



Squirrel sparks power loss near Gov. Dunleavy's residence

By The Associated Press

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An squirrel knocked out power to residences near Gov. Mike Dunleavy's mansion, Alaska electric company officials said.

The squirrel was interfering with equipment when the temporary loss of electrical service happened in Juneau Monday, The Juneau Empire reported.

"Our crews were on site very quickly, and found it not alive," said Debbie Driscoll, Alaska Electric Light and Power vice president of consumer affairs.

The squirrel generated a problem with fuses and sparked the power outage experienced by 15 customers.

"He-she-it actually caused a fair amount of damage," Driscoll said.

The utility company expected to maintain full service through the outbreak, Discoll said.

Electrical failures due to wildlife interference are rare but not unprecedented, Driscoll said.

"It happens. They sometimes get where they shouldn't be," Driscoll said.

Squirrels are more often the cause of mechanical issues in the southern part of the state, while birds generally create problems in Juneau.

The electrical failure caused by the squirrel was the second this year, following a disruption caused by an unknown type of bird.

“Outages in general are not particularly common for us, we have a fairly reliable system,” Driscoll said.