-way engagement seamless and scalable, supporting millions of interactions without delay. Whether it's collecting outage reports, sending wellness check-ins, or gathering feedback on communication effectiveness, Convey helps utilities stay connected to their customers, every step of the way.

Crisis messaging workflows

As storm conditions evolve, utilities must be ready to deploy the right message at the right time:

- Safety alerts (e.g., downed lines, evacuation orders)
- Outage notifications and restoration updates
- Conservation, load shedding, and grid stability messages

All communications should convey empathy, explain critical measures, and set clear expectations.



Conservation vs load shedding to achieve grid stability

Public participation is essential in grid stability. Load shedding and energy conservation aren't just utility mandates, but shared responsibilities. During periods of high demand or severe weather, utilities can empower customers with targeted, timely campaigns that encourage energy-conscious behavior and build community-wide resilience.

There are two distinct types of crisis communications related to grid stability, conservation vs load shedding. Always communicate conservation appeals first, as a proactive measure. If load shedding becomes necessary, clearly explain the transition from voluntary conservation to required outages, so customers understand the progression and the reasons behind each action.

Conservation appeal

To ask **customers to voluntarily reduce electricity use in order to help prevent forced outages**. This is a proactive step to maintain grid stability before mandatory action is needed.

Example messages

 EnergyCompany 14 mins ago

There is a high demand for electricity in our area due to extreme weather conditions. To help avoid periodic outages, we are asking all customers to voluntarily reduce their electricity usage now. Please help by adjusting thermostats and turning off non-essential lights, electronics, and large appliances. We apologize for any inconvenience. For more information and updates, visit [utility URL].

Load shedding

To inform customers that conservation was not sufficient or that grid conditions have worsened, **the utility must implement controlled, temporary outages** to protect the overall power system and critical infrastructure.

Example messages

 EnergyCompany 14 mins ago

To maintain system reliability and protect critical services such as hospitals and emergency responders, we are implementing brief, rotating outages in your area. These outages are necessary due to extreme demand on the grid. We expect power to be restored within approximately 2 hours. For more information and updates, visit [utility URL].



Deliver the right message with Convey

Convey partners with leading utilities across the United States to deliver real-time outage communication, customer notifications, and power restoration updates. Convey supports utilities in educating their customers through engaging, multi-channel messaging strategies and campaigns.

These campaigns help increase transparency around conservation efforts and offer clear, actionable steps to ease grid demand. By proactively keeping residents, property managers, and business owners informed, utilities can reduce disruption and enable faster, safer recoveries, particularly during events that require load shedding or conservation efforts.

Suggested messages include:

- Raise thermostats to 78°F or higher during extreme heat to reduce HVAC load.
- Delay large appliance use such as washers, dryers, and ovens until off-peak hours.
- Unplug electronics that draw "phantom load" even when not in use.
- Use ceiling fans to circulate air instead of lowering the thermostat.
- Turn off unnecessary lighting in unoccupied rooms to save power.

These small actions, when adopted collectively, reduce strain on the grid and foster a sense of shared responsibility in preserving essential services. By communicating these efforts clearly and consistently, utilities can strengthen public understanding, foster cooperation, and reinforce trust during high-stakes moments.

Convey ensures that these messages reach the right audiences quickly and reliably, offering utilities a powerful toolset to manage energy emergencies while building lasting community engagement.



7

Community and emergency support

Leading utilities leverage Convey's powerful solutions to deliver instant alerts, facilitate two-way messaging, and integrate digital signage. This enables proactive engagement with communities before, during, and after severe weather events.

This comprehensive approach ensures that every customer feels supported, informed, and connected when it matters most.

By maintaining a disciplined, human-centered communication strategy during the storm, utilities can reduce confusion, accelerate restoration, and reinforce their role as a trusted partner in community safety and resilience.



8

Real-time, High Throughput communication



Convey's intelligent workflows enable utilities to **automate the deployment of safety alerts, outage notifications, and restoration updates** as conditions evolve.

Our **High Throughput technology** can reach over one million recipients within minutes, ensuring critical information is delivered even during network congestion or peak demand.

Voice INCREASED SPEED UPTO 4x	SMS INCREASED SPEED UPTO 7x	Email INCREASED SPEED UPTO 9x

By maintaining a disciplined, human-centered communication strategy during the storm, supported by two-way engagement, accessible channels, and High Throughput automation, utilities can reduce confusion, accelerate restoration, and reinforce their role as trusted partners in community safety and resilience. This approach, validated by leading utilities and industry research, sets a **new standard for customer engagement during severe weather events.**



9

Post-storm performance and customer engagement

Post-storm priorities may include:

Once the storm passes, utilities must move quickly to assess damage and restore service and should audit every step of their response. Convey helps facilitate post-storm reviews by offering performance metrics and analytics.



Ongoing customer updates to maintain a steady cadence of communications about restoration progress, safety reminders, and billing or service support for impacted customers (such as pauses or deferred payments). Use pre-approved templates for post-storm messaging, including “all clear” notices and return-to-service instructions.



Damage assessment and restoration sequencing to deploy AI-powered drones and field apps for rapid assessment and real-time data collection. Prioritize restoration for critical infrastructure, then high-density residential clusters, then rural areas.



Community support and resource coordination in partnership with FEMA, Red Cross, and local agencies to distribute resources and information about shelters, food, and mental health services. Enable two-way messaging for reporting ongoing hazards or requesting additional support.

Collecting and analyzing data helps identify areas for improvement and strengthens strategies for future events. Utilities are encouraged to share findings with peers and regulators to promote broader resilience.

After a storm, clear communication about billing pauses, payment assistance, and support resources is essential for customer trust.

Rate changes and impact of storms financially

In line with JD Power’s recommendations, utilities should proactively educate customers about rate changes, energy usage, and available assistance programs, especially after major storms.⁵ By leveraging AMI data and personalized dashboards, utilities can deliver targeted high-bill alerts that help customers understand and manage their usage.

Sample of billing message:



We’ve paused billing for storm-impacted customers. Need flexibility? **Call [number] or visit [link]**

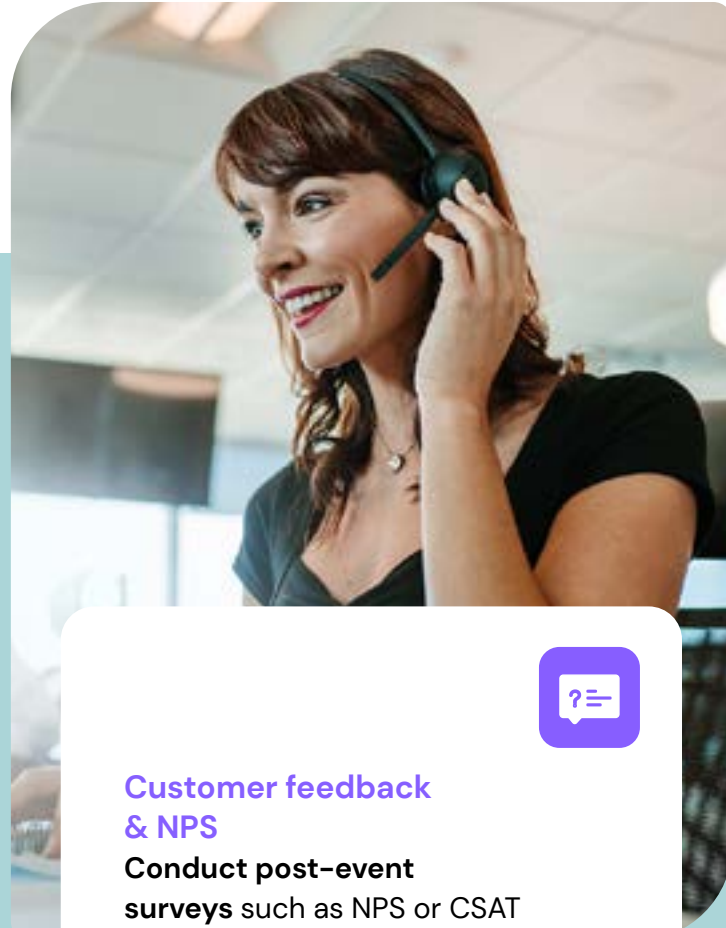
Above all, transparency about billing impacts is key to building lasting customer loyalty and confidence in utility storm response.



10

Continuous improvement and optimization

Every event is an opportunity to improve.



Customer feedback & NPS

Conduct post-event surveys such as NPS or CSAT to understand customer perception and trust drivers. Use feedback to refine messaging cadence, script content, and communication workflows.



Performance analysis

Audit message delivery metrics, customer engagement rates, and call center volumes to identify gaps and successes. Compare predicted vs. actual restoration timelines; review incident command and escalation protocols.



Template library and scenario expansion

Update and expand the messaging library annually by adding new scenarios like wildfires, winter storms, cyber threats, etc. Continue to refine based on regulatory changes and customer feedback.

11

Quick round-up of best practices and key takeaways

1

Start early and launch pre-storm communications as soon as a threat is identified.

2

Maintain cadence by using a consistent, scenario-based messaging cadence; pre, during, and post-storm.

3

Test and refine by conducting regular drills and scenario testing to ensure workflows, templates, and escalation protocols are effective.

4

Humanize every interaction and prioritize empathy, clarity, and trust in every message, especially during high-stress events.

5

Leverage smart technology by using intelligent workflows to automate, personalize, and measure every interaction, setting new engagement standards for regulated environments.

6

Integrate FAQ chatbots and support tools to resolve common questions quickly and efficiently.

7

Promote digital self-service options for outage tracking, bill payment, and usage monitoring.



12

The power of proactive outreach

Every severe weather event, whether a hurricane, winter storm, wildfire, or flood, reminds us that nature’s unpredictability is a constant in the utility industry.

What distinguishes leading utilities is not the ability to prevent storms, but the ability to anticipate, communicate, and empower communities before, during, and after disaster strikes.

Proactive, transparent communication is the single most effective tool utilities must implement to protect customers, support first responders, and strengthen public trust.

By leveraging advanced technology, multi-channel outreach, and inclusive messaging, utilities can ensure that every customer, regardless of location, language, or ability receives timely, actionable information when it matters most.

Utilities are the cornerstone of community resilience during severe weather conditions.



This playbook has demonstrated that **operational excellence** is built on:



- **Preparedness** includes investing in robust protocols, regular drills, and mutual aid partnerships to ensure readiness for any scenario.
- **Technology** that deploys intelligent workflows and High Throughput platforms delivering millions of alerts, segmented audiences, and automated compliance.
- **Customer-centric messaging** that prioritizes accessibility, empathy, and clarity in every message, and tailoring communications to the needs of diverse communities.
- **Two-way engagement** that sets customers up to feel more empowered by reporting outages, requesting assistance, and providing real-time feedback, creating a continuous loop of information that accelerates restoration and improves safety.
- **Continuous improvement by auditing every event**, analyzing performance data, and refining strategies to set new standards for utility storm response.

As a utility leader, your commitment to proactive outreach is more than a regulatory requirement; it is a cornerstone of community resilience. By framing preparedness guidance and fostering a culture of trust, you empower customers to take meaningful action and reinforce your organization’s role as a reliable partner in times of crisis.

While you can’t control the weather, you can control the message. With every alert sent, every update shared, and every question answered, you are not just restoring power; you are restoring confidence, safety, and hope for the communities you serve.

The future of utility storm response is clear:

- Anticipate threats, communicate early, and maintain a steady cadence of updates.
- Leverage every channel such as SMS, IVR, email, apps, and digital signage, to maximize reach and accessibility.
- Embrace innovation and feedback, always striving to improve the customer experience.

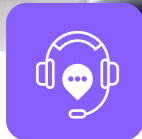
Be the utility your customers can count on, no matter what the storm brings.

Ready to transform your storm response across the full lifecycle? [Reach out to Convey](#) to see how you can turn chaos into coordination.



13

Recommended customer-facing communications



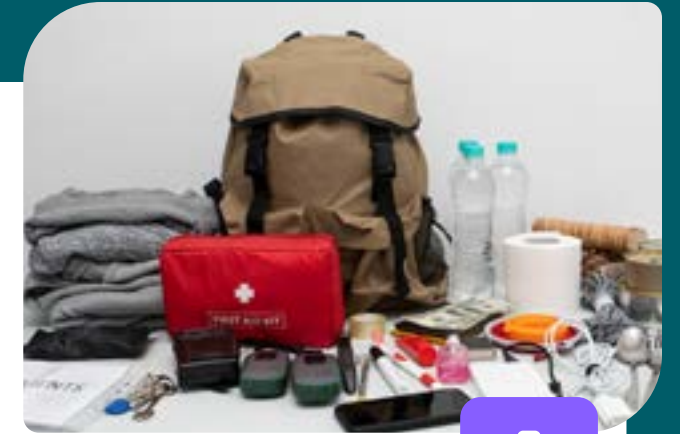
Customer-facing preparedness

Demonstrate a commitment to your customers' well-being by delivering clear, practical resources and tips and show that you have their back not just through the service you provide, but by supporting them through what's to come.

To strengthen customer preparedness and safety, utilities are encouraged to leverage customers' preferred communication channels to deliver proactive, prompt, and practical information⁶. Consider including the following types of messages in your outreach strategy to ensure your audience receives the support and guidance they need to feel supported and connected:

- Encourage customers to monitor local news, NOAA Weather Radio, or the FEMA app for official updates.
- Advise customers to write down emergency contacts and vital information so it remains accessible if devices lose power.
- Remind customers to keep phones and backup batteries charged to maintain access to critical communications.
- Share information about local evacuation zones and routes and recommend that customers share these details with their networks.
- Suggest that customers review insurance policies and keep important documents up to date and easily accessible.

Storm kits



Distribute checklists via SMS/email:

- Water (at least 1 gallon per person per day for 3 days)
- Batteries and battery-powered flashlights
- Portable phone charger and backup power bank
- Non-perishable food (3-day supply)
- Pet food and pet emergency supplies
- Prescription medications (at least a 7-day supply)
- Weather-appropriate clothing and sturdy shoes
- Copies of important documents (ID cards, medical cards, insurance, property records)
- First aid kit and personal hygiene items
- Cash, as ATMs may be down
- Emergency contact list written down
- Face coverings and disinfectant supplies

Property protection tips

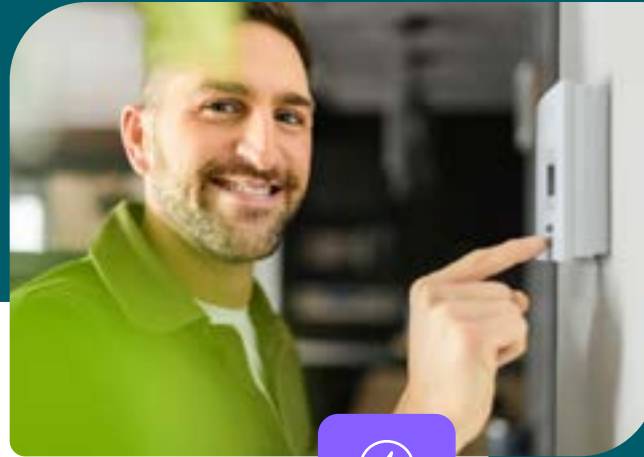


Provide timely messages via SMS and email:

- Wait for an official all-clear before returning to your property.
- Inspect structural damage, gas leaks, and electrical hazards.
- Avoid downed power lines and report them immediately.
- Do not enter flooded buildings until they are cleared by the authorities.
- Use flashlights, not candles, to avoid fire danger.
- Check for gas, water, and electrical damage before using it.
- Prevent mold by airing out rooms and disinfecting them.
- Throw away any food that may have been contaminated.



By leveraging Convey's platform, **utilities can guarantee these essential messages reach the right audiences** at the right time, building trust and supporting community resilience throughout the storm lifecycle.



Tips for energy conservation

Utilities should educate their customers on energy conservation strategies during storms and peak demand periods. Here are some practical tips that you can communicate to your customers through a proactive campaign that will educate and inform them:

- Use eco-friendly thermostat settings (such as **"eco" or "away" modes**) to automatically optimize heating and cooling.
- Raise your thermostat a few degrees in summer or lower it in winter to **reduce HVAC demand**.
- **Close blinds and curtains during the day** to keep interiors cool and reduce the need for air conditioning.
- **Unplug electronics and appliances that are not in use** to prevent "phantom" energy drain.
- **Delay use of high-energy appliances** (like ovens, washers, and dryers) until off-peak hours or after the storm passes.
- **Switch to LED light bulbs** and turn off lights in unoccupied rooms.
- **Use ceiling fans to circulate air** and make rooms feel cooler without lowering the thermostat.
- **Seal doors and windows** to prevent drafts and maintain indoor temperatures.
- **Limit hot water usage** by taking shorter showers and washing clothes with cold water.
- **Check for utility rebates and energy-saving incentives** in your area for using smart thermostats or upgrading to energy-efficient appliances.
- **Charge devices in advance** and use portable battery packs during outages.
- Set refrigerators and freezers to optimal temperatures (**refrigerator: 37–40°F, freezer: 0°F**) to preserve food longer during outages.

Practicing these energy conservation habits, especially during severe weather, **helps protect the power grid in your community and supports a more resilient response for everyone.**

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How prepared is your organization?

Ask yourself the following seven questions to ensure peak preparedness for the next storm season! Don't feel prepared? Reach out to Convey and we can walk you through what award-winning storm preparedness looks like.

1

Are we proactively communicating with customers before, during, and after a storm using the channels they prefer?

4

Have we tailored our outreach to accommodate vulnerable populations, diverse languages, and accessibility needs?

7

After a storm, do we consistently review our performance and update our approach based on customer engagement and outcomes?

2

Do our messages provide clear, actionable guidance that helps customers stay safe and prepared; not just service updates?

3

Is our storm communication plan tested, current, and supported by automated technology that ensures speed, scale, and compliance?

5

Do we have a strategy for educating customers on energy conservation and grid support during peak demand and outages?

6

Are we set up to gather real-time feedback and outage reports to accelerate response and restoration?



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Resources and references



1. [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#). (2024, May 23). NOAA predicts above-normal 2025 Atlantic hurricane season.
2. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). (2023, August 30). Hurricane safety tips.
3. [American Red Cross](#). (n.d.). Hurricane safety.
4. [J.D. Power](#). (2024, April 22). Tackling rising electric bills: Strategies for utilities.
5. [Ready.gov](#). (n.d.). Hurricane preparedness graphics.



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