Power keeps slipping amid cold weather

The state’s power situation worsened Tuesday as millions of Texans waited in the cold and dark for their electricity to return. The system lost more power Tuesday, according to the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, which manages the state’s power grid. ERCOT said frigid temperatures had knocked out a total 45,000 megawatts of power generation offline, more than the 36,000 megawatts that went offline Monday. “You haven’t been able to add as much as back when I would have liked,” Dan Woodson, ERCOT’s senior director of system operations, said in a Tuesday afternoon news conference.

About 4.2 million Texans were still without power early Tuesday afternoon, according to ERCOT’s energy tracking site, energystorage.us. In Houston, about 117,000 power customers, plus about 16 million Tuesday morning, according to Houston utility CenterPoint Energy, the regulated utility that delivers electricity to Houston area homes and provides natural gas service, urged customers Tuesday afternoon to prepare for power outages that could last for several days as cold weather continues to threaten third-party power generation. “Given uncertain timing and the ongoing public safety risks, the senior weather conditions in Houston and surrounding areas, CenterPoint Energy advises Power outages as By

ERCOT in spotlight as outages persist

By Amanda Drane and Marcy de Luna

ERCOT continues on B7

ERCOT, the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, has been under scrutiny for the past week over the power failures that left tens of millions of Texans in the dark for days. ERCOT, the electric grid operator for most of Texas, has faced criticism for its handling of the winter storm that caused widespread power outages across the state.

On Tuesday, the electric grid operator announced that it had restored power to about 95% of the state’s customers. ERCOT said it had reached a record peak demand of 73,928 megawatts, or 73.9 gigawatts, at 5:25 p.m. on Monday. ERCOT also said it had restored power to 89% of customers who were still without power on Tuesday morning.

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A transmission tower supports power lines after the snowstorm hit Fort Worth. When the fossil fuel plants failed Monday, they took 30,000 megawatts off the grid. Texas could have relied on power plants with gas...