



County of Berks Department of Emergency Services

DirectLink Technology Center ♦ 2561 Bernville Road ♦ Reading, PA 19605

NEWS STATEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Brian A. Gottschall DATE: 2/2/2011 NUMBER: 1

PHONE: (610) 236-8162 TIME: 1500 hours AUTHORIZATION:

BERN TOWNSHIP, PA – In response to the ongoing electrical outages caused by the recent winter weather, Berks County Department of Emergency Services has asked that the Berks County Chapter of the American Red Cross open a shelter to provide comfort for those persons impacted by this weather event.

MetEd has advised the County that most areas with significant electrical outages will be restored this evening. However, some homes throughout the county could be without power until Friday evening. This is particularly the case where the damage causing the outage is localized to just one or two homes. A large number of homes without power in Southeast Reading, Mt. Penn, and Lower Alsace Township could be without power until tomorrow night. Additionally, a large number of homes in the Boyertown area could be without power overnight. MetEd has mobilized crews from other regions and private contractors to address these outages as quickly as possible.

Most current information available from PP&L is that the majority of their customers with outages will be restored this evening, but individual homes and business impacted could be restored as late as tomorrow.

Those seeking shelter can report to Antietam High School, 100 Antietam Road, Lower Alsace Township, after 5:30 tonight where they will be able to sleep, shower and be fed. Individuals are asked to bring toiletries, bedding if available, medications, and any necessary personal items. There is adequate parking and security on-site.

For the safety of occupants, animals are not permitted in Red Cross shelters. Individuals are encouraged to keep their animals at home with ample food and water. If individuals seeking shelter believe that conditions in the home are unsafe for their pets, they should bring them to the shelter location where representatives of the County Animal Response Teams will take custody of them until they can be retrieved for return home.

Individuals are asked to find their own transportation to the shelter site or request transportation from family or friends. If no other transportation is available, those needing rides should call 610-236-8162 or 610-236-8174. All efforts will be made to accommodate the need. These numbers should only be used for transportation to the shelter operation. No other services will be able to be accessed through these numbers.

###

"To Assess, To Assist, To Advise"