

Stage 3 Power Emergency Affects Metro Blue Line Service

(March 20) Rolling blackouts hit communities throughout California for a second day, Tuesday, as the state remained in a Stage 3 Power Emergency. The outages affected electrical equipment ranging from latte machines and elevators, to traffic lights and light-rail service.

The electrical "load shedding" began in the Los Angeles area at 9:30 a.m. Some 20,000 Southern California Edison customers lost power initially, but that number was expected to grow to 60,000 by 10 a.m.

Alerted at 9 a.m. that Edison needed to begin electrical "load shedding," Metro Rail Operations shut down alternate power substations in an eight-mile stretch of the Metro Blue Line between Slauson and Willow stations. The shutdown was still in affect as of 11:30 a.m.

Trains continued in normal operation, however, as other power substations took up the slack. There are 14 substations along the 22-mile Metro Blue Line. The Metro Red Line, which takes power from the city's DWP, was not affected by the blackouts.

On Monday, Edison asked the MTA to take power substations off-line as a precautionary measure. Train operation wasn't affected, but later in the day due to a blackout in Long Beach that took traffic lights out of service, trains encountered five-minute delays. Ticket vending machines on platforms at four stations also were out of service.

Bus Operations, meanwhile, reported only minor problems caused by out-of-service traffic lights that slowed bus service. John Roberts, deputy executive officer, Bus Operations, said all operating divisions have emergency generators that can provide basic electrical service in the event of a blackout.

Edison said the Monday's blackouts touched 430,984 customers in 140 cities. More than 1.2 million customers were affected throughout California.

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