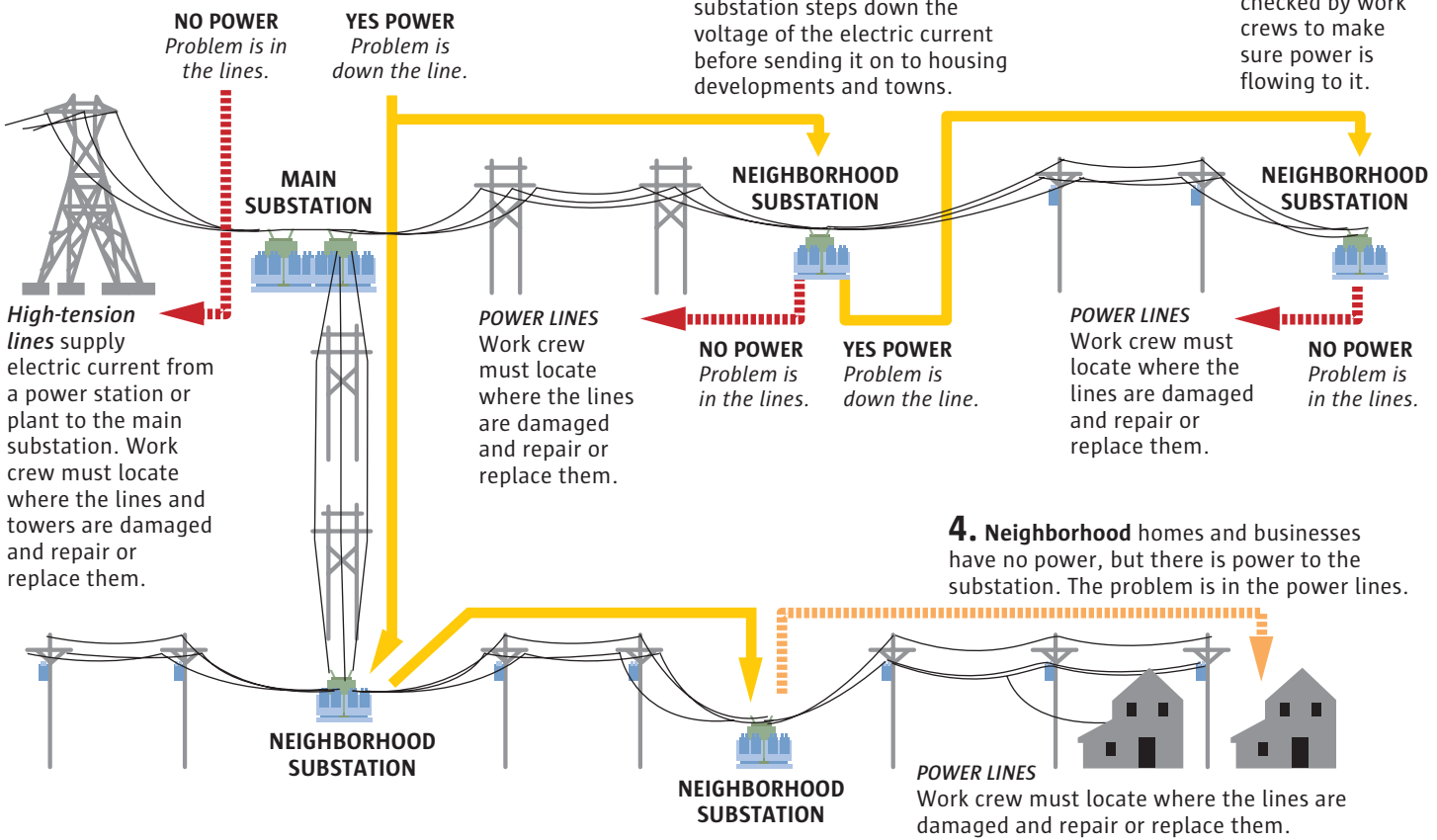
Repairing the power grid

Restoring power to homes and businesses is more complicated than removing trees from downed power lines or simply flipping a switch at a substation. Work crews have to locate where the breaks are in the grid. Here are the steps it takes to repair the electric power system after a major storm:

1. Main substation is checked by work crews first to make sure power is flowing to it. The main substation steps down the voltage of the electric current from the high-tension lines and transfers the current to neighborhood substations.

2. Neighborhood substations are checked by work crews to make sure power is flowing to them. The neighborhood substation steps down the voltage of the electric current before sending it on to housing developments and towns.

3. The next neighborhood substation is checked by work crews to make sure power is flowing to it.



Sources: Seattle City Light, Puget Sound Energy and the Iowa Association Of Electric Cooperatives

THE SEATTLE TIMES