

Entergy Louisiana and Burns & McDonnell Mobilize Construction of 16.3-Mile, 230-kV Waterford to Vacherie Transmission Line in Southeast Louisiana

Innovative Solutions by Joint Project Team Paving the Way for Improved Reliability and Load Capabilities to Support 1.3 Million Louisianans

KILLONA, Louisiana — After overcoming a few years of unavoidable, unrelated challenges, [Entergy Louisiana](#) and [Burns & McDonnell](#) have begun helicopter operations to construct the utility's 16.3-mile, 230-kV Waterford to Vacherie transmission line.

By significantly [upgrading local power delivery infrastructure](#) to a higher rating, the critical project will address future load growth and reliability needs in southeast Louisiana for the more than 1.3 million residents served by Entergy in the region.

In 2018, Entergy Louisiana selected Burns & McDonnell to rebuild the high-voltage transmission line from the utility's Waterford to Vacherie substations through the marshes of southern Louisiana. To execute the project, Burns & McDonnell planned to transport transmission structures with helicopters from the laydown yard into the marsh, and then use swamp equipment to set the assets.

During the same year, Entergy elected to halt all aerial operations and holistically reevaluate the use of helicopters for project delivery. Based on new standards and practices — which included a phased-gate process for approvals — the utility re-instituted the ability to utilize helicopter operations near the end of 2019. The Entergy and Burns & McDonnell team devised an execution process that allowed Waterford-to-Vacherie work to begin — creating a plan that would optimize flight operations, lessen impacts on the environment and minimize overall work hours.

The project team's planned remobilization to the field in August 2020 was delayed by the arrival of Hurricane Laura. The storm caused significant damage to [Entergy's grid throughout its Louisiana service territory, which Burns & McDonnell supported in restoring power](#). During that time, focus switched from transmission upgrades to restoring power to the utility's 219 transmission lines, 292 substations, 3,729 transformers and 18,707 spans of wire that were damaged.

Part of the firm's emergency response included repurposing the existing structures that had been delivered for the Waterford to Vacherie project. When the collective dust settled after the joint storm response, the combined project teams worked to develop several different iterations of how the project could be executed throughout 2021, including if summer outages could be granted, minimization to crop damages during the sugar cane growing season and the schedule within which the transmission pole manufacturer could deliver replacement structures.

“[Electrical transmission and distribution facilities](#) continue to play an important role for our society — they connect us to green energy, power our economy and provide the reliability needed to keep us safe,” says [Jeff Allen](#), vice president and regional Construction/Design-Build Group manager for Burns & McDonnell in [Houston](#). “Our experience in and commitment to finding new solutions for traditional [overhead transmission](#) challenges leads the industry in providing for the future. We are proud to collaborate with Entergy to deliver this vital project in support of Louisianans.”

Burns & McDonnell, with experienced professionals who have developed some of the largest transmission and distribution projects in North America, leverages its multidisciplinary construction team to optimize project delivery and tailor solutions to fit the needs of every customer.

Using an integrated engineer-procure-construct (EPC) approach, the firm has the industry-leading team needed to power projects to the finish line, on time and on budget. Burns & McDonnell ranks [No. 1 in Power](#), is the No. 2 design firm in the Texas and Louisiana region, and ranks among the top construction firms worldwide, according to *Engineering News-Record*.

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About Burns & McDonnell

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies bringing together an unmatched team of 7,600 engineers, construction professionals, architects, planners, technologists and scientists to design and build our critical infrastructure. With an integrated construction and design mindset, we offer full-service capabilities with more than 60 offices globally. Founded in 1898, Burns & McDonnell is a 100% employee-owned company. Learn how we are [designed to build](#).

About Entergy Louisiana

Entergy Louisiana, LLC provides electric service to more than 1 million customers and natural gas service to more than 93,000 customers in the greater Baton Rouge area. It has operations in southern, central and northern Louisiana. Entergy Louisiana is a subsidiary of Entergy Corporation, an integrated energy company engaged in electric power production, transmission and retail distribution operations. Entergy delivers electricity to 3 million utility customers in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Entergy owns and operates one of the cleanest large-scale U.S. power generating fleets with approximately 30,000 megawatts of electric generating capacity, including 7,000 megawatts of nuclear power. Headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana, Entergy has annual revenues of \$10 billion and more than 13,000 employees. Learn more at entergylouisiana.com and follow [@EntergyLA](https://twitter.com/EntergyLA) on social media.