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## The Top 10 Most Unusual U.S. Blackouts of 2017

- 1. *Statue of darkness.*** Not even Lady Liberty is invulnerable to power outages. The nation's most famous statue was left without its hallmark illuminating lights for several hours March 7. Although there was some online speculation that it was a deliberate move to show solidarity with the Day Without A Woman inequality protests scheduled for the following day, the National Parks Service said the New York City blackout was probably due to construction work.
- 2. *Beware.*** Crews in Bradford, Ill., were busy as bees June 11 after a tree branch, rotted from beehives and honeycombs inside, broke off and landed on power lines. The subsequent outage was prolonged when crews had to find a way to remove the state-protected insects without harming them, and were forced to wait for the arrival of state agency employees.
- 3. *Why did the chicken cross the road?*** There was a whole lot of squawking over a blackout in Felton, Del., on Dec. 12. Sixty customers were left without electricity for two hours following a crash involving a tractor-trailer truck carrying a load of chickens. The collision not only cut electricity to area residents, but snarled traffic after the flock escaped.
- 4. *A cross to bear.*** A utility crew summoned to a Mountain View, Ala., power outage on June 8 got a bit of a shock when they discovered the source of the problem. After tracing the outage to a transformer on a utility pole, workers arrived on scene to find a 150-pound black bear dead on the ground. It is believed that the animal climbed the pole, touched the live transformer and was electrocuted. The outage was confined to about 20 customers, with electricity restored in about an hour.
- 5. *Fight ends in knock-out – of power.*** An entire neighborhood in Hialeah, Fla., paid the price for a young couple's quarrel on April 28 when an 18-year-old caused an outage during a fight with his 17-year-old girlfriend. Investigators reported that the teen allegedly grabbed his girlfriend's purse, lit it on fire and threw it over the gate where he lives. The burning purse then hit a palm tree, with flames spreading to a nearby electric box and knocking out electric services. It was unclear if the couple remains together.
- 6. *The naked truth.*** A 25-year-old naked man jumped off a train on May 15 in Topock, Ariz., then allegedly broke water pipes near an electrical box, resulting in a blackout. Sheriff's officials found the man stumbling on a road and covered in blood. Apparently a 72-year-old woman saw the naked man walking up to her home after her electricity went out and screamed at him to leave. Her 86-year-old boyfriend fired a shot after the man ignored commands to get off the property, wounding him in the face. County prosecutors were reviewing the case.
- 7. *Don't blame it on the squirrel (even if he was there).*** While often the protagonist behind power outages, a Hampton, Va., squirrel actually played a secondhand role in a blackout. Fire officials discovered a singed squirrel clutched in the talons of a hawk that flew into power lines. They believe the bird caught the squirrel then attempted to land on top of the pole to enjoy its meal but instead touched a live power line, electrocuting both bird and squirrel while setting the woods on fire below.
- 8. *Cough it up.*** Excessive coughing was the excuse a man gave authorities for crashing his vehicle into a Michigan utility pole and knocking out power to more than 1,300 DP&L customers on Feb. 19.
- 9. *Trash talk.*** It really stinks when the power goes out — and residents in Atlanta, Ga., can attest to this quite literally. On Nov. 6, more than 5,000 customers were left in the dark items, knocked down power lines as it fell, which led to a chaos-causing rush hour outage.
- 10. *Power supply goes out to sea.*** On Sept. 19 a sailboat — yes, a sailboat! — was blamed for knocking out power to 2,575 customers in Michigan's Grand Haven Township. The boat's mast hit an overhead wire in a swampy area on the Lost Channel, resulting in the 75-minute blackout. The boat caught fire and its sole passenger reportedly attempted to put out the fire himself before jumping off the sailboat and swimming to shore.