



## **Power line damaged by squirrel, causes damages to home, resident forced to pay**

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An East Texas man claims a power company's policy is dangerous for homeowners.

The man said a damaged power line caused hundreds of dollars in damages to his home. But the power company refuses to pay for it.

"The lights blew out, the microwave blew out, central heat and air blew out," said homeowner, Paul Strait.

Strait said last week his internet stopped working. When crews came out to repair it, they found the power line was touching the internet line.

"I saw this was starting to melt, this line right here. It caught flame right there and when there is electricity on the line we aren't allowed to touch it," said a Sudden link representative.

Strait said what happened outside could be felt through the inside of his home.

"I was afraid that my house was going to burn down and I was hoping they would send someone right over and when stuff started blowing out over the house it was scary," Strait said.

Strait contacted Oncor and they came out and repaired the power line. He said when he first spoke to them about the damages to the inside of his home they told them they would pay eventually.

"They wanted me to pay for everything out of my pocket and submit whatever the damages were for reimbursement," Strait said.

After further investigation, Oncor determined the power line was damaged by a squirrel.

"It caused a short which sent abnormal voltage potential through his house through his electric lines," said Oncor Representative Charles Hill.

Since it was an act of nature, they claim they're not financially responsible.

"Because it was something that was not our negligence, not something that our employees did in error," Hill said.

But Strait believes a change needs to happen.

"They're saying their policy is that they are not responsible for providing safe electricity for east Texas, I'm only responsible for what's outside but what they are selling comes inside your house," Strait said.

Oncor said they are working with the homeowner and are sending him documents regarding their company policies. Strait said he has estimated \$500 worth of damages to the appliances to in his home.