



Houston Grocery Store Survives with a Microgrid

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The nation's attention is focused on the devastation brought to Texas and Louisiana by Hurricane Harvey, but there is one positive development that deserves our attention: the use of microgrids to ensure the continued operation of essential services in the face of natural disasters. An electric microgrid is broadly defined as a local network of multiple sources of power (such as solar, wind, or natural gas) and controlled by local consumers of that power that can be connected and disconnected from the surrounding electric utility grid.

As reported in the Houston Business Journal,

<https://www.bizjournals.com/houston/news/2017/08/28/microgrids-pass-crucial-test-for-heb-during-harvey.html>,

Houston's H-E-B grocery store chain has, over the past year, installed natural gas-fired generators in many of its stores. The generators are served by underground pipelines unaffected by the storm and have allowed the stores to disconnect from the power grid and to continue to operate. The microgrid developer, Enchanted Rock, has also installed microgrid generators at some gas stations and at an assisted living center.

Microgrids such as those deployed in Houston provide security and access to important and essential services in the event of disasters, whether man-made or natural, that cause lengthy power outages. Hospitals, governments, businesses such as grocery stores, gas stations, insurers, schools and other such entities, and the customers that rely on them, can benefit from the installation of microgrids. Microgrids can save lives.

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