

FCC Says 12 Radio Stations Are Dark From Hurricane Ida, But The Big Problem Is Cell Service.



Bloomberg

It is likely more radio stations are out of service in the wake of Hurricane Ida than what the official count suggests, but for the moment the Federal Communications Commission says a dozen radio stations are dark. Those are the stations that filed reports Tuesday with the FCC's Disaster Information Reporting System or DIRS. But with power and telephone service in southern Louisiana mostly offline, other stations either were unable to report – or simply had their hands full with the voluntary check-in.

The FCC says these FMs reported being out of service: hot AC “106.7 The Krewe” KKND, adult R&B KMEZ (102.9); and modern rock “Alt 92.3” WZRH – all Cumulus Media stations in New Orleans. [Inside Radio](#) reported yesterday that the entire Cumulus cluster in New Orleans was silent. Since then a Cumulus spokesperson says “Nash Country 106.1” WRKN is back on the air as are all of the company's stations in Baton Rouge.

Also dark, per the FCC, are iHeartMedia classic hits “104.1 The Spot” KVDU New Orleans and Lee Airwaves talk WJDR (98.3) and classic country “The Legend” WSSM-FM (104.9) in Prentiss, MS. The FCC also says one FM translator (W208FC) is off the air.

There are also four AMs silent, including Lee Airwaves classic hits “The Pearl” WCJU Columbia, MS (1450) and classic country “The Legend” WHSY, Hattiesburg, MS (950); Shadowlands Communications religious “Sonshine 800” WSHO, New Orleans; and iHeartMedia gospel “Amen 940” WYLD, New Orleans.

Some of the stations reported silent by the FCC may now be back on the air since the Disaster Information Reporting System, or DIRS, offers just a snapshot in time.

The silver lining [in the daily update](#) is that more radio stations have checked in with the FCC as being on the air. The latest count released by the agency includes 31 FMs and 12 AMs as of 11am ET

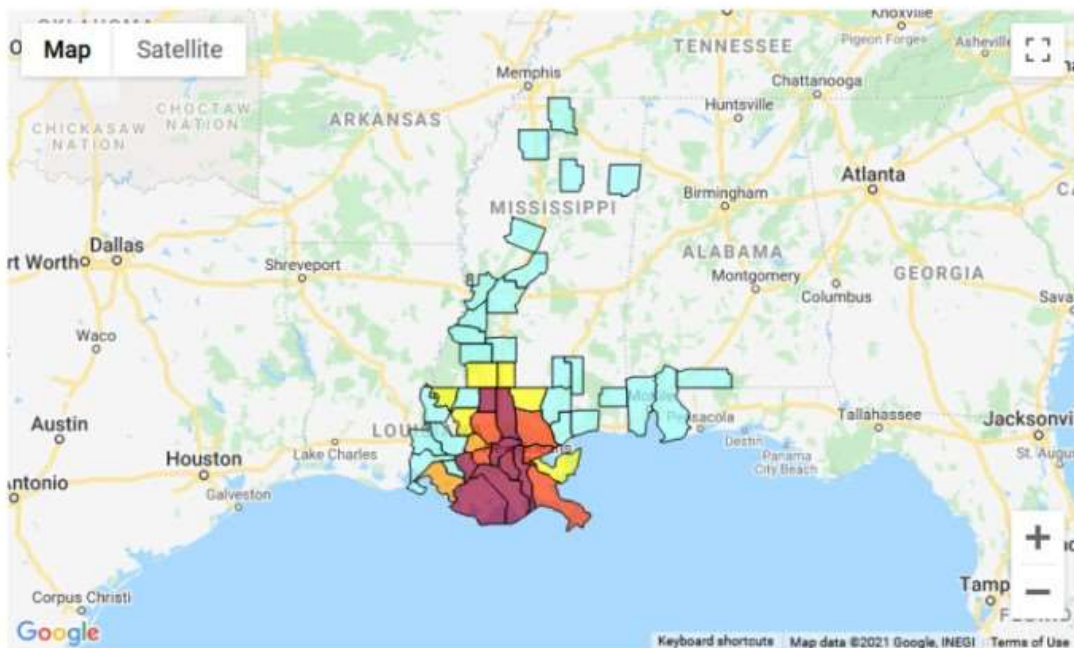
on Tuesday. *[While any disaster can occur one step beyond all preparation, most stations stay on the air or are returned to service quickly. Our intention at Radio of Hope is to be prepared to remain on air and then HAVE all available information to share during and post-disaster.]*

Similar numbers have been released for television. They show four TV stations are reported as being out of service while 27 told the FCC they are on the air.

The big communications collapse in Louisiana has been with cell phone service as eight counties report 61% or more of their cell towers are offline. That includes Terrebonne Parish – home to Houma, LA – where 100% of the cell towers are not working. Things don't look much better in several other parishes including Lafourche (94.9%), Assumption (94.7%) St. Charles (68.3%), St. John the Baptist (66.7%), St. Helena (61.5%), Tangipahoa (61.0%) and Jefferson (60.2%). Statewide the FCC says 38% of Louisiana cell phone towers are currently dark.

Percent Cell Sites Out-of-Service By County

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1 - 15 16 - 30 31 - 45 46 - 60 61 - 100

The update shows a small numbers of cell phone towers down in Mississippi and Alabama.

The FCC has said its operations center will remain open 24-hours a day to assist broadcasters and others, including expediting any Special Temporary Authority (STA) request or other waivers. A handful have already been approved by the FCC, but none are for radio or TV stations.