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SENATORS: Guglielmo, Witkos

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Becker, Boukus, Candelora,  
Carter, Crawford, Davis,  
Fawcett, Flexer, Fritz,  
Geigler, Genga, Greene,  
Grogins, Kokoruda, Lemar,  
Lesser, Mikutel, O'Brien,  
Orange, Reynolds, Ritter,  
Rojas, Rovero, Simanski,  
Smith, Steinberg, Tercyak,  
Yaccarino

SENATOR FONFARA: Good morning, everyone. And we'd like to begin our hearing this morning on gathering information which will help us make decisions following the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene, which took place on Saturday the 27th and Sunday the 28th of August and leading to, I believe the largest power outage in our state that culminated in some folks finally getting power on Tuesday, September 6th.

We have a number of speakers here today. We're going to begin the first portion with electric utilities between 9:45 and noon. But before we do so, we'd like to get an opportunity for our leaders to make some opening remarks and will begin with Senate President Pro Tem Donald Williams.

Senator Williams.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Thank you, Senator Fonfara and thank you, to the four committees that are involved in hearing today. There will be another hearing at which we'll air additional issues. So I want to thank the legislators who are here today and we'll be joined by many others as the day goes by because this is a full day long public hearing.

But I especially want to thank our constituents, the men and women and the families and the business owners across the state of Connecticut. We, as Legislators, have heard from many of you and many of you have wanted us to not just simply forget Hurricane Irene and go about our business, but to get information, take away lessons and be better prepared in the future.

I also want to thank those constituents who have joined us in a new way over the last week and that is through Facebook and Twitter. The social media of today is not a substitute for this kind of public hearing, yet at the same time it can supplement our knowledge and provide an opportunity for constituents to share their experiences, their advice and suggestions from the convenience of their home.

Not everyone has the schedule and the time to

come here to the capitol in Hartford to be a part of public hearings like this. So this was an opportunity for folks to share their experiences directly with us and impact on our understanding of the crisis and to help us shape the questions for the public hearing today.

And we are here to examine Connecticut's readiness and response regarding Hurricane Irene. The goal here is to inform and to learn. There were many frustrations in the aftermath of the hurricane, but the purpose of this public hearing is to transform those frustrations into action steps that will leave us better prepared next time.

So there will be questions for Connecticut Light & Power and United Illuminating and issues such as tree trimming, managing the line crews, priorities for restoration, communication between the utilities, state officials and municipal officials and our townspeople and constituents. But there will also be questions for other utilities, the operators of our landline phone companies, our wireless and cellular phone companies; the municipalities and those representing regions of our cities and towns. Because as we go forward planning and be better prepared, it's going to be the cornerstone of our recommendations coming out of this.

And when I mentioned planning it reminds me of a hurricane that folks compared Irene to Hurricane Gloria back in 1985. And in many ways some of the planning that we had in place for Hurricane Irene came from the lessons we learned from Hurricane Gloria. And yet, you know, just like that old expression that sometimes folks wind up fighting the last war

and preparing for the last war, we know that the next emergency, the next weather emergency could be much worse than Hurricane Irene. The circumstances could be much different.

I mean, imagine even though there are some people in this room who feel like 1985 wasn't such a long time ago -- actually in 1985 with Hurricane Gloria cell phones played no meaningful role in communication before, during or after the hurricane. The Internet played no meaningful role in communication. Cable television was in its relative infancy and cable television providing phone service for individuals at home did not exist.

So when we talk about communication, if we were looking at Hurricane Irene through the lens of Hurricane Gloria, we would have found that many things have changed and that we must adapt coming out of Hurricane Irene in order to be better prepared for the next hurricane where the circumstances almost certainly will be different.

So again, I would say that we can never guard against every aspect of weather emergencies, but we certainly can learn and be better prepared in the future. And our goal today is to ask tough questions, get the answers that the constituents and the State of Connecticut to serve and to come away at the end of the series with action steps to make sure that we are as best prepared as we can possibly be to meet those weather emergencies in the future and protect our citizens and restore their utilities as quickly as possible. So again, thank you, to everyone for being here and being a part of this process. Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, Senator Williams.

Representative Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Senator Fonfara.

I just wanted to state also for the record that this hearing is really about doing the analysis that is necessary to find out what did we do well and what can we improve upon.

It's important for us, as a Legislature, to do thorough analysis so that we can look at our response to the storm and provide the information necessary to develop effective public policy to make the improvements as we go forward.

So today is going to be about asking questions, many questions, and their purpose is in information gathering so I hope everybody will understand that going forward.

And now it's my pleasure to introduce to everyone the Speaker of the House Christopher Donovan, who is here today and will make some remarks as well regarding today's proceedings.

REP. DONOVAN: Thank you, Chairman Nardello.

Thank everyone for coming here today. You know, we've all experienced Hurricane Irene. We were all there. So it's good to get together again and say, all right. What did we learn from it? What can we do better?

You know, we can't control mother nature. We think we can sometimes, but we can't. And like many of us, we were sitting around Saturday or making plans and preparations on Saturday, knowing that the storm was coming our way. But the good news is we had reports as it worked its way up the coast, but like

many of us I was getting prepared going to the supermarket, making sure we had batteries, flashlights, water, et cetera.

And all of us sat and waited and saw what was happening. Well, utility companies sure were getting prepared as well and doing what they had to do. Then the storm hit. Some places it hit really hard. Other places it was relatively diminished than what people expected.

The aftermath: floods, loss of electricity. Many people suffered without power for a long, long time. It jeopardized their health, safety and livelihoods and others had to deal with the floods and destruction of their businesses.

So we're here today to say, okay. We thought we were prepared. We thought we had a good response, but we can do better. So what can we do? Now that we've experienced this we have the knowledge now to know what has happened and let's find out ways to be more prepared for a worst-case scenario. Do we have enough crews on standby? Were plans for communication ready in preparation? And then in terms of response, how were our communications in terms of municipalities. Some of us heard from our public officials. Were there a number of adequate crews? Was that information communication going as well ?

So I think what we are saying is, okay. We went through a rough time, but we are a community. We need to work together and work out those best ways to prepare for another storm because there's going to be another one at the best ways that we can respond to it for the good of our communities.

So thank you, everyone, for being here.

REP. NARDELLO: If we will just take a one minute recess while we discussed the time allotted to everybody so we can make that announcement.

SENATOR FONFARA: Okay. Just wanted to get some ground rules here so that we have ample time for members who will have questions. And as I believe Senator Williams indicated, the use of some of the social media, people will be able to use Facebook to send in questions if they're watching from home or from work. We do have a number of questions that have already been sent in through that medium. And we will intersperse some of those questions as we move forward.

So if we could limit the statements from the utilities, CL&P, United Illuminating. And I know that the municipals are here and they may or may not be represent -- they are representing different utilities. So we'll try to manage this as best as possible and if we could limit the statements to 15 minutes, hopefully we can make that happen.

Utilities, the municipals need a little bit more time. I think we could accommodate them and still have enough time for members to have questions following those statements.

So we'll begin with Jeff Butler from -- president and chief operating officer of Connecticut Light and Power. Jeff.

JEFFREY BUTLER: Thank you, Senator . As the Senator mentioned, I'm Jeff Butler. I'm the president and chief operating officer of Connecticut light and power. With me today

are Bill Quinlan, vice president of customer solutions and Bob Hicks, the vice president of the customer operations.

I'm pleased to be here today to share with you information regarding Tropical Storm Irene and CL&P's effort to restore electric service.

In CL&P's 100-year history, no storm has caused as much damage or as many outages as Tropical Storm Irene. The combination of wind and flooding ravaged 15 states along the eastern seaboard. The storm left as many as 7 million customers from the Carolinas to Maine without electricity with over a million of them here in Connecticut.

I believe that CL&P's preparedness for the response to the storm was appropriate, effective and strong; however, I know that being without power for a short period of time, let alone days, is a frustrating experience for our customers. Today's hearing and further analysis by various state agencies provides us with an opportunity to pause and review the storm, are preparedness and our restoration efforts.

From my perspective, as CL&P president, I want to share with you information, share with you information about the storm and how we prepared and performed in greater detail. If you would flip-- I believe everybody has a copy of the slide deck that was handed out.

Going right into page 2, I think as you look at Tropical Storm Irene's path, as you look at from the Atlantic of the eastern seaboard, recognizing that it wasn't similar size to Hurricane Katrina, the breadth of the width of the storm as it came of the seaboard, which



continue to expand and the winds that were associated with it and the fact that given the way it came up the seaboard impacted our typical ability to bring in mutual aid crews from states to the south of us.

Gone on to page 2: The combination of the went and the rains, as I mentioned ravaged the 15 states, cut power to 7 million homes and businesses, 2 million here in New England lost power. The one thing I think is really important is the entire state of Connecticut took a direct hit. When you look at our service territory of 149 towns, every single town and city was impacted by Tropical Storm Irene.

As everybody is aware, our Governor declared a state of emergency for Connecticut on August 25th. President Obama declared Connecticut a major disaster area on September 2nd. And then associated with the storm, 45 people lost their lives along the East Coast in eight states, and unfortunately, including one person here in Connecticut. Right now the storm's costs currently are estimated at \$12 billion across the eastern seaboard.

Moving onto preparation for Storm Irene: Our planning and preparation for Irene began six days prior to the storm hitting our service territory. The Monday prior to the storm's arrival we began tracking the storm when it was still down and considerably south of us. Five days prior, we started looking at our storm rosters, looking at the personnel and validating the people available and that we had people to fill the roles. Our storm rooms were checked and that means all our materials and supplies to make sure that adequate

supplies on hand, given the possibility of direct impact on our service territory and the damage that would be associated with the.

Four days prior, we activated our system command, our incident commands system. We started securing line and tree crews through both mutual aid and/or directly through our contractors. And I think it's very important to recognize that there was a tremendous benefit, in fact, that we have strong relationships with some contractors as it became apparent that we are not going to be able to get the mutual aid crews that we were requesting. We relied heavily on those contractors that we do use and many of the first arrivers were, in fact -- and many of the groups we used throughout the event were brought through, through those contractors that we have relationships with.

We refreshed training for our corporate center employees to support us in restoration. Three days prior, we placed all our critical resources on call. We canceled all vacations. We mobilized our internal emergency response organization to plan for the storm's anticipated arrival, and certainly the damage associated with it.

We ensured that the logistics, when you look at the amount of people we anticipated bringing in, having logistics in terms of feeding and lodging was critical. That was all taking place. And then, I also began participating in the daily briefings with the Governor and his staff.

One of the things that occurred three days prior to is our account executives proactively started reaching out to the towns across our

service territory to discuss our preparation and start identifying the points of contact with the towns that we serve. They, too, proactively reached out to the media with customer-focused communication, really a focus on safety. As everybody saw, as you go through an event like this, a lot of wires down. Public safety becomes a very significant aspect of this both in terms of lawyers down, but also in the proper installation of generators, which can be an issue, and also to plan for multiple day outages.

We used news releases. We broadcast public service announcements and we also use the social media post on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. We also made approximately 1.1 million automated outbound calls from our call center to inform customers of our preparation, provided important safety reminders to them and offered guidance to our customers on what they should do in their preparation and especially those with medical conditions. And we secured from outside our service territory aero-patrolling capability recognizing that the damage across our service territory may be extensive. We brought in the helicopters to be able to do area patrols which would facilitate our assessment.

Day one: We had foreign crews that arrived on our property. We did safety briefings with those, and we also went back and verified that all our preparations were complete -- verified and completed and were on schedule.

Just to put it in perspective of CL&P's major storms, as I said earlier, Storm Irene was the worst in Connecticut history. We had at the peak approximately 671,000 customers out of

power, but during the entire nine days of restoration we were restored approximately 1,024,000 customers. And that's, you know, damaged continued to occur. We continued to have trees fall. There was other things that took place. So it wasn't just about restoring the number of customers at peak. We were restoring other customers that were affected during that nine-day period as well.

That we peaked at approximately 7500 people supporting the restoration efforts. That is both CL&P, our NU employees, mutual aid and contractors and just looking at a couple of the top storms we've had. When you look at Irene -- I mention the number nine-day restoration, Hurricane Gloria, which I know many people in the state remember, 506,000 customers impacted and it was a ten-day restoration and Hurricane Bob which occurred in '91, 275,000 in four days.

So overall, I believe that, you know, when you look at the magnitude of damage across our entire service territory, the restoration went very well.

And we also have this next page on page 6 looking at the trouble spots. And as I said earlier, the damage was extensive. No part of our service territory was spared and our current estimate is we have approximately 16,000 trouble spots across our service territory. That had to be dealt with in order to restore power back to our customers as we went forward. Looking at that, that's approximately 1300 poles were broken. We replaced over 100 miles of wire. Over 1700 transformers were damaged and needed to be replaced. And well over 2500 residential or business services needed -- were down and

needed to be repaired or replaced and over 1500 roads were blocked by downed trees and wires across Connecticut. And we've set wall boards around the room that gives a good example of the amount of damage we saw across our service territory.

Moving onto CL&P's restoration priorities: We do utilize the industry best practices in terms of prioritizing for restoring of power in such a large event such as we had. Public safety is first and foremost. Emergency response, the 911; make safe and clear wires down and then assist with the road clearance. And those last two, I can tell you and many of you now when on for many days. Those were not complete in the first 24/48 hours. We were assisting clearing roads throughout most of the restoration process.

In terms of folks restoring power to critical customers first, hospitals, fire departments, police stations, those type of businesses, water treatment, wastewater -- than focusing on restoring the most amount of customers as quickly as possible, and that's really looking at what we call the backbone of the system, the mainline that come out from our substations into the towns and the communities.

But one of the things as the power outages went on and the time lengthened, we also shift our prioritization criteria to include town centers in some of the hardest hit communities, that virtually the entire towns were out and also focused on restoring power to schools. And we did that twofold, first recognizing it was the start of the new school season, but also I know in many towns the schools became shelters for those customers

that still did not have power restored. And as we complete restoration we started looking at the side taps, the laterals that come off the mainlines and individual service lines that (inaudible) individual customers, residential and business.

I do want -- as I -- and the bottom really reinforced the damage assessment, road clearance, and communications continued throughout this event.

Moving onto page 8, CL&P's restoration: As I mentioned, I do believe we had a strong response to the storm. When you look at what we accomplished from the peak of 671,000 customers out, I think the preparedness we learned from past events -- I know some of the stuff we learned goes there back to the Gloria the Senator mentioned, but also the March, 2010 storms and most recently the severe thunderstorms that hit Connecticut in June of this year.

So focusing on preparedness, communication and then the development use of town liaisons came out of the March 2010 storms.

Resources, I believe, were -- were effectively deployed once we received them. Eventually we had over 1100 mutually-aid contractor line crews and nearly 603 tree crews that were responding to clearing roads and restoring power. That is on top of approximately 4,000 NU support personnel that were also assisting in the storm restoration.

I'm very proud of the fact that our call center personnel and technology and issues have worked well. As I mentioned, we've made over 1.1 million automated phone calls to

inform CL&P customers of our preparations, specifically what they need to do around safety reminders. We received 476,000 calls -- which is in the first 24 hours which is equivalent to 25 days of our normal call volume. We responded to approximately 1 million CL&P customer calls over the nine days and sent out approximately 500,000 outage responses via text messages to our customers.

As we were winding down, one of the issues, though, is becomes -- occurs in a large restoration effort, is customers that may have not called us that after services down or damaged, that even though the system has been built, they may still have individual customers out.

So we actually made post-outage restoration. We made 250,000 outbound calls to verify with customers, in fact, their power had been restored because those areas our records showed everything had been restored and was really an outreach to ensure that we didn't have individual customers out there that had not made contact with us and hadn't been restored. And so to my knowledge, there was no issue with customers' ability to reach our call centers and -- which is a significant improvement over the March 2010 storms.

Throughout the restoration process senior officers led the comprehensive outreach. I participated in the Governor's daily briefing both prior to the storm and following the storm. I also held morning media briefings and provided key messages through daily press releases. Bill Quinlan led communications with congressional representatives and coordinated with town liaison efforts, but I also want to mention that during the

restoration based on feedback we heard from the towns and their frustrations and the types of communications we were providing, we developed what we called a town briefing sheet that converted what we talked about in terms of circuits and area work centers and try to provide town-specific information.

As we heard back from the communities we serve that, you know, they didn't want to hear about work centers and circuits. They wanted to hear about how many crews were working in their towns, what streets were affected and the type of information. Bill worked closely with communities to develop information that I think it's an excellent template as we continue to move forward. And then Bob Hicks, Vice President Customer Operations, led our EOC efforts, which is our headquarters in Berlin. Because it's in a major event like that that strategy and development of our plan comes out of that emergency operations center. And then also worked closely providing operational updates to both the communication team as well, as senior management.

Due to the extent of the damage both along the shoreline and Eastern, Connecticut, midway through the week during the restoration we made a significant shift in our management structure and was there really for twofold. Given the significant amount of people we were bringing in -- and keep in mind when you look at our normal staffing, by the time we peaked, we had brought on six times the normal workforce in the field that we typically have day in and day out to expedite restoration.

We split our area up into -- or our system up into three areas where we have signed Peter Clark, who is president of our -- and chief



operating officer of our sister utility in Massachusetts, Western Massachusetts Electric Company. He led Southeastern Connecticut restoration. Jim Muns, who is the president of our transmission group, led the Northeast. And Ken Bowes, who is our vice president of energy delivery, led the southwest. Each of those three individuals were at one time in their careers vice president of customer operations within CL&P.

So they know our service territory very well. They know the challenges and I think it was a very effective structure and their focus was both managing the restoration, but also working closely with the towns, getting feedback from the towns, recognizing the frustration of the towns and our customers were seeing at that point.

Post storm: I think overall what we've seen is that the restoration was completed ahead of schedule. That does not detract from the fact that, you know, people are out of power for, you know, a few days, let alone nine days are very frustrating and that certainly continues to be a focus of ours. Outstanding safety performance and I'm very proud of the fact that the men and women of, not only CL&P, but the contractors we brought in on NU's -- outstanding safety performance from the entire organization.

We did have comprehensive communications. I'll touch a little bit more on that when we talk about improvements. And then lessons learned from previous storms were really beneficial, I think, it providing us the background and the strength to perform well during storm Irene.

Early observations, though, for improvement: First of all -- and it's been mentioned several times -- is the state utility tree policies need to be reevaluated. And I think a lot of people jumped to the conclusion that this is just about the trees in the trim zone. When you look at the damage -- and there is some pictures of damage at the back of the package -- this goes far beyond just the trees in close proximity. A lot of the damage occurred from what we refer to as hazard trees, trees well outside what we would typically trim, that were uprooted or split. When you look at them they are either deceased or decayed.

So I think we have to step back and working closely with the state and its agencies, the towns and ourselves, what is the effective prepolicy going forward that could substantially reduce the amount of damage we see? Review our make-safe process to expedite road clearing in collaboration with the municipalities. And this is one we need to step back and find a process that works more effectively with the towns where we can expedite and facilitate getting the wires cleared, made safe, so that we can have quicker access to getting the roads open.

Provide customer and municipal officials with timely and specific information. I touched on it briefly. And then review mutual aid process to address resource (inaudible) especially early in the storm. Continuous improvement -- critical self analysis is already underway in -- not only for CL&P, but Northeast Utilities as well. You know, our normal process is determine the lessons learned and focus on how do we improve our performance going forward.

We'll actively participate in the Governor's review, his legislative review as well, as the PURA review. And then Bill Quinlan is actually heading up a proactive outreach to towns to identify lessons learned and opportunities from their perspective on how we can improve as well.

You know, in addition to the approximately 4,000 employees from CL&P, Western Massachusetts Electric Company, Public Service New Hampshire, Yankee gas and NUSCO, our corporate center organization and mutual aid from at least 21 states and Canada. You know, there was tremendous support within the state that I want to acknowledge as well. The Governor's office, the Governor himself and his office provided strong leadership. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, which we all know is a new organization, for their support as well, as PURA, Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Operations, federal, state and municipal officials, local police, fire, emergency crews and hundreds of businesses supported us. I mean, we literally, you know, when you look at that, the hotels that supported our restoration by providing lodging where we put up people throughout the service territory and then the media who continued to get the important messages back to our customers.

As I wrap up, with the widespread damage affecting all 149 cities and towns we serve, as I said earlier, I believe CL&P's response was appropriate and strong. We literally rebuilt entire sections of our distribution system. In nine days, we safely restored as many outages as we typically would do in 11

months. For our electric system, this storm was worse in history than the hurricanes of Gloria and Bob. However, as with any major disaster, we will all learn from examining the impacts of the storm and we hope to work with the state and the communities to make continuous improvement in our restoration process. We are actively soliciting feedback from stakeholders, including municipalities and our customers to improve our communications with both the towns and our customers.

We welcome a dialogue with the state and municipal leaders and the Public Utility Regulatory Authority to discuss improvements we can all make in education management, as trees created the vast majority of all outages during the storm. Thank you very much.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, Jeff. Appreciate your testimony and your thoroughness.

I think, as I said earlier, we are going to allot 15 minutes for questions for CL&P and then move onto United Illuminating. And I would ask everyone to limit the length of their questions and comments so that others can get their time in now. We will hopefully have time at the end of this. If we're judicious with our time so that if we have additional questions within the public utility section which will conclude at noon. So I would hope everyone would be fair with their colleagues and giving them an opportunity to ask their questions as well. And that pertains to the chairs as well.

So I will ask a single question, Jeff. It's unrealistic given that we have -- I think you said that we're the second most treed state in

the country, which I think comes as a surprise to many people. It did to me. And we have overhead power lines. Putting those two things together, we're going to have power outages. It's unrealistic and I hope everyone accepts that, that there won't be power outages even in the smallest of storms, much less a tropical storm or a hurricane.

But I think for me, at least as I see it for most folks, even those who would expect that they lived in a very rural areas, that there's going to be a longer delay for their power to be turned on. That's historical. They accept that, but the frustration of the amount of time of understanding how long their power will be out and how they can plan for that. If it's a day, they will plan one way. If it's three days, they'll plan another way. If it's a week ago, they'll plan a third way.

And can you give us your understanding of -- can there be progress made in this area giving people a better sense of how long their street, their neighborhood, their town will be without power, and ultimately, it comes down to what is my situation? And we all understand that.

JEFFREY BUTLER: I think there is an opportunity and part of it has already to place we started converting what we talked about in terms of, as I mentioned earlier, circuits and area work centers. And recognizing that when we come into this event, such as this, that towns and citizens within those towns are looking at the town-specific information, not, you know -- I think the globals work well for a period of time in terms of, you know, what to expect that town to be at 99 percent, but recognizing we need to do a better job of how do we

provide more specific information as we go into that, versus the global. So that will certainly be an area that we focus on as we move forward because we do understand that was a large frustration of both the town leadership and our customers in those communities.

So don't have the answers, but it is definitely an area that we are looking at of how do we improve it and because that is a major issue, especially when you're talking about days without power, is getting that information, you talked about, to our customers as soon as possible.

SENATOR FONFARA: This goes for the entire forum here today so the public understands. This is not a showpiece. Our job here is to gather information that will result in changes, whether it's done by the companies, whether it's done as policy and regulation or whether it has to be done in law, there will be outcomes to this work here today.

So I hope people will understand that when Mr. Butler says that there is review going on and searching for ways to increase and improve communication for individual customers during outages, that we will work on this and we will wait for the answers from the companies so we can figure out how to improve in that area.

Representative Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: And Jeff, I have a few questions that I hope will have short answers. If they're not short answers, in deference to time, I'll either take the answers at the end or we'll work something out so that I can leave time for my colleagues.

I want you to tell me about the line-clearing cycle. Has it changed over time and would you keep the current recommendations?

ROBERT HYBSCH: Representative Nardello, I'll address that. My name is Bob Hybsch. And the tree trimming cycles -- trim cycles have basically not changed over the past ten years. The funding levels have been supported by PURA, that have been requested during the last rate case. And we're currently working towards a five-year trim cycle. I won't get into much more detail, unless you'd like me to, to keep it brief.

REP. NARDELLO: I do want to keep it brief. I guess the answer I need is, and we always have the five-year trim cycle? And is the five-year trim cycle the best, to your recommendation, the best?

So, again, keeping it brief.

ROBERT HYBSCH: We have not always had a five-year trim cycle. I think a five-year trim cycle is exactly what we have today, but a four-year trim cycle is preferable in that you can do more aggressive trimming more frequently.

JEFFREY BUTLER: Representative, I'd really like to add that the trimming is one aspect of it. The real issue I think that has to be addressed here in the state is what we call the hazard trees. These are trees that are well outside of our trim zone. We would never trim them, but actually pose the greatest hazard to our lines. They're, you know, 50 feet away from our lines. They are 70 feet tall. They fall over and they take out the lines.

So it's not just about talking about the trim cycles. It's about what actually is being done to those as well.

REP. NARDELLO: And I would ask you to give me the percentage of those verses, you know, the numbers of those that you think are involved here -- future, not right now.

Quick question, also. The cost of tree trimming has increased by a large degree per mile. Okay. Can you tell me why there's been such an increase in cost of tree trimming, because that again eats into your budget as to how many areas you can get to.

ROBERT HYBSCH: I'm not aware that it has increased significantly. Our current scheduled maintenance program is about \$5800 a mile. The company currently has about 17,000 miles of distribution lines that has to be trimmed once every five years. Currently, our budget for trimming of the -- maintenance cycle is roughly \$21.5 million annually. And we do additional trimming in the range of 4 to 5 million on enhanced tree trimming and we're working to address those trees, those hazard trees that Jeff mentioned as well.

So we feel we have a comprehensive trimming plan, but we're not aware that there's been a significant increase in costs.

REP. NARDELLO: And again, and you can correct me if my information is not correct. My understanding is that it has gone somewhere from around \$2800 per mile to over \$5,000 per mile in the last few years and that's significant. But we don't need to, again get into that, but you and I can discuss that at a



future point. So I just wanted to know where we were getting to that.

And then regarding linemen. Okay. What are the number of linemen that you added the past five years versus those that are allowed in rates and then also do you find that there is a cost differential for the linemen that you have to contract out for versus your own crews?

And again, if you don't have the information you can tell me (inaudible).

ROBERT HYBSCH: I have it within the last ten years. Currently, we employ 422 line mechanics and troubleshooters, which are qualified overhead and distribution line mechanics. And in 2001, we had 385 of those same classifications.

And relative to cost of bringing in outside resources, those varied by the contracts that we have with different vendors. And with mutual aid companies, we have to pay their prevailing rates, exactly the same way they get paid to the exact same fashion that our crews get paid when they go off of our system to Florida or South Carolina to help with hurricane relief down there.

REP. NARDELLO: Not for today, but if you could provide to the committee the cost of your line crews versus the hourly cost of the line crews of contracting out, that would be helpful to us in thinking of how we're going to go forward here.

And last, what I wanted to just quickly ask you about storm recovery. Okay. What I wanted you to tell me is what was included in

your storm recovery in the past? And what are your plans for storm recovery for this storm?

JEFFREY BUTLER: I'm not clear what you're asking for in the past, Representative.

REP. NARDELLO: In other words, experientially the last storm was Gloria, so therefore, you have a history of what -- in these major storms, last major storm. What did you include in that storm recovery? How did you recover it? And what are your plans for this, for storm Irene?

JEFFREY BUTLER: I don't have the information on Gloria, but I will tell you that there is a process on major storms that we would go through and submit for cost recovery through PURA, formerly the DPUC, at which point they would go through a prudent and reasonable review and make the final determination in terms of what costs are recoverable going forward. And this is associated with a major storm recovery.

REP. NARDELLO: Just one -- that just begs one question. Do expect that to be in the context of the full rate case? Or in the issue of just storm expenses?

JEFFREY BUTLER: I expect it to be in the context of the next rate case at this point.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much. Thank you.

Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, Representative Nardello. You are done for the day.

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Jeff, I just wanted to start by saying, thank you for your company's response to the storm prior to and immediately following thereafter. Canceling everyone's vacation and working 16 hour days, seven days a week is a tremendous effort to give to the residents of Connecticut. I just have two quick questions.

Most of my concerns that I received were regarding the communications and I know that's an area you said you were going to be working on, but how are we able to provide a detailed town briefing sheet to the mayors and first selectmen of these towns, but we couldn't determine which areas of the town were without power. Is that something that we're going to be looking on in the future?

WILLIAM QUINLAN: Again, Bill Quinlan. So the challenge here is really to translate the way we run the business into a language that the towns understand. That's -- Mr. Butler indicated we tend to think about circuits and area work centers without regard to the boundaries of a town.

And what we learned clearly during this event was what towns are really interested in is, what's going on within their town borders and within their roads and streets. So during the -- I would say early part of this storm after the claim clear that we needed to make the shift, we spent literally hours and hours every day, particularly on the back shift, the overnight, translating the information from our systems into these briefing sheets so that they would be meaningful to the town leaders.

There was a very significant effort -- is one we instituted during the course of this event. And, you know, when we talk about lessons learned, this is something we are likely to take going forward and I think what we need to do first and foremost is to allocate the data from our systems so that it's almost automatic and we don't have to spend, you know, manual hours processing that data and accounting streets and counting rows.

So it was a logistical challenge here. We overcame it. We need to automate it going forward.

ROBERT HYBSCH: And this is really -- Senator (inaudible) this is really about taking circuit maps and overlaying them on street maps so that the towns could have information.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you for that.

And my last question is, turn your testimony you said there were six times the amount of usual crews that were here in the state of Connecticut to manage the storm. And how do you address the ability to manage that a large number of crews with your managers?

JEFFREY BUTLER: Well, as I mentioned in my opening statements, we brought in a management structure into those three areas. We brought in two of my counterparts, presidents from other part of Northeast Utilities. And so we actually developed management structures in the northeast, the southeast portion and the southwest where we had literally hundreds of crews working there. And put a management structure in place to support those on a local basis versus trying to control it all around (inaudible) So the thousands of people we

brought in, it was impossible to manage that from a central location so we did decentralize (inaudible).

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, sir.

Representative Reed.

REP. REED: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Butler, thank you also CL&P and (inaudible.) And I have to say that all of our of emergency workers and our officials who were on deck were very laudatory about the quality of the crews that were brought in from Texas and Oklahoma and it was a real bonding that went on. But they were concerned about how they were managed in terms of when they actually showed up in town and where some of the staging areas where in terms of the population. So I wonder if that's something you're looking at. I know that they were getting together at 5 a.m., but not showing up in town until 10, which I can see on the first day, but that happen again the second and the third day and those daylight hours are key.

Everybody seems to agree they should not be working at night, but there is some sense that maybe debriefing at night would be -- at least with the foreman and preparing for the next day would be a better use of time and getting them in to the town as close to 5 a.m. as possible.

JEFFREY BUTLER: I'm going to let Mr. Hybsch address it, but, you know, crews do work throughout the night. I mean, we had people

on the property work around the clock different shifts, but we do have resources during any event, major event working throughout the 24-hour period.

So I'll let Mr. Hybsch answer the question.

ROBERT HYBSCH: Thank you. As you can imagine, bringing in six times the normal workforce is a logistical challenge; however, the work schedules that were set up at some flexibility in them. But basically we're starting 5, 6 a.m. in the morning and we're bringing the crews in to have a breakfast buffet and it was provided for by the company.

And at the same time, they were having -- they should have been having their safety briefing during the buffet to save time and then their job assignments would be brought to them so that they could go directly to the work site. So I'm not familiar with the situation that you are mentioning, but every effort was made to increase the efficiency of these crews while they were here, recognize that the citizens of Connecticut were out for some time.

And my experience was that these crews worked very hard, long days and worked extremely hard to get the citizens of Connecticut (inaudible) power.

JEFFREY BUTLER: There is one part that I would add to that. If the crews had arrived during that evening hours and it was the first day on the property they would have gone through what Mr. Hybsch described, but then before we would give them job packages, we actually had a safety briefing, which every crew that came in from outside our company actually spent an

hour and a half or so on a safety briefing regarding our safety practices.

So the first day that they got there, if they started in the morning and they could be in the yard for an additional hour and a half after what Mr. Hybsch described.

REP. REED: Thank you. Well, I'd like to take a look at that because I know we have real-world experience that a lot of people want to give you, probably more than you want to hear.

And one other very good question that will be my final. I know that there -- because we have a centralized grid now, that there is a need to shut down areas at certain times to protect the larger grid. Is there a percentage of lines down in an area that you look for before you shut down the area, shut the system down?

JEFFREY BUTLER: I'm aware that some towns (inaudible) to be energized based on the amount of damage they had. We typically let our own protection equipment take care of turning the power off. So if you have, you know, typically the way our system is built, you have safety devices -- when you have damage they will automatically deenergize the line.

But I do know in some towns, it was a limited number of towns, where there was so much extensive damage in that town that we were contacted by town leaders and said, could you please deenergize the entire town. At which steps -- we took those steps to, you know, for their request, but we typically will not go out there saying, we're going to shut down a wide area.

Now, when we get into restoration there is times when you have to deenergize part of it to fix something or to make something safe before you reenergize again. So if you did have those times -- but as the storm was coming through, the equipment itself takes care of any type of de-energization that needs to take place due to failures.

REP. REED: Thank you very much.

SENATOR FONFARA: Okay. Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

And Jeff and crew, thank you for being with us, because I know you perhaps haven't even had a chance to catch your breath.

But if I just might say, you know, we're talking about the worst storm, Irene being the worst storm in a hundred year history, but that's when we talk about tropical storms. We aren't talking about hurricanes here, so that kind of leaves out a whole population of storms that we have lived through.

And we were blessed that, in fact, it was downgraded, although in some places -- and I know my cochair in the Public Safety Committee, being on the New Haven/West Haven shore, got clobbered, but yet, in fact, it was still a tropical storm.

And there's a lot of anecdotal stories, but I come from Central Connecticut, the Waterbury, Naugatuck, Middlebury area, and I was hearing from people who were saying to me, how long does it take these replacement workers to get dispatched? Because they were saying that



they were here, but awaiting their charges, if you will, for up to 24 hours. Could that possibly have been true?

ROBERT HYBSCH: That would be highly unlikely that that could possibly occur. I know the incident commander of the Waterbury work center and I visited during the event. And that was a very well-run, efficient operation. They're storm room is very well-managed. And when I was there, there were no crews standing around waiting for work. So that would be -- if you had specific data, we could look into that, but I've never heard of.

SENATOR HARTLEY: And I think it's important to just try to, you know, clarify in retrospect so as we go forward we know.

And so your plan -- you were planning six days in preparation, nine days in cleanup. And in the preparation process, you have a plan to bring in replacement workers from various states. And I'm not sure, as the East Coast continued to get wiped out, if you had to retool and change those plans in terms of where these workers were coming from.

For example, in acute care hospital care, we have a plan A and then we have a plan B and you go right down the line and you continue to plan for every domino that could possibly drop hoping that they won't.

So I'm just wondering what your backup plans were.

JEFFREY BUTLER: Well, I think it's a very fair question. We did not just rely on mutual aid as we prepared. As I mentioned in my comments, we both looked and mutual aid plus

started talking to contractors that we have relationships with. And outreach and beyond mutual aid. So we worked two things in parallel because it became obvious -- or (inaudible) actually shared this at one of the Governor's briefings, that we were having a very difficult time getting what we called the true mutual aid crews, which is typically utility crews from other utilities and that we are going after contractors.

But even with that said, what people had committed to us to show up at certain times were not even the numbers that showed up. So there was an area where I mentioned the comments, really we need to step back and look at what worked, what didn't and I would make it better because getting the crews here, having them available is extremely important from the time the event goes all the way through the last customer being restored.

So it's an area we felt there were issues with and that we need to work with not only ourselves, but with the industry, how do we address. We were very fortunate to be able to bring virtually -- down -- all the crews down from our sister utilities because they were not hit nearly as hard as we were, so we brought Western Massachusetts Electric Company, both their crews and contractors down and Public Service in New Hampshire crews and contractors came down which were nearby quick resources and they were here, virtually a hundred percent of their available resources were here by Thursday of that week.

SENATOR HARTLEY: And I just want to say my experience with -- and I'm in the CL&P area -- everyone was very responsive, supportive and helpful because I talk to many folks on the

trucks.

And one last question if I might, Mr. Chair, and that is with regard to the tree maintenance program. You are absolutely right that -- my observation anyway was that the majority of trees were not trees that were along power lines, but these were, quite frankly, beautiful sometimes specimen trees and people are very covetous of their trees. I am of mine. And you know, I've had discussions with people who are out trimming trees myself.

I guess I would like to ask you, now that we are the most treed state in this country, if you are aware of any other states that have a program with regard to trees that are not in your tree-cutting purview, if you will, because I think that's something that we really have to begin to deal with.

And also I think we have to have a strong communication message that goes out through the state to people to inform them how important it is that aging trees need to be tended to because they and everyone is at risk. I mean, we have seen in my area tragic accidents where limbs have just fallen.

And so it's something that, you know, you kind of like push off, you don't want to deal with, but I think we have to engage collectively in a communications effort to people. And I'm just curious if you know of any other definitive policies that other states have engaged successfully with regard to this.

JEFFREY BUTLER: Well, the utility I formerly worked at, which was in California, did have a hazard tree removal program. Keep in mind

that the big challenge in California is fire danger in the summertime so trees falling from outside the normal tree zone is something we typically patrol and expect and remove if they pose a hazard to the town.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Well, I think that something as we go forward we have to work on.

I just want to say thank you, Mr. Chair.

And I want to just say thank you to CL&P because my experience was very positive. Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: I think brevity is another thing we need to work on, but thank you, Senator.

Representative Carter, if we could get two quick questions in.

Representative Carter followed by Senator Cassano.

REP. CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Jeff, thank you very much for being here and all the work that your company has done through this aftermath.

My question kind of relates to what the Senator had mentioned with respect to those trees that are outside the purview of your company. When crews do the five-year cutting or the five-year trimming, are those trees identified? I mean, can they see those trees? Do they have an arborist who can point out the ones that are diseased, as you mentioned? Because I'd be interested in knowing if that's happening now.

ROBERT HYBSCH: Yes, Representative, they are.

They're called -- the hazard trees are identified as part of our normal maintenance tree-trimming program and our enhanced tree-trimming program. But nonetheless, we have to get permission from the landowner to remove those trees.

And as I had said earlier in my testimony, we spent several million dollars a year removing hazardous trees, but in all honesty it does not touch the number, as we now, the percentage of hazardous trees that really need to be removed out there throughout the entire state.

REP. CARTER: Thank you very much. And also just to follow up on that, when you identify a hazardous tree, do you start working with the landowner? Is anybody else notified of that? DOT, I know we had a couple of arborists in the state. Does anybody else get notified about that interaction?

ROBERT HYBSCH: If it's on private property, I'm not aware that they are. We have several professional arborists that work for us full time, that work with the landowners. So I know that when the tree is located on a public right-of-way they work with the tree wardens and the Department of Public Works and DOT.

REP. CARTER: Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, sir.

SENATOR CASSANO: Yes. Again, thank you for being here. You described earlier, Jeff, the make safe program. Is that separate from the

restoration of power? We have municipalities that do a great job of clearing roads. In Glastonbury, my district, as an example, but some areas heavily treed. They couldn't do anything until somebody got there. Is there a possibility of having a dedicated group or is there one that does that?

And on the tree trimming, I don't know why municipalities wouldn't be noticed whether its private or public property as to the hazard trees; the permission slips to trim. Can you trim your regular tree lines without those permission slips being signed? I mean, is that a hindrance to what we're trying to do?

JEFFREY BUTLER: I'll address your first question in terms of the road clearing. In a major event like this, it is a separate process where we go out and make safe in advance of doing restoration. Because there was so many roadblocks, there was a focus and its area, though, given the feedback and given the length of time that I've asked Bob and his team to look at that full entire process and is there a way we can expedite it?

And so at the same time not only ensure the safety of our employees, but ensure the safety of the public as well.

Something that hasn't been mentioned, we actually had a number of cases where we found lines that had been reenergized because people had connected generators incorrectly. And that transformer that feeds your home or business can feed power back the other way as well as it can to your residence. So safety continues to be -- not just for our employees, but also for a public as well.

And then, do you want to touch on that?

ROBERT HYBSCH: Yes. Regarding the permission to trim. As you know -- may know there was some legislative changes made recently that now we do notification of our customers that we are going to be trimming and then they have 15 days to respond to us if they would like special circumstances surrounding their trees regarding permission to trim. They want us to take less than what we really would like to keep to our specifications. So we work with those customers, but in reality we have less than 1 percent of our customers don't allow us to trim trees or ask us to restrict the trimming. So is a very small percentage which is very helpful. And this new process is working extremely well.

JEFFREY BUTLER: I want to touch on that because this is a new process that we got agreement through PURA during our last rate case and it has expedited our current process significantly from the process. We use to set it out and we had to get written approval back from every customer. Well, a lot of people see it and just toss it away. So it was very time consuming to be able to go out there and get.

So the new process that was agreed upon has been very effective in reducing the denials (inaudible) not be able to proceed with trimming.

SENATOR FONFARA: Okay. We're going to conclude this segment. For those who have questions for CL&P, specifically, we hope we have some time at the end of this before noon. But -- and so I'll ask you to stay around if you could.

JEFFREY BUTLER: Senator, could I make one last comment.

SENATOR FONFARA: Of course.

JEFFREY BUTLER: I mean one of the things I think is extremely important is that every employee, man and woman that worked for CL&P did an outstanding job. And it's roughly 2,000 people that work for our company that deserve the credit of restoring the customers and the storm response. So thank you very much.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, Jeff.

And I think everyone recognizes that, even those that were most severely impacted. That the company and your workers did great work and committed people to their jobs. But this is a process that we must go through and I know you welcomed it. And we will continue throughout the day to elicit answers and do our best to create a better policy because they're will be another storm.

There will be other events and maybe the next one will be worse and we need to -- and so often is the case in this building, it's events that happen out in the real world that bring us here to address them and we wish we could have a crystal ball to be able to predict when things will happen and how severe they will be. The world would be great if we could.

But I think our responsible approach is to take what we've learned and do our best to be able to respond better in the future. Thank you very much.



JEFFREY BUTLER: Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: And for those that were not able to ask their questions to CL&P, if they're generic questions certainly you will be first up with United Illuminating once they are through their statements and following the municipals as well. So we will hopefully get everyone in.

And now we have the officials from United Illuminating beginning with Jim Torgerson, chairman and chief executive officer.

JAMES P. TORGERSON: Thank you.

Cochair Fonfara and Representative Nardello and also the members of Connecticut General Assembly, thank you for the opportunity to go before you today to address the performance of United Illuminating in restoring our customers during the damage caused by Tropical Storm Irene.

As Senator Fonfara mentioned, I'm Jim Torgerson. I am president and CEO of UIL Holdings company. With me is Tony Vallillo who's executive vice president and chief operating officer of UIL Holdings, and John Prete, who's the senior vice president of United Illuminating and responsible for the transmission and distribution system.

First I want to thank the employees of UI who did such an outstanding job in restoring power, but also the other employees of UIL holdings, Connecticut Natural Gas, Southern Connecticut Gas, who all worked jointly to make sure that we got the restoration done as quickly and safely as possible, but also all the state, federal and local officials who

worked jointly with us to get this done and accomplished along with the mutual assistance crews and the contractor crews.

At the height of the storm we had -- the height of our crew output, we had a 363 crews, which is almost six times our normal contingent of about 60 to 65. At the peak, we had one 158,000 customers out. That's nearly half of all of our customers. And the crews worked at 10,300 separate locations to restore the power. When we talked to the DOE people they mentioned that 60 to 70 percent of the people would be restored in three to six days on a storm of this magnitude and that 98 percent would be restored in 10 the 14 days.

We actually had 75 percent of our customers that were back in three days and 99 percent back in seven days. So I think are people really did a phenomenal job in preparing, assessing and restoring the power and actually the president of our union Moses Rams is here today. He's the president of Utility Workers Union of America Local 470-1. And we're thankful for the work him and all the employees did to get the power back.

As I said, I think we did a good job of preparing, restoring and assessing the storm. And although we did significant communication, it's not what our town officials or our customers really wanted and we did get to the point where we were providing street-by-street information to the town officials, but in order to improve on that we're not going to spend 10 to 15 million dollars over the next two to three years to enhance our outage management system and also our call center technology that will provide customer

restoration times, you know, after we complete the assessment to that provided to all our customers, probably throughout (inaudible) calling, but also perhaps through ways that the customer would like to see.

And we're very anxious to work with fiscal committee of the Legislature to find the best practices to improve upon. And with that, I'm going to turn it over to John Prete who's going to walk through the -- some of the statistics related to the storm.

JOHN PRETE: Thank you, Jim.

Good morning. Thank you very much for having us here. I'm respectful of your time. We hope that the short deck you have in front of you is a foundation for a lot of your questions so I will do my best not to duplicate. Mr. Butler did a good job at a lot of the uniqueness of the storm, but on page 2 the contents -- what I'd like to really run you through is kind of how we go about doing a storm, both from a restoration point of view and a communication.

You can see on page 2, I'll hit the, what we call our -- the processes involved with restoration of communications and then the last three bullets really talk about what we've learned, what we've heard and what we're going to try to do.

So, moving on to page 3. At a very high level this is our restoration and communication process. I would note out in the middle of the page it's a timeline. It takes us about seven days prior to the event and then thereafter. Above the line there are what we call our chevron diagrams, and what those are,

are very distinct areas that things get done.

In blue is the work, the actual fieldwork and in gray, more of intel planning and forecasting function and I'll get into more specifics in the following slide, but just very quickly there are very specific events that happened prior to the event in case of Irene. You can see below the timeline some of the things that we did in a communication spaces much like CL&P. The municipalities were very much engaged.

Each one opened up an EOC. We staffed the EOC and, in fact, gave a global estimate that the outages will take between four and seven days. Moving into the middle part of that page, it's really where a lot of the work gets done and what we call it is assessments. As you may expect and what you saw, there was a lot of damage and just to put some highlights, there was about ten thousand locations where damage occurred.

Now, you could go out into all those independently. To really get it home you need to understand what the damage is -- we call assessment -- and then you optimize the work. In other words, what goes out to the crews and how it goes out. So we recognize we believe that the restoration, we did a very good job. Communication is an area that we can always improve.

So if I can move to page 4. This is more detail about the pre-event planning and many things that happened on the CL&P track are the same. We started seven days before. You can see that on the left side of the page on Monday 8/22. And above the line again, what we would call operational activities, we did

indeed talk to the municipalities, but we activated the storm plan. We went very quickly and notified a number of our contacts. NEMAG is a New England Municipal Assistance Group, and again, that was request for crews. And indeed I do -- walk to the right side of that page. We got crews from as far as Kansas City as well as other areas of the country, including line clearance.

Now, below the timeline communications, again a little bit more detail. We did indeed talk to the municipalities and the EOCs. They were very poised in getting things taken care of. We did indeed cancel vacations, and as I said before, the towns were fully engaged.

And as the right -- as we became closer and closer to the storm there was no doubt that it was going to hit us. We stepped up quite a bit of communication both in media as well as outbound calling to our hardship customers, those that needed medical sort of assistance.

So page 5, Mr. Butler did a good job. You know all about the facts on it was an event that was a triage. There was pre-rain. There was rain during. There was wind and of course there was (inaudible) tidal flooding that occurred. All of those manifested themselves in different types of damage so I won't spend a lot of time on that.

The next few slides really are what we consider very important to convey that this is all about the damage and our assessment and why it's critically important and why it took the time it did, which is about two, two and half days. So what you see here on the right is our service territory, the 17 towns. The red actually are unique dots of those who

experienced the outages. You'll total those up, that's about 158,000, as Mr. Torgerson has relayed.

If you go to the bottom of the page, just to give you some highlights of our distribution system we have what we call our 443 circuits. You'll find out that the circuits are not like did a circuit that goes from your main panel site to the kitchen. That would be one circuit.

In our case, is the circuits around anywhere from two to eight miles and they could, of course, stretch across the various towns and cities. We have 3200 overhead miles. So those would have to be patrolled and indeed as you see they were.

So if you go to the left just to give some highlights, half of our circuits were out. So half of that 32,000 overhead lines were out and needed to be looked at and assessed. As I said before, it manifested itself on about 10,000 locations of damage.

So the next page is a little closer to home. I think one of the Senators asked a very good question. On the left, that's Fairfield. You can see a number of colors. What those are, are the circuits. So in Fairfield, there's any number -- about eight circuits that actually transverse a number of streets throughout the town. Each one of those, as I said, is about two to eight miles in length. One of the senators -- and I think the response by CL&P is -- unfortunately, the laws of physics and the way we do don't appreciate geographic boundaries. You can see some of these colors stretching into various towns.

We understand, as well, that the towns are interested to their constituents and that's very real for yourselves as well. So on this particular page if you were to get a little bit closer to home, there's about 570 interrupting devices that again, were they're electrically. They are forecast and planned in the system, so if something, say, a transformer went down, an interrupting device and so forth and so on -- should get to the beginning of the circuit.

The next slide, which is Slide 8, actually brings it a little to home. If you were to take one of those circuits which indeed this circuit as numerically numbered 2686, is in the eastern portion of Fairfield. The red dots there really identify the isolating devices. So if something happened downstream that actually had to open, which is good electrically and for safety reasons, at that, that is generated about 113 work locations that needed to be organized. And in fact, if you were to look at this circuit, it is 2700 customers that were actually connected.

So the next couple of pages have damage. The upper left on page 9 -- interesting, certainly the pole is down on the ground but what's interesting in the foreground there's a number of sections down. You can see some of the trees that were uprooted. On this particular location, not only was UI down, but some of the telecommunications and cable TV and there's an underground service as well so there's a lot of damage to that one pole.

And to the right, I think to a lot of questions that the Representatives and Senators had, you have a tree literally across the street that was uprooted that actually

manifested itself in some damage across the street.

We have large what we call switching stations or substations. Again, electrically they do the same as they do in, say, your house as the main panel. The substation happens to be on Congress Street, which is in Bridgeport. You can see we've never had water there so it's associated close to a river. What happened is in the tidal surge it came up so we actually had to deenergize that.

And in the whole scheme of things when you look at our electric system the transmission is the area that we focused first and make sure there's no issues with that. And in fact, we were able to save the substation, so to speak, deenergize it quickly in 20 minutes or so assess and then put it back.

So moving onto an assessment and the commencement of the repair work. And he spent a little bit of time on the next two pages so if you remember back to our chevron, the event happened, which is on the left side of the page, immediately what we do on the left side is we start work and we start assessing.

So you can see in the blue public safety town priorities, we work in concert with the town to make sure their priorities, which are already identified, whether their hospital, medical, fire and police and things of that nature, and we begin our assessment and what that is, is you actually get patrollers to visit the locations to make sure we understand what damage is there and of course bring them back and we'll see in a minute we need to optimize it.



So it's all about the quantity and location and nature of work and then it's all about assigning deficient resources. And I hope as you see to here it takes about two, to a database to transfers what in our case was about 1600 miles to make sure that we understand what was wrong and that to associate it in a logical sequence.

And the next page actually does that. It's the coordination of work. And it's about safety. I think as Mr. Butler it's mind-boggling that there was, in our case, no lost time accidents, but that wasn't by happenstance. We do tremendous safety programs everyday and when people enter our property.

So what I wanted to do was walk you through an example which is midway through the page, the example is replace a broken pole. So even though the pole is a damaged device, what happens if somebody assesses it. They say it's a pole. The state law is, call before you dig, which is a CBYD. So we have to get them engaged.

They go out and our to make sure that something isn't wrong or the locations of other underground utilities are identified. We set the pole. Our line department and line area sets the pole. We frame it. Then we have communication shift and then we remove the old pole.

So you can see that one activity of damage has to be coordinated amongst a lot of parties. That takes time, but that time is well-deserved and well-forecasted when it's optimizing the work and the restoration time. The wires down takes a similar path. Once

somebody identifies it -- in our case, from UI they stand there.

Our crews, the linemen, the line there, it makes it safe. Then the tree contractor comes in or a crew comes in to cut it down and then we come and restore. So, again, a lot of activity and that's really the essence of that here.

So as we go forward, we had 40,000 crew hours, which is a mind-boggling amount. We had over -- well over a thousand safety events and training sessions and what Jim talked about his that was done by about 350 crews, and if you could multiply that out, that's about five or six times our normal staff.

So onto communication. On page 13 is a very high-level, but global communication matrix that we followed. We understand that it's all about accurate status and prediction, the earlier the better, both to yourselves and governmental leaders and individuals. So if you were to look down the left side and the blue bars on Monday and throughout, we had the global predictions. We had the number of outages my town, the percentage and a number of crews. A day after, after we started to optimize the work, we were able to identify with the towns and locations of the crews. We were able to get daily restoration times for the towns, albeit on a town basis.

And then finally, as you fast forward to Wednesday, we were able to get street locations as to where the restorations were going forward. And then Thursday, we had a glide path asked what the town can expect as far as restorations that had been done. And then finally as the storm progressed -- put

forward, around Friday or Saturday, we started getting individual times. So the bottom of the page I think is our lesson learned. We need to shift the customer, individualized customer outage information closer to the assessment. And we believe through technology that is doable.

Similar to some of the answers and some of the things by CL&P, this is a high-level look at some best practices, enablers as recalling that in our plan for the future. In blue and in our answers we have a lot of best practices in place. A lot of what CL&P talked about and indeed we had a consultant come in on behalf of the DPUC to audit our March 2010 storm. The growing checkmarks are things that are in place, but we'll find in best practices it's all about taking advantage of what exists at the moment in time and we see the technology rate now being much more mature than it was even a year ago in allowing us to do many things. So the enabling technologies that we have on the bottom, I won't go through a lot of those. We believe the integration of those platforms will allow us to bring that assessment time a little quicker or a little shorter, more importantly, the restoration information going to our customers and to yourselves.

So the last page is the results and lessons learned. Mr. Torgerson identified in the upper left what we have here is a graph of the storm and the progress of the seven days. The red line and the green line are from the DOE. They talk about storms of this nature. Mr. Torgerson talked about a glide path where it three days 60 to 70 percent of customers should be back and then within 14 days all. The blue line is where we fared and we're

pretty proud of that. We fell below what would be considered well above average and, in fact, I would offer some of that is stellar. The dotted line is -- is our predictions which are pretty much on track after the assessment, or the Wednesday timeframe.

So as we go to the lessons learned, we understand the restoration. We always try to make it shorter. There will be wholesale changes as we see it, but there's always constant improvement. That's how we run our business. And it's all about the information. The second bullet on the left. We need to be able to convey it better and quicker and more tightly to the folks in different ways and mediums.

On the upper right, there's technology, as I talked about, in coordination and communications. So plans for next steps, we have conducted customer surveys to get their take on the storm, how we did on the restoration, validate some of their communication both media and what they expect. We're going to meet with the towns and we have started to hone the process with the towns and cities, and as I said before, we're actively implementing a technology plan that we have in place.

And in closing, this executive team I couldn't be any more proud of the people that work at UI. I walked around. I felt good. We went to a lot of the in-board sessions at six o'clock in the morning and I think a couple of the individuals basically summed it up by saying, you know, Mr. Prete, if you could do anything for us just tell everybody we care and that's what we did. They cared. Each and every hour they said that they didn't

summon storm, but by golly they're going to work, you know, day and night to get it done and taking care of it for their customers. And I think oftentimes we forget about the families. A lot of the folks I talked to had either wives or husbands and kids at home. Most of them didn't have power for eight, seven days and on their own they had to deal with that.

So our deep thanks and -- to our customers as well as our employees and families. Thank you very much for your time.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you very much. I'll ask the same question I asked of CL&P. It's expected that there will be power outages and it's expected that some will take a lot longer than we'd like. But I do believe that most people -- and most people will appreciate that and understand that, but again the question is, how can we better communicate? And assuming we're doing our best to restore power as quickly as possible, and as part of his hearing as well, but with respect to communicating with individual customers how long they can expect to be out, do you have -- was your evaluation of how well you communicated, that sufficient? And do you see ways in which that can be improved so that people have a better idea? Even if you say to them, it will be a week, as opposed to saying, we think people will be out for seven days in some cases, but never knowing who that will be?

Or if someone is anticipated to be out for three days were for five days?

JAMES P. TORGERSON: I think the challenge we had and I think John went through the very well of

the assessment period -- our goal now is to accelerate the time when we can provide that information to our customers. I don't think we did it as effectively as we would have liked to be able to communicate when the customer would be restored. That's why we've said we're going to spend the money over the next couple of years to put its technology that will allow us to do exactly what you're saying, Senator, to be able to contact the customer with outbound calling once the assessment is done and keep in mind, you know, a storm of this magnitude as John said, it's going to take two to two and half days to do the assessment. We'll have some done a little earlier. Smaller storms will take less time.

So then we want to be in a position once the assessment is done -- we do our planning -- to be able to contact customers directly either through outbound calling, e-mail, whatever they wish and then tell them what our estimate for restoration will be, rather than just have a global time frame to say it's going to be seven days because we don't think that's acceptable. That's not what I want is a customer and it's not what our customers want so we're going to pursue that and we think we can get that done the next two to three years.

SENATOR FONFARA: And you believe that -- what will you change? And give us a quick answer on that. When will you change from what is in place now?

JAMES P. TORGERSON: We'll have to change the outage management system. It gives us information on the outages and the planning and effectively where the crews are going to be on a daily basis will have more information on. We have a good system now. We need to

enhance it then be able to track that information back to our other system so we can then get into our call center reps so they will have it.

And it's a matter of enhancing the package and also putting in a mobile device is within every vehicle so they can contact, send the information digitally back rather than calling or coming back at the end of the day and reporting. Automatically recorded so that it will update the outage management system immediately, so then we know the status of things going forward. So that will help dramatically. We have to get those systems in place too.

SENATOR FONFARA: And you know, some of the Facebook questions that we've received today center on the lack of communication to their home or even to their cell phone. So given that situation, what you anticipate how will you get that information to people?

JAMES P. TORGERSON: To the extent either home phones were out or cell phones were out we are going to need a number of different avenues that we can contact them. The first would probably be their landline, assuming they have them. I don't know -- many people don't anymore. So their cell phone and then e-mail so that they can get to a site where they can get computer access.

So I think we're not going to go through all of those in getting information back from the customers how do they want to get contacted and then give us the information so we can then do it.

SENATOR FONFARA: I think it's important that we

coordinate this kind of effort that you're undergoing with CL&P.

JAMES P. TORGERSON: Certainly.

SENATOR FONFARA: And with municipalities as well.

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you for all being here today. You know, ran into a friend of mine yesterday whose wife in 1998 was living in Montreal during the infamous North American ice storm and she said at the time she was out for 21 days in that storm and she was out for three days in this storm. Just some -- a comment that I'd like to make that I'm trying to get information, one from a number of municipalities that actually had EOCs or emergency operating centers. And I say that's important because I was involved with my -- West Haven before, during and after along with our state EOC. And I was impressed that UI have a representative there at 4 a.m. on Sunday morning, any time that there was an outage she would put that in.

But the one area where I could see where we need improvement as everybody else has had has been communication. There's -- there's two issues I bring up. One I was also impressed with UI and the city having tree trucks set up in different parts of the city when I was out there early in the morning waiting to -- after the storm was done. But the one criticism that I heard, the utility companies couldn't operate until the tree personnel took the tree down. The tree personnel said, we can't take the tree down until the power lines are shut



down.

So what was happening is one utility company truck would be there. They would leave. The tree company truck would come and they would leave so I think we need to do a better communication in that area.

The one other area that I see, you know, a lot of times first responders, we practice, practice, practice. And I think that the utility companies have to do more of that practice, practice, practice for these sort of catastrophic issues that come forward. And my suggestion would be -- and I've talked to other first responders -- to incorporate utility companies in the future in these drills that they have, and I think that's an important component to do because again as everyone else said, it's all about communication, communication, communication.

And the more that we communicate with each other from a private partnership to elected officials -- that day I was out somebody was yelling at the mayor, you have power. And the mayor didn't have power. You know, when the Governor -- those first two places that he came to was in Cozy Beach in East Haven and he came to West Haven. In typical West Haven fashion, we already had an Irene hurricane party going on and I asked the Governor and Lieutenant Governor to stay and join us.

But those are just some -- it's not criticisms, but it's just communications that we need to do. And the other thing UI cannot communicate any better with Al Carbone, because if I get one more e-mail from Al Carbone -- who just to let you know is a friend of mine, too -- I thought that you did

a good job, but those are two areas that I could see where we can improve collectively together.

And thank you very much for being here.

ANTHONY VALLILLO: If I could just add one quick comment to that, Representative, on the second point of communication. References to response that we submitted to the questions that were asked in one of the questions was about communications. We list a number of things we did it says long before the event. And many of the things you're suggesting we've actually done and they're listed there so I won't go through them.

But we, you know, when we say we started to prepare for this storm, you know, a week before, we've been preparing forever and we constantly had these after the last storm in March of last year and June of last year, which were smaller, but very intense. We did a lot of things, learned a lot of lessons, employed new changes to our process and technology. So it's an evolving thing, though, I just wanted to let you know that a lot of what you're suggesting I believe -- we haven't done it all, but we've done a lot of it.

SENATOR FONFARA: Representative -- the Majority Leader Sharkey.

REP. SHARKEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also want to thank you for your responsiveness to me personally during the storm. I spoke with Mr. Vallillo, I think, it was on Tuesday in the midst of recovery efforts to try to get an understanding of what was going on. And you were very responsive and got back to me very

quickly.

I just would briefly echo what -- one thing that Representative Dargan was pointing out about the coordination with town -- towns and public works crews in particular. I think I mentioned to you that one of the experiences that we had in Hamden was one of the crews -- it dovetails with what Representative Dargan said in terms of the coordination, but also the communications that go on with the crews in the field. Because the incidents that were occurring in Hamden were that the crews in the field were the UI crews or your contractors were telling people on the street that the reason why they couldn't get to their street was because the town's public works crews weren't moving fast enough, or at all, to clear trees out of the way so that they could get in.

And that meant that every resident in town was going to mayor's office saying, why aren't you letting the public works crews get to work? And it created a lot of confusion and frustration and anger within town towards town government, towards UI. I mean, everybody came out looking badly in that scenario.

And so I guess what I would convey is that the communication also really needs to get out to the guys in the field, A, not to spread disinformation or misinformation about what's actually happening and not point fingers, but you know, let's all work together, but also have a more direct way of communicating with the customers so that they don't get offhand by a guy on the street, a crewman on the street, but is rather getting it directly from the source.

The other thing that I think is -- that I'm very concerned about, the Friday before the storm the Governor asked the leaders, the legislative leaders to a conference call to just alert us to the fact that he was going to potentially be exercising some executive authority and powers over the course of the weekend depending upon the severity of the storm and that was really the substance of the call. But in the course of it, I asked the Governor, what -- what are the utilities doing in terms of preparation? And the response that the Governor provided to me which was directly from CL&P and UI was that, things were under control. I think the quote that the Governor gave me was that there were 600 crews ready to go on the ground and available to work.

And the -- there was a sense of confidence that we had, what I interpreted to be, enough crews all here with the engines idling so that once the storm passes everybody is out in the field working. Now, I realize it's not quite that smooth. But I think what -- in my conversation with Mr. Vallillo, what I realized was that there really weren't all the crews out there that we thought there were -- at least I thought there would be day one after the storm.

And I guess, one, my first question is, was there an underestimate of the severity and the need? Because the impression I got was that there was. There weren't enough people, crews on the ground on day one ready to go. Secondly about mutual aid. We had a little bit of a conversation about the fact that UI may not have -- pardon the expression -- but the juice, the same juice that a CL&P or Northeast Utilities might have in terms of

their ability to draw crews from out-of-state because it's a relatively small utility.

And you know, I don't know the relationship and mutual aid agreements and how that works, but the impression I got was that UI is at somewhat of a disadvantage in terms of encouraging out-of-state utilities to send their crews here because, you know, what's your ability to reciprocate? You're a relatively small utility. You know, are you going to be able to get back in the mutual aid agreement what maybe what others might give?

And third, there seems to be no coordination between CL&P and UI as to where the crews will go. That both companies kind of work in isolation from each other, take the crews that they have individually and disseminate them out to their territories, but without necessarily consideration of what they need is statewide. And they're doesn't seem to be any kind of larger cross-pollination between the utilities about well, if CL&P has some, you know, maybe after day three or day four, if CL&P has some extra crews, can take the lent over UI territory or should there be some kind of an overarching policy on behalf of the entire state so that we redirect.

I know in Hamden our mayor had to do this ad hoc a little bit on his own, but are we -- should we be in a position where the state can kind of facilitated where crews should go regardless of whether they are NU crews, mutual aid crews, private contractors or not. So a few questions all in one (inaudible).

JAMES P. TORGERSON: Let me start with a couple and then I'll let Tony address this. We don't work in isolation with CL&P. I mean, we're in

constant contact with them, talking to them about availability of crews. We had actually called them a couple of times, said, if you have extra crews can we have them? They did the same with us. So we're in contact with them all the time.

And as far as the mutual assistance, just so you know, I'm on the board of the Edison Electric Institute and every year there's an award given out for mutual assistance and the crews in every -- and a lot of times they are small companies and a lot of times they are very big companies, whether it's AEP or Entergy or companies our size, but the philosophy among all utilities across this country are if someone is in need they will send crews to help. Whether you are a small utility or a big utility, we'll send -- we've sent crews down to help in Katrina. I mean, maybe a few crews and people have come to help us.

So that's the philosophy behind it and that's how it actually works in practice. People do send crews. Now, will we get as many as Northeast Utilities? No. Because the size is quite a bit effort. I mean, they're four times our size, but we do get the crews when we ask for them, assuming they're not needed in the region and because of the size of the storm and where it impacted a lot of the crews that you would normally expect to get from, let's say, the Carolinas or from Jersey or New York, which it's a more isolated storm -- you get the crews from there more readily -- we had to go much further out and so we did get the crews and it takes a little longer to get here.

Now being ready, we were ready and we didn't

have the 600 crews. We ended up with 363 in total. Now, there's all sorts of different crews. We had our crews stationed -- our contract crews and our own line crews were already prepared to go.

And Tony wants to (inaudible).

ANTHONY VALLILLO: No. Just a couple other things. On the mutual aid, you have distinguish mutual aid that we get from other utilities. That I believe we have just as much right and influence as CL&P does and I think they would agree. The other is contractors. They are a bigger system. They use more contractors so the accessibility to a larger number of contract crews then we did.

I believe that's what I try to convey to you, Representative. So if I did misconstrue that I'm sorry. Jim is right as far as crews ready and John Prete can add to that. We were gearing up for an outage or a storm that was going to create 150,000 outages. We had pegged various severities and what the outages might be. We get it up to basically the worst case and we got every resource we could get our hands on and we had that there as soon as they could be usable.

Again, you can't put all your crews out there the first day because you don't know what you have. You have to go out and figure out what the plan is there to get things ready. As far as getting prepared, I was on a conference call with the Governor and all of his commissioners. I think it was on the Thursday night before the arcade. Deputy Commissioner Boynton was asking me to call. We called him, myself and another individual from UI. We gave him a full status of where we were, what

our preparations were. Everybody seemed fine with that. CL&P was on the call. They did that as well.

So I believe we were doing everything we could do. And as far as having the crews ready, I believe we were very good in getting the resources out in the field at the right time and in the right place as soon as we knew what the assessment was. And just the last thing, I would -- and I want to say this respectfully -- let us, you know, do our jobs. I don't -- you said something about the state taking control of dispatching crews or whatever. I -- that would get me very nervous. We can certainly talk about that, but we really need to do the job and be held accountable for the job we do because it is an extremely complex system and the damage that we had was diverse, multifaceted and very much required an extensive review and process to determine what we needed to do.

And once we had that I think we were extremely effective in rebuilding the system.

REP. SHARKEY: So just bottom-line, just quick answer. Do you feel that you have enough crews on the ground Monday morning here in state to address the problem that you actually had, not necessarily what you anticipated, but what you actually had?

JOHN PRETE: Yes.

REP. SHARKEY: Okay.

JOHN PRETE: A far majority of the crews that we had in the state were there at 6 a.m. Sunday and, in fact, I remember a visual that the gentleman that runs that (inaudible) Thomas



was in the yard holding them back because they wanted to go out in the middle of the storm.

REP. SHARKEY: Okay. All right. Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: Representative Ritter.

Representative Mikutel.

REP. MIKUTEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was going to ask this question of CL&P, but it's a generic question so you guys can fill me in. A lot of the damage was due to the trees, limbs and trees falling it has never seen so many trees on the lines and I still can't understand why we have more trees this time than Hurricane Gloria.

But cutting to the chase here, we in Eastern Connecticut have lots of trees. They're all over the roads in my district. And what's the -- the tree trimming policy differs from municipal utilities to CL&P and probably from you. But short -- short of leveling every tree within a 70-foot range of the lines, what is -- what would you do differently? And whose responsibility is it to do the tree removal?

Because if you're talking -- you're talking as industries that are what? Fifty feet away from -- you're changing the character of the town. You're changing the character of my town if you want to try to really do a real control here. So what do we do? How many trees do we take down? Do we level every tree within 50 feet of the lines? Give me your take on this.

ANTHONY VALLILLO: Let me try to answer the first question about the difference between Gloria

and Irene a little bit. I was here for Gloria and just a couple of things. First of all, Gloria, more intense wind; much, much less rain either prior to the hurricane and during the hurricane and it was faster moving. Irene was a less intense -- wind wise, but was a slow-moving storm so it continued to batter the system, a lot more rain which softens soils, a lot more trees came down.

As far as the trees, our trimming specifications which basically creates a trim zone around the wires to basically keep limbs from interfering with our wires -- is effective. Works well; we can make changes to that, but this is a totally different paradigm. When we start looking at the kinds of damages that we had and happened throughout the state, we have to collectively get together and think about what are the trade-offs? What are the balances? We don't have total control. We just can't go cut down trees and nobody would ever try to do that. We want to work with everybody to figure out what makes sense.

And I would suggest the first thing we do is we look at the mainlines and the most critical mainline systems. Take a look at those. May because of experts in here who can look at trees and determined are those trees in distress because I believe a number of trees that came down also had some disease. I saw some of them.

You have trees that are growing indirections that are subject to -- be the first to come down so maybe we start with, you know, sort of small steps and start moving trees that we just know are going to be a problem and then we go from there because the stark reality is

that 90 percent of the damage in the storm was caused by huge trees coming down. Tree trimming changes are not going to have any material effect on at all.

And if we really want to eliminate outages -- I saw a report that came out recently that talked about if this was a category one or a category two hurricane, frankly we'd still be in restoration right now.

And so that's -- that's how important it is to look at this topic from a totally new light, again, collectively so that we can decide, you know, what makes sense.

REP. MIKUTEL: Follow-up question. What does the future hold for underground wires as opposed to the current system? And economically is that ever going to be feasible?

ANTHONY VALLILLO: Well, if we were starting -- if we had no system out there and you were going to build it from scratch today, undergrounding would be more viable. To go now and take down what we have and underground it, the cost of three to five to six times more expensive to underground a distribution line than it is to put it overhead. So you have that huge cost.

The maintenance practices are totally different. The restoration practices, when you have an outage, are much different. You know, you've got to dig things up. The whole protective devices and schemes have to be different. It's a totally different technology, cable versus wire. So it's a big -- the cost, I think, at the end of the day I think people would say the cost is prohibitive at this point, to really do that in you know, a large-scale way.

REP. MIKUTEL: I think to get an effective tree-cutting policy -- because we're always going to have tree damage as long as we have the current system we have -- to me requires coordination between the landowner and the town and the state because any utility companies, it can work any other way and I foresee all the problems that occur of trying to cut so much trees down.

So that's an issue -- this all of us have to work on, but that to me -- we all need to spend some time on that and do it in a thoughtful manner.

ANTHONY VALLILLO: We agree.

JAMES P. TORGERSON: We agree.

SENATOR FONFARA: Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I just had a couple of comments, not any questions. I wanted to first thank you all for having those conference calls for the state representatives and senators to call in, because although, we, as legislators, don't have control over that piece of the process and its more of a town municipal issue, we had a lot of people asking us questions and those are very helpful to sort of give us the macro of how things were progressing and I thought that was very helpful.

I think one of the criticisms that I heard -- and it seems that you are going to be touching on it is just to be improving the communications, at least in the first 24 hours and more so I would say with the liaisons. I think it was a great concept to have the

liaisons working with our municipal officials in setting the priorities of what needed to go back online first. But I think there was sort of a disconnect with the liaisons being able to get the information from the companies of how we were going to progress.

So it was a little bit tough, you know, for places like our senior housing that had lost power and sort of assessing what to do with them. Should we be putting them into shelters? And I think improving that piece of the communication is really critical, but I do want to thank you for all the efforts that you made in keeping us informed because you know, it was difficult and it was well appreciated.

JAMES P. TORGERSON: Thank you. And we agree. We need to improve the communication aspect.

SENATOR FONFARA: We have time for a few more brief questions.

Representative Carter.

REP. CARTER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One thing that came out of this when I was out in the field, I noticed that some of the folks talked about tree crews, local tree crews. Maybe they need more training. I guess there's a certification process for local tree crews. Maybe you could address that ended you feel you had an adequate number of local tree crews trained?

JOHN PRETE: Representative, working on the high-powered lines or the distribution lines certainly required a fair amount of training and some of the local ones that do backyards are not trained. Can they be? It will be a personal choice up to them, but as far as tree

crews and what we received we were happy with the numbers and of course with that came the quality of what they did.

We have a partnership with a tree company called Lewis, who is very big and we do that for very specific reasons because of the work that they need to do day in and day out.

REP. CARTER: Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you.

Representative Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: Just a quick question, gentleman. It seems to me that we have a higher percentage of outages in each storm. So my question to you, is there anything inherent in the system that is making it more likely that you will have more outages as we go forward and have future storms?

JAMES P. TORGERSON: Probably the biggest thing is what we were talking about with the trees. From Gloria to today, we had 26 years where trees have grown up more and nothing to thin those out. Now, I agree, we have to work together to figure out the possibilities that can be done, but when we looked at what caused the outages for this storm, as Tony said, it was -- over 90 percent of it was caused by tree damage and that's what's causing the system to have outages.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you and I just wanted to make one comment. Your last slide was the most important to me, Slide Number 15, and the reason for that is it's very rare that a company will publicly state its weaknesses and how they're going to handle it and I just

wanted to commend you for that, because I think that all organizations, our own included, need to constantly analyze what we do, how we could do it better and acknowledge our weaknesses and how we do it better. So I wanted to commend you on that.

Thank you.

JAMES P. TORGERSON: Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you very much. That will conclude our -- the presentation and questions to United Illuminating. We appreciate you being here, and again, if there is time at the end of this I would hope that we could -- if there are additional questions to the utilities that some if not all of you who remain -- and that brings up our municipal utilities section and that would include Paul Yatcko from Groton Utilities, Ken Sullivan from Jewett City, John Hiscock from South Norwalk Electric and Water, Chris LaRose from Norwich Public Utilities along with Mike Hughs, and George Leary from the Norwalk 3rd Taxing District Electrical Department.

Hopefully we have enough room.

For the sake of time for you to be able to get through your presentations as well as for members to ask questions, critically those that are within the municipal utility areas -- I know members here will want to ask you questions. I would ask that if you have prepared statements that you try to consolidate that. It's more effective if you can not read, but if that's your preference, certainly we're not going to -- to deny you that opportunity, but I think the best that you can do to summarize and then -- then go

from there would be much appreciated.

Please proceed, identifying yourself for the record, please.

PAUL YATCKO: Good morning. My name is Paul Yatcko. I have the pleasure of being the director of utilities for the city of Groton and I thank you for the opportunity of appearing here before you today. Just by way of introduction, Groton Utilities and its subsidiary Bozrah Light and Power provide electric service to about 17,000 customers in the city of Groton, part of the town of Groton, Bozrah and part of Lebanon. I would like to begin my remarks this morning by paying tribute to the hard-working men and women of both of our organizations who gave tirelessly of themselves to restore electric power. Saying thank you to them hardly seems enough.

We believe that our emergency preparedness plan, which was not unlike those that you've heard about already this morning, put us in a very good position to respond to the challenges of the tropical storm and that we had people, material, equipment and provisions and communications all in place prior to the storm. And during the height of the storm, frankly, we did only respond to those situations that were a threat to public safety due to safety regulations because when winds exceed 35 miles an hour you can't put somebody up in a bucket, but as the winds died down Groton Utility personnel surveyed the damage and prioritized the restoration efforts not unlike using methods that we heard earlier today.

And after the winds fell below 35 miles an



hour, our crews hit the street working 16 hours on an eight hours off. We fielded eight line crews and four tree crews and we had complete restoration by -- in Groton by 5 p.m. on Wednesday August, 31, and by ten p.m. the same night in Bozrah.

I would also like to thank the people from Holyoke, Massachusetts, who under the mutual aid system sent us a couple of crews. They work seamlessly in side-by-side our people to help us out to restore from the outage. Overall the damage resulted in over 11,700 customers being out of service. That doesn't sound like much next to the numbers that you've heard already this morning, but that having been said, that was some 70 percent of our service territory without power.

What did we learn from this experience? While there are a number of technical improvements we believe can be made in our response, the biggest lesson we take away from this, again not unlike what you've heard already is about communications. The acquisition of, the use of and the sharing of information both internally in our organization and externally with our customers.

We believe that in the operational area there are opportunities that are system control and data acquisition systems as well as smart-metering systems to isolate damage, speed of the restoration and ensure that no isolated customers remain without power as the restoration process continues. And finally we think we can improve the value and timeliness of information that's provided to customers both during and after the extraordinary event. In particular, we believe that we need to work harder on our predictive capability with

respect to restoration times and towards improving our websites and other communication avenues to give customers a better idea of just when they're going to be restored.

Thank you again for the opportunity of being here today. I do hope that I spoke quickly enough.

SENATOR FONFARA: The gentleman with you (inaudible) just with you.

KENNETH SULLIVAN: My name is Ken Sullivan. I'm from Jewett city.

SENATOR FONFARA: Oh, okay. Great.

Any questions? Senator Gomes.

SENATOR GOMES: I have a question that may be a little innocuous.

Do the towns and the communications that they have, do they have a direct way of assembly with the state representative or Senators to contact somebody because Lord knows our members -- I mean, our citizens know how to contact us and sometimes communications stops right there because we don't know directly how to get to somebody to solve their problems.

PAUL YATCKO: I'll speak specifically for Groton. During the storm, I have no communications with anybody in the state Legislature or the state Senate. I believe those communications were conducted through our mayor's office and I was in the (inaudible) emergency operations center for the entire event working side-by-side with our public safety officials and our mayor so I had access to her the entire time.

SENATOR GOMES: I understand that most cities have their own operations center, but sometimes they're so chopped up, they're so busy and everything. And when some of us look to get to somebody that we can get an answer. I know we're not going to get the answer that some of these people want, but something to tell them when they call us directly. They find our numbers and they call us every day and we just have to have a way of saying to somebody, well, we'll take care of this or we'll try to put you in touch with somebody and so on and so forth.

PAUL YATCKO: That's a very good point. That something we'll need to look at in the future. Thank you.

SENATOR GOMES: I didn't -- I don't know if other people had that problem. You know, I was just trying to imagine it, how it goes (inaudible).

PAUL YATCKO: Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: Representative Mikutel.

REP. MIKUTEL: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I want to congratulate the municipal utilities for their responding so well and getting service back online as quickly as they did because I know in Jewett City, which I represent, I think the power was back on Tuesday night, if I'm not correct. Monday night? Monday night. I don't live in Jewett City. Just outside. I almost moved to Jewett City just to get my power.

But why is it, in your opinion, that you were able to -- municipal utilities were able to

restore power so quickly? Was it the fact that you're in a more urban area and less tree damage? Or what? Because I just want to know how did you manage to do it.

KENNETH SULLIVAN: I'll speak for Jewett City. I want to just -- again, Ken Sullivan for the record. Ken Sullivan, director of utilities for Jewett City, and I just want to say quick thank you to Senator Fonfara and Representative Nardello, close to the home, Representative Steve Mikutel.

To answer your question, Steve, yeah. I think the, you know, in Jewett city service territory obviously being 2.5 square miles, 2300 electrical meters, you know, we employ a very rigorous year-round tree trimming plan that go into effect. We focus hard in the fall. We usually dedicate about a month straight in the fall to tree trimming.

I do agree with previous testimony that anything Legislature can do along the lines of, you know, future mandates for tree trimming on personal properties, et cetera, would be -- would be beneficial. One can't help but wonder -- and I think we all need to keep in mind -- these were 60-mile an hour winds. What happens when it blows 120?

REP. MIKUTEL: Question. After you completed your work and got the people back on power, I don't believe that you are put into service or asked to respond to help out the utility companies. Was there -- was that something that you could have done? Should there have -- should you have been asked to help out.

KENNETH SULLIVAN: Actually, Mr. Representative, in the case of Groton, we did provide crews that

supported CL&P's recovery after our service territory was completely restored.

JOHN HISCOCK: My name is John Hiscock. I'm general manager South Norwalk Electric and Water. And the one thing I wanted to point out to you is our utility was back online in 12 hours. We were back on time on Sunday night around 11:15.

We had virtually no storm damage. We're in an urban setting. Half of our distribution system is underground. The overhead portions are in urban areas. There aren't many trees and it really speaks to the issue of trees. And the issue is simply trees and nothing else.

Our crews started on Tuesday morning and worked for the neighboring muni for a day or so and then worked through Labor Day with CL&P so we did assign our crews to CL&P. We were down for 12 hours because our incoming feeds from CL&P failed due to a tree failure and CL&P got us online very quickly through communication back and forth, and we worked quite well with CL&P and have tremendous communications with them. It's essentially a tree issue.

SENATOR FONFARA: Representative Rovero.

REP. ROVERO: Good morning. I'm very happy to see the utilities talking about lessons learned. I know we can't do anything about Irene. It's long gone, but I'm anxious to see this list by all the utilities of the lessons that we've learned so we can all get prepared for the future.

And I hope one of the main objects of your

lessons learned will be better communications with the towns. So I'm going to be anxious to see that list from all the utilities about the lessons that you learned and how you can prevent those things from happening in the future.

Thank you.

SENATOR FONFARA: Representative Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: Yes. Can you tell me the number of linemen per mile that you have? I know I'm asking specifics here.

PAUL YATCKO: If I have my decimal point in the right place, it's less than one linemen for every ten miles.

REP. NARDELLO: All right. And you alluded to some of this, so you may have already fully answered it, but in case there is anything else left. Clearly you are able to get things up and running quickly, but what I wanted to know it's what's the difference between you and the other utilities that allow you to do that?

In other words, where do you feel the concrete differences were? Is it based on size? Is it based on the number of linemen? Is it based on -- you talked a little bit about the fact that you're in -- you're in urban areas. Give me those factors that you feel were beneficial to you that may differentiate you.

JOHN HISCOCK: South Norwalk Electric and Water not only has to -- runs an electric utility, it runs a water utility also, which is actually larger than its electric utility and we borrowed a significant number of crews from

the water utility, our water forestry crews, our water utility construction crews and our operations crews. Virtually all of our staff on the operation side in both the water and electric utility workers were assigned to electric problems. We had complete control over those crews and complete communication so we had good communication, and as I said, we received very little storm damage and it really has to do with the nature of our service territory.

Being underground it is tremendous in a storm. It's not so good when you need to do restoration because its difficult, expensive and it requires some very specialized safety training.

REP. NARDELLO: Since that's the question and you touched on something that -- because a lot of people are going to ask, why don't we just underground? And we've had answers, it's the expense involved in that.

So that undergrounding helps in a storm, but what you're saying is in other times it's actually more expensive and it has to be taken into consideration. Am I hearing you correctly?

JOHN HISCOCK: Yes. You're correct. When you have a cable failure in your underground system, the diagnosis of the problem and the appropriate solution is much more difficult, much more time-consuming and significantly more expensive. The underground crews also have to have significantly more training than linemen. Linemen may disagree, but that's basically our company's position. So each comes with its own difficulties. In preference, we prefer underground.

REP. NARDELLO: And is there a failure rate that's published on underground lines versus overhead lines in terms of failure rate so that we can get a comparison of how big the failure rate is for both?

JOHN HISCOCK: I don't think ours will be very helpful because our underground system has been suffering from repeated problems with out-of-date switches, which we are in the process of replacing so that we're in a larger placement program in our underground system due to its failure so the data would not be helpful.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you.

We've been joined by Senator Prague. Welcome, Senator Prague. And I understand you have a question.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Senator Fonfara.

Mr. Yatcko, you're from Groton Utilities?

PAUL YATCKO: That's correct, Senator.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Congressman Courtney had a conference call of all of the chief elected officials of the municipalities. And the chief elected official in Groton asked Connecticut Light and Power, Jeff Butler, a question. And he said, half of my town is covered by Groton Utilities and the other half is covered by CL&P. The half of my town that's covered by Groton Utilities already has their power back and the half that is covered by CL&P not one person has their power back.



Can you explain why you were better able to get people back on their power right in the same area than CL&P?

PAUL YATCKO: I won't speak to CL&P's restoration process. I believe that the folks from CL&P did a tremendous job with a statewide problem of this magnitude. I can tell you that our job was probably easier than theirs because the scale was smaller and it was concentrated in a small geographic area.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Okay. That I thought perhaps you had -- you're doing something that we could learn from that might benefit CL&P in the future in restoring power to their customers, but --

PAUL YATCKO: I wouldn't leap to the conclusion that we're doing anything different or anything better than CL&P, or any other utility for that matter. I think the circumstances were just very different.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Okay. Thank you.

PAUL YATCKO: You're welcome.

REP. NARDELLO: Are there further questions from members of the committee?

Representative Lesser.

REP. LESSER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you for your testimony. One of the things I haven't heard discussed by you or by anybody else this morning is the question of incentives. And I've heard when you talk about what you do when there are outages, but

I was wondering if you could comment on the effect of decoupling on your incentives versus those of electric distribution companies in terms of getting power restored as quickly as possible.

PAUL YATCKO: Could you help me? I'm not quite sure I understand what you mean by incentives.

REP. LESSER: Sure. Absolutely. And obviously, everybody, you know, my hat is off to the work of linemen around the state for all of the companies, for working huge, lengthy shifts and doing a lot to restore power as quickly as possible. But in terms of the financial incentives of how you get paid as a municipal company versus an electric distribution company. Are there differences? Have those differences developed over time since the deregulation? And how does that affect the compensation incentives for getting power restored?

PAUL YATCKO: My understanding of the rate setting process is that while it's on a local level and rather than a state level rates are set similarly. There based on recovery of costs through the number of sales units. I don't believe that there are any rate incentives that are different between ourselves and the investor-owned utilities. I wouldn't look to that as a reason for the difference in performance.

REP. LESSER: So I'm sorry. Just a follow-up really quickly. I just want to make sure. So the fact that you generate -- or some of your members generate their own electricity as opposed to buying it on the market does not affect, you know, incentives in terms of selling electricity.

PAUL YATCKO: We have very few self generators and it doesn't really change the nature of our distribution rates.

REP. LESSER: Okay. Thank you very much.

PAUL YATCKO: You're welcome.

REP. NARDELLO: Are there further questions from members of the committee? Seeing none, I have to say that, boy, how good is this? We finished at exactly 12 noon what we were expected to. So we are ready to move into --

Before I do that let me just doublecheck the -- there were other members that were on the list of municipal utilities. Do they wish to come up as well or has it been covered by the gentlemen who have already come up to speak?

CHRISTOPHER LaROSE: (Inaudible).

REP. NARDELLO: We have one that does. Can you then come identify yourself?

CHRISTOPHER LaROSE: (Inaudible) and one of the things that Norwich did this year after the lessons learned from last year's storms was too heavily engaged our EOC. We actually brought it into our own building.

So communications between the municipal departments and Norwich Public Utilities has never been better because of those lessons learned. And we've also partnered with public works on a tree restoration. Our crews worked in conjunction with public works so we tended to get trees out in a safer and more expeditious manner.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much for that helpful piece of information.

Any questions from members of the committee?

And you're all set, all the members of the municipal electric company? Thank you very much for coming here today.

At this point, we're going to move on to the next segment, which is the municipal segment and I'm going to turn over the Chair's position to Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: Yes. Thank you, Representative Nardello. It's a pleasure for me to have this opportunity on behalf of our committee to begin this process. I like to say at the very beginning my cochair and our ranking member both are unable to be here because of prior commitments. And so that I apologize for their not being here. Of course, they would like to be.

We're going to start. We have three hours for the municipal section. We'll start with Mary Glassman, the chairman of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities and Bill Austin from Homeland Security; talk about the regional aspects of the capital region area and then we'll go through a list and I'll call people out individual.

Ken Hanks. April Capone. Joseph Mazza, Anthony DaRos, Iino, Rudy Marconi, Teresa (inaudible), Brian Sear and Jim Reed -- Jim Rivers.

The last questions -- limit our questions for the panelists. Okay. We're going to --

because of a prior commitment --

MARY GLASSMAN: Senator, I'm going to yield to First Selectman of Canterbury who has a time commitment.

SENATOR CASSANO: Yes. I was just going to say Brian Sear has another commitment so I'm going to ask Brian to come in first and then we'll take it from there.

Brian, welcome.

BRIAN SEAR: Thank you very much.

I'm also on the Secretary of State's voter reform panel in the other room. I thank you for this courtesy. I'm Brian Sear, First Selectman of Canterbury, Connecticut, for a population of about 5100 in the eastern part of the state.

Part of my preparation prior to Tropical Storm Irene was being involved and acting as the CEO of two tabletop workshops put on by Region 4 DEMHS and also prior to the storm we prepared in our EOC. I met with my emergency management director on Friday and Saturday and we opened up the EOC on Sunday morning. We also had a planning meeting at our council of governments, NECOG on Friday morning, where we all got ready for the storm.

The storm hit Canterbury hard by about 9:00 o'clock in the morning on Sunday. I would say 70 to 80 percent of the roads in town were impassable. The trees went down like matchsticks. We had crews throughout the town tracking. We had a big map up on the wall and they were tracking, you know, where the blockages were and where things stood.

And once the storm subsided about two o'clock in the afternoon, we had the map on the wall. We had it color coded. We have prioritized what we thought would be the most efficient way to start opening the routes in Canterbury and we also had our main number one priority, which is the Route 14 commercial corridor in town which includes a supermarket, a Dunkin' Donuts, a school, our post office, our town hall and basically all of our commercial entities. And that Route 14 restoration was our number one priority.

About 3:00 o'clock on Sunday, we were without telephone. We were without Internet. We were without power. We have a generator at the town hall so we were able to continue on. I contacted my CL&P rep at that point. I was able to reach her by cell phone and gave her the specifics of everything that we had put together along with our priority. I was told that there were no crews that were coming out that -- the rest of Sunday, but that everybody would hit the deck on Monday running.

As I understood it, it's my first storm of this nature, but our public works crew was not in the position to go out and starting cutting trees away from wires. If they were entangled in wires they were not supposed to touch them and they patrolled through town and if there were citizens that were out trying to cut for firewood and such they warned them away from that.

On Monday morning, I received a call from our CL&P rep that there was a crew headed to town. Could we direct that crew around town and starts setting and communicating our priorities. That crew came into town and

spent one hour and then left and never came back.

From that point on Monday until late on Thursday, there was no utility work done in our town. On Wednesday, 20 crews -- on Wednesday at 3:00 o'clock I got a call from CL&P in Danielson and they said get your public works crew back on the job -- because they leave at two o'clock. Get them back at the town hall. We have 20 crews coming to Canterbury and we need them there to give direction. So we were thrilled.

So I got the crew back on the clock. Indeed, those trucks showed up. Big white trucks. People were cheering when they came into town. Those trucks arrived about four o'clock on Wednesday. They sat from four o'clock on Wednesday until ten o'clock at night; 10:00 o'clock at night the crews left but the trucks the state there. Our public works crew sat waiting all the time. I was there included with them.

I communicated with the Danielson office and I told them the trucks are here, but nothing is happening and they said we'll get back to you. Thursday morning at six o'clock in the morning we were there. Our public works crew was there. I was expecting everybody to roll out and start working. From six o'clock until after ten o'clock in the morning on Thursday those trucks stayed there. And our public works crew stayed there. And then they got the word to go to Eastford, a town to the northwest of us. And so everybody that saw all these trucks pulling into town, saw all these trucks pulling out of town after that and we had a supermarket in town and they were calling me -- all the businesses were -- and

they said, we need information. And this was from Monday morning on. What's going on?

I could get no information from CL&P as to when people were going to be there, where we stood on their priority list. Did they even understand what was going on in our town and what our priorities were? So what we faced was a big dumpster in front of our supermarket in town and rotten food was being shoveled out into the dumpster in front of everybody and it was -- from my perspective, it was very, very frustrating.

The ideal situation would have been at least on Monday or Tuesday get the commercial core going. Morale would be up. The businesses would know they could continue and if the rest of the town took a little longer, well, so be it. That didn't happen.

I was in the middle of a meeting at NECOG with some representatives of CL&P on Thursday when all this happened with the trucks leaving for Eastford. Maybe it was what I did. Maybe not, but later on Thursday trucks came down from New Hampshire. These were yellow trucks or orange trucks. And they came into town and CL&P gave us a different liaison that came and stayed in our town, the EOC at the town hall. And those trucks started going around town with our public works crew and checking all the priorities that we had set up originally.

And from what I hear, that truck leader was told in the middle of that route you need to leave Canterbury and God love him, he said I'm not leaving. I'm staying here because these people need me. And those crews stayed and that liaison sat in our EOC and that was Thursday, about 3:00 o'clock. And from



Thursday through Sunday everything went like clockwork. The crews stayed. They worked out a system with our public works crew where they would disentangle the wires, but our crew would do all the cutting behind. They set up a parallel route where there was another group that would follow and hook up the wires. And within -- that's late Thursday -- within three days, the town was back up and running again.

What I need to analyze from my position is that worked out great at the end of the week. What was my role earlier in the week? And there were people in town that were saying, I wasn't doing my job. And I was told, well, I didn't contact the right person at CL&P or I didn't go about it the right way. I see our job on the local level is to take care of our citizens. I'm not elected to tell utility how to run their business. We took care of our citizens. We had a cert team involved. We offered showers. We offered water. God love DEMHS. We had those MREs that people were able to come and pick up and eat and bottled water and stuff.

Canterbury took care of itself. But it was a very frustrating situation and you would not believe the rumors that have been one of those CL&P trucks came in and that they left and everything was swirling and I had no information to counter that. I had no accurate information at all so as far as what we learned from this, I'd like to know who it is that a selectmen in town would contact or would have accurate information that would be able to provide all that.

We also had problems with the Red Cross unfortunately. They gave me a list of shelters that were open and it turns out one

of them in our region did not open. So I had people driving there that it wasn't open. I had people turned away from a shelter in the next town to us and also when our CERT team, that's our community emergency response team, volunteers in town -- who did a wonderful job -- when they visited the shelter on Tuesday, the people in the shelter had worked double shifts, more than 24 hours without any contact from Red Cross administration and they thought that our CERT team was coming in to relieve them. And there was a lot of confusion at that end.

To work within that vacuum and not have the accurate information and get out ahead of the story, again, was extremely frustrating. I did take part in two conference calls with Representative Courtney's office that he set up. I was very frustrated because it was 20 minutes at the beginning of the call of information, PR, what have you, from CL&P before there was ever a discussion of what was needed on the local level.

I hope we've learned from this. Connecticut is too small a state not to be able to have us all working on the same page and together on this and maybe taking a note whatever CL&P learned, whatever got to the point in Canterbury from Thursday through Sunday, if that could have been applied three days earlier we would have all been in a much better situation. Thank you.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you, Selectmen Sear. Questions from the panel? I know that your time is short, but Senator Williams.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Brian, thank you for being here and thank you for that informative story. I

think there are a number of lessons that we can take away from the in we're not just talking about Canterbury. I know that in Eastern, Connecticut, you have Scotland and Sterling that went for four or five days with a hundred percent of its residents out of power. Plainfield was in that situation for, I believe, about four days. And then there were many towns in the southeastern portion of the state that went for days with essentially a hundred percent of its citizens out of power.

What can you tell us further, or what would be your recommendation in terms of communication so that we are better prepared for the back-and-forth that's necessary to not only inform communities of what's going on -- because as you say, it's up to the utilities to run their business -- but even more importantly to have the kind of communication that can then facilitate the restoration of utility service and power more quickly.

BRIAN SEAR: We all learned after this -- and as far as communicating with the residents in town, we can do some work on that as far as getting the word out. The frustration that we had early on was no information. And when you operate in a vacuum what actually is created is extremely fanciful and there were people that were coming to me with all sorts of information that turned out not to be true.

As far as setting up a system this was a good test in a sense -- or a bad test however you want to look at -- that the web went down, internet, cable, cell phone usage. We all learned, I guess I did about cell phone towers having batteries that they became very spotty as the week went on.

I would like a centralized contact point that I could be in contact with. Maybe it would be regional in our area, where I, as the selectmen, would not have to hunt and peck and trying to get information, but that there would be somebody that I could call that was keeping tabs on our area, and you know, beforehand had set up the systems of communication back and forth as opposed to all of us going alone one at the time. A central communications point would be absolutely ideal. And I don't think it necessarily has to be somebody from the utility. I really don't care where the information came from as long as they're would be a reliable source for that.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: Could this be done perhaps the regional planning authorities or council of governments? Because I think that's a great idea and I know Northeastern Connecticut we pulled together some regional council of governments meetings going into the hurricane just before it hit, and afterwards, the Thursday afterwards. And I thought those were very helpful.

But I think the idea of having towns work together regionally, having command centers where you know that there are generators in place, having a plan for regional shelters where people are not turned away and staff are not asked to work two or three shifts in a row and where there's a plan for communication at a number of different levels, whether its communicating with the local radio station, with the social media that's out there.

I know in Canterbury you put up signs. It's like in some cases back to the Stone Age, but

you know what? When everything goes down you have to use all the tools at your disposal to communicate with folks and the next weather emergency may not be just a severe tropical storm. It could be a category 1. It could be a category 2. We could be looking at much more serious outcomes that really call for something like regional command centers.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Well, coincidentally, one of the most welcome calls I got was -- I believe it was Wednesday morning from the director of our council of governments who called me just to kind of see how we were doing and offered some other information.

I do know from a practical nature, yes, we did the Stone Age. We put the signs up. The most beneficial thing we did, we provided water for people to flush their toilets with and town hall and we provided showers at our middle school and that became our kind of information center.

As far as getting the word out -- another thing that was very -- well, the way the storm hit was parents were calling me and dropping into town hall and all wondering whether school would open or not and whether they could leave town or not. Can I leave? And I'm going to be penalized because school is supposed to start and I want my children ready, but I don't have any power at home. That information, we worked that out. We just canceled school until the next Tuesday and that worked out well. But again, it's a case of getting information to people. And I think that anxiety with people, the more you can address that -- I mean, the reality is CL&P knows what it takes, I would hope, to restore power. If it's going to be a little bit

longer well, so be it. You know, we're resourceful people out our way.

But the information, I think it's key to actually concentrate on that because that's something we can do. The power company, we hope they kind of get their act together, address however effectively they can the communication aspect, but yes, it's upon us at the local level to spread that out and yeah, it would be wonderful.

And as far as working with the other towns we were very similar in our response to this, to this event. The weather hit us all at the same condition and stuff. Twelve is a nice number. That's our council of governments and as far as us being a working area, I'd feel more comfortable if I could rely on a central portal of information rather than trying to freelance or do it myself.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you, again. I know your time is short. We have two more questions and then we're going to move on.

Senator Witkos and then Representative Ritter.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Brian, you had mentioned that you received a phone call from the representative (inaudible) or soon thereafter, and I'm wondering did you receive a phone call from any of the utilities for a debriefing ask your experiences with them after the storm, after you were up and running, say, on Sunday or Monday afternoon?

BRIAN SEAR: No. There was follow-up promised on the conference calls during the week when I participated and I think both of them -- and

there was a comment, well, we'll get back to you. I've got to meet with you and find out. But no, there wasn't any follow-up.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

REP. RITTER: Thank you, Senator Cassano.

Thank you for your testimony. For the record, I represent two towns in Southeastern Connecticut, Waterford and Montville and I can tell you that this is a very familiar story for us, but it was seven days (inaudible).

One of -- in my conversations, particularly among my two communities, it became clear to me that -- of course I represent two very different communities. And in terms of their ability to provide and manage an emergency operations center and to keep it going, also different challenges across those two communities.

And I was particularly struck by stories I was hearing -- and I helped distribute water, food, and ice like many people so I heard a lot of stories. Many people came in from council over Southeastern Connecticut to pick this up. Many towns were very constrained by the fact that there EOCs in some cases presented perhaps -- when they got their embedded utility person they didn't have any power. They didn't have any phones. They didn't have any Internet. They didn't have the ability really to allow that person to do their job and I wondered if you have any further comments on that.

BRIAN SEAR: Our embedded contact and all from CL&P

happened later on Thursday. And that -- there was enough around us, I think. Some of the cell towers were coming back. Brooklyn had its power by then. We were somewhat of an island at that point. So it wasn't as widespread.

The ability of that contact at that Point to get the information and transmit it and all, it was later in the week. So we did -- up until then we didn't have anybody else that was there to provide that function. It was just our regional CL&P rep that we deal with all the time.

REP. RITTER: Thank you. One of the thoughts that that led me to next -- and I guess I would invite the rest of the panel to maybe think about this too -- is that something like this neither the storm itself nor the way we provide electricity or phone service has anything to do with our municipal boundaries, really none.

And so I was very struck as I crossed town lines in my region by the difficulty so many municipalities had to provide an equal type of response to this. And we talked a little earlier about a more regional nature. And I know this is a complex issue. It's not as easy as it sounds, but I would be very interested in thoughts from you or anybody else on this panel about -- with that perspective in mind, because clearly I believe that one of the difficulties, in a way we've created ourselves with these expectations perhaps that we're placing on our system that we're so widely -- when I say "variable" that's not correct -- the results were so variable and dependent, of course, on our many municipalities in cases where it just wasn't a



reasonable expectation.

So I guess your thoughts and the rest of the panel as we go through -- if you want to speak to that point would be very helpful. Thank you.

BRIAN SEAR: Thank you. We were able to communicate on the highway band with DEMHS whatever that number was. And that worked out well, as far as communicating the information to them.

We're all mopping up after this so I never really -- it's coming from a now, but when the storm hit and we had information we created incidents on our web EOC -- they call it -- for every tree down on water Street. Tree down on Gooseneck Hill. Route 14 went down. All these long --

We did that. We were trained to do that. We did as best we could. I don't know how that information -- where that information went. Did that go to the utility? I don't know where those kind of -- intermesh between them, but that, while the Internet was working and all -- and then that high-band radio. That worked throughout the week so I do know that that never got knocked down. So...

SENATOR CASSANO: Brian, can you take two more questions?

BRIAN SEAR: Absolutely.

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. We have -- we'll do two our questions because we really need to move on, but we have to that have similar communities (inaudible) Senator Prague Representative Boukus.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Sear, did you ever get an explanation of why all those trucks came into your town and sat there our after hour after hour without any orders as to what to do?

BRIAN SEAR: Officially --

SENATOR PRAGUE: Did anybody ever tell you why?

BRIAN SEAR: Officially, no.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Unofficially?

BRIAN SEAR: There was a lot of conjecture.

CL&P -- I don't really want to go down that road, you know, but they don't want to pay overtime. They're trying to save money. It's a political decision. I mean, again I'm saying -- and there is a public relations or a kind of public confidence component to what we're dealing with here is it's not just a functional the where those trucks aren't out and the power takes a little bit longer to restore. There's the appearance and this is in the main parking lot of our town. I mean, when you go down -- you see these trucks. Some of them had aerial booms a hundred feet high. The -- no. There was never an official -- I think somebody said, what? I mean, my assumption was that because -- I could be wrong -- because of the nature of the way they want to set up their safety, that maybe it wasn't safe for the crews to proceed or whatever. I don't know. I don't know.

SENATOR PRAGUE: (Inaudible.)

BRIAN SEAR: They didn't have clearance. I know

that it wasn't workers themselves. I've got to say they were wonderful. They came ready to work.

SENATOR PRAGUE: And they didn't get any orders from central office as to what to do.

BRIAN SEAR: Right. Permission I think it's more -- as opposed to -- just permission to say, yes, you can work with the public works crew. Start going around town and start doing the work.

SENATOR PRAGUE: And you had nobody to call to get this going.

BRIAN SEAR: Oh, I called. I called the Danielson CL&P office and I spoke with about four or five different people. Their ears might still be ringing from that phone call. No, I did. I didn't play, you know, I tried to play nice, but not naive. No. They knew. They knew those trucks were there. They knew we were there ready and I called about every hour on the hour and at the NECOG meeting on Thursday that we attended there were CL&P representatives there. Whether they listened or not, I don't know, but they heard this story.

Because I heard right in the middle of that meeting with them present that the trucks were being pulled to Eastford right in the middle of that.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Yes, but they sat in your town for hours before they were pulled to Eastford.

BRIAN SEAR: Long time. Yeah.

SENATOR PRAGUE: I hope CL&P is listening very

closely to this so that they can make some changes that will improve the way they react when we have a crisis. So thank you.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you. And that highlights the need for a meeting like this so that we can make sure those things don't happen again.

Representative Boukus.

REP. BOUKUS: Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr. Sear.

After 9/11 the state and all the municipalities I believe, as a member of the Public Safety Committee, worked very, very hard to see that local communities and means of communication. If I recall correctly, cities and towns had meetings periodically of how they would respond to different kinds of emergencies.

So my question to you is: On the local level, were the means of communication available to you to get to your constituents or your residents and the breakdown only with CL&P not giving you the information to disseminate? Or are there other things that you've learned that you need to have up and running so that your community can be well -- and we all can benefit from having better served?

BRIAN SEAR: Yes. Well, we have equipment that was set up so we were able to communicate with the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

As far as equipment that was provided in the aftermath of 9/11 to get to individual citizens in town, once -- once the Internet and the cell phone service and regular phone service went down, that that took that

component out.

I don't want to say there was no service. I mean, I had Sprint and I had cell phone service for most of the week. You would dial sometimes and the network would be busy and stuff. It wasn't a complete blank, but I don't think there was a component of how cities and towns were trained or equipped that was able to get the citizens who didn't have either a landline, a cell phone. I guess the radio was a means of getting through to them and that is something I mentioned earlier as far as, I think what I would do locally is possibly try to have a communications person who was there and their job was to try to update the local media on where things stood.

I think part of what I might not have done as frequently as possible was a lack of factual information to give. So -- and there is a little reluctance. If all you have to give is the same information you gave 4 hours ago or 8 hours ago or 16 hours ago, there's a frustration aspect in there as well because you're the person giving the information to these people and you're giving them bad -- not bad, you're giving them unwelcome information and that's frustrating in itself.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you. Brian, I appreciate your testimony and your information. We will hopefully learn from this. Again, thank you.

BRIAN SEAR: Thank you all.

SENATOR CASSANO: Okay. We're going to move on. Again, to be consistent we've asked that you kind of summarize -- that we have written testimony from everyone -- if you would summarize which would give us an opportunity

to ask questions.

We're going to start again with the first selectman of Simsbury Mary Glassman who's Chair of the Conference of Municipalities and also chair of the capital region council of governments, but you can only testify once.

MARY GLASSMAN: Oh, all right. Well, thank you, Senate President Williams and Senator Cassano. I want to thank all of you for the opportunity to be here today to share our experiences as municipal CEOs of our community.

I'm just going to share with you my role is the first selectman of the town of Simsbury where it's my responsibility to activate the emergency operations center, where our town was 65 percent without power when we started and where we had tremendous amounts of flooding and road closures.

And as Representative Ritter said, when you have an emergency it is a regional emergency. It is a statewide emergency. The closure of Route 185 and most of the roads going in and out of Simsbury created problems for our residents to get out of town, created problems for our ambulances to respond in places that were across the river. And it took about two hours for residents of the nearby towns and cities to get to their homes as well.

I'll share with you my role as the chairman of the council of governments where we did take a regional approach to looking at the outages. And again, with the role of Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, as you've heard today, there was a lot of frustration and a lot of different experiences ranging from some towns that were not hard hit to towns that

were a hundred percent without power and had difficulty communicating with their residents.

First, I want to just share with you what worked in the town of Simsbury. We restored power in a relatively quick fashion. I think the prevention is probably the best reason to summarize our experiences. We meet monthly has a public safety subcommittee. We have a great relationship with our CL&P representative Mark Massaro. We know each other. We're not trading phone numbers at the emergency scene.

We also several years ago worked with CL&P for a very aggressive treatment the operation so we could clear a lot of the trees on any of our lines. We did work with CL&P on a transmission line review and, in fact, did have tremendous investment in our community of upgrading the lines which truly prevented us from having problems this year as well.

We did also prepare our residents and announced where our emergency shelter would be open and, in fact, our residents did lose access to power, did lose access to cell phone and didn't have any other means of communication. So residents in our town did know the high school would be open and they should go there if they couldn't communicate with us in any other way.

We also did see the need to improve cell and tech services. Reverse 911 was very helpful. Used it, but that's when many of our residents were underwater or their homes were underwater. What we didn't find was helpful was the text capability. As the Governor said, texting capability was available to residents even when cell service went down and

in many of our towns we did not have that capability of texting. So we did see a need for better communication opportunities.

We didn't have the same relationships with AT&T and Comcast, and in many cases, we didn't have contact names for those. So while CL&P is certainly first and foremost of the utilities that you're talking to today, it's important that you also realize the important role that AT&T and Comcast plays as well. And many cases in our town, a telephone pole went down. AT&T did not respond and CL&P did provide that backup for us. So I just wanted to share that experience.

As far as the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities, you're going to hear a lot of frustration from a lot of our towns and cities this morning. I just wanted to start first by thanking the tremendous efforts that our local first responders played in our emergencies, our police, our fire, our ambulance were with us every moment days prior to the storm, in the middle of the storm when we opened the emergency operation center, and also following the storm when we worked to try to clean up the devastation to get roads reopened, to address the flooding and to try to help our neighbors and friends in other towns who also were experiencing tremendous outages. So I just wanted to thank our dedicated staff in our town.

I just want to share with you that our towns and cities were affected in many different ways and we come here today with the opportunity and the hope that we will work as a partner with U.S. work to find solutions for preventing the next storm which we surely know will occur.



We did do a survey (inaudible) to do a survey following the storm because we wanted to come here equipped with information to you as to how you can best be helpful. About a third of the towns were first asked about their communication with the State of Connecticut and with the municipalities and the utilities before the storm and most of our towns responded excellent to good before the storm as well.

We had a number of phone conferences. We had contact information and we felt we were prepared before the storm. Local communities also evaluated during the storm that communication. Many of the responses ranged from very good to good. Responses evaluating communication after the storm, however, were divided between excellent, very good, good and it needs improvement. More than 90 percent of our towns and cities responded that they did have a municipal utility liaison and many felt that their liaison's performance in those towns that have established those relationships was excellent to very good.

The majority responded (inaudible) effectiveness of the emergency notification system, which is referred to as the reverse 911, when it was functional from excellent to good. So in towns that utilized that system recounted was helpful in contacting our residents, letting them know there was a problem and identifying it with them.

In terms of alternate forms of communication, many communities found that social media accounts like Facebook and twitter was very helpful in disseminating information when our residents didn't have access to other forms of

communication. We also used local radio stations and town hall websites and found that was helpful as well.

We did come you did it with some suggestions about coordinating and the process of restoring services. Our first suggestion is to strengthen real-time communication, which you've heard from many of the mayors and first selectman, between the municipal CEOs and recovery crews, utility crew supervisors, tree removal crews, local property public works crews and utility line crews.

The concern was the inability of the different disciplines of restoring to communicate among each other. Often we would have a utility crucial up where a tree crew headed to been there to remove the tree. And so instead of deploying utility companies to places where they could restore they had to wait while we then coordinated the recovery. This really was one of the reasons for causing many of the delays in the restoration of local services within our towns and cities.

Another recommendation based on the feedback from local officials is to establish a strike team, a model of communications that deploys the restoration assets, our various field crews, and outlines a definitive chain of command within the field. Also to equip designated leaders in the field with adequate communication capabilities which means sometimes radios when the cell phones are not working. And conducting regularly scheduled reports directly to the local CEOs.

A recommendation will build off the utility liaison's program that a number of towns found that did work well. And it would also allow

us to do a better job in communicating that information to our residents. We would often call CL&P, ask where the power outages were and how long it would take to restore. We need that information because we wanted to move into the second phase, which was to open local shelters to try to provide field -- meals in the field and to go door-to-door in some cases to let residents know that the flooding was rising or that the power was not going to be restored for days. If a few local officials are equipped with this information we can determine best locally how to protect and respond and keep our residents safe.

Another consideration we offer is to improve the collection and dissemination of local utility data, possibly through GIS, the location of major circuit substations in relation to local priority restoration points and correlate those with specific causes and locations of power outages. We want to work with utilities to set priorities of restoration so we aren't wasting our time responding in ways that are not helpful and don't restore the most number of residents, so that we can together on to the next town that may be experiencing a larger problem.

If such a blueprint were in place we believe that local recovery efforts would be more efficient, information to our residents would be more timely and we could work better together to protect public safety.

We just come here today, again, thanking you for the opportunity to speak and also working with you to make sure that when the next disaster comes we are better prepared to protect all of our residents.

So thank you. I'm happy to answer any questions.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Mary, for being here today.

A quick question. You alluded in your testimony to the fact that you had more difficulty within certain companies and getting the response. Can you elaborate on that and tell me what impact that your towns in terms of your ability to get responsiveness from the various entities that you needed to during the crisis?

MARY GLASSMAN: Well, in our local operations center, we opened our local operations center at 6 a.m. We knew which trees were down. We know which areas of the town were without power. We depend on the utility companies to tell us where they thought restoration would be possible first and where we would experience long-term delays so that we could then contact the residents and get them alternative methods of safety.

We didn't have that same response from AT&T. I believe one of our officers at what we did call AT&T we were directed to someplace out of Connecticut. And so it was frustrating for us to be contacting a utility company that wasn't familiar with what was happening here.

Comcast didn't provide us with any contact person again, and so we didn't know what restoration was going to be possible or, in fact, we couldn't -- we didn't know where the problems were occurring. So again, when there's a disaster, our residents are relying on the municipal CEOs to know the information, to get the contact information, to give them

timely options as to when restoration is possible.

You know, in some respects Hurricane Irene wasn't as bad as we thought it was going to be. And can you imagine if it was as bad as they said it was going to be? So this is a good opportunity for us to work out the kinks and that would be one area, again, which would be helpful to communicate.

REP. NARDELLO: Do you know offhand what percentage of the poles are the responsibility of the -- of Comcast or AT&T and those of CL&P?

MARY GLASSMAN: I don't, but you can imagine during a storm when a pole is down and it's a telephone call you call AT&T, they're not responding, we have to take police off of other areas and assign them to monitor the pole. That means we can't respond to other emergencies. We also have to take CL&P -- which did respond in that particular case -- off of their restoration shop at restoring power to address a pole which is really the responsibility of AT&T. So there seems to be some need for improvement in that area.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Mary.

SENATOR CASSANO: (Inaudible) the survey results or --

MARY GLASSMAN: Yeah. We submitted testimony today and would be happy to provide more information.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you very much. I'm going to ask that -- we have two regional agencies represented here and going to ask them to come up together. Chief Bill Austin, homeland

security coordinator from CRCOG and Ken Hanks, the chairman of Central Naugatuck Valley Emergency Planning Committee from Naugatuck, two different areas.

Chief Austin, would you like to begin?

WILLIAM AUSTIN: Mr. Chairperson and distinguished members of the committee, my name is William Austin and I'm the homeland security coordinator for the Capital Region Council of Governments.

Now, the chairman ask that we summarize the testimony. You already have my testimony, but I would like to point out that from one perspective we found this tropical storm to be the perfect opportunity to point out how regionalization could work and I want to emphasize that we are prepared just as any other local municipality or regional operation was prepared and we set up the RCC. We went into business. Things were slow, but I will tell you we have a very significant event that occurred on Sunday afternoon at approximately 4:37 in the afternoon.

Johnson Memorial hospital had a major power failure. We were called and asked to activate our regional emergency response plan and we did. We effectively carried out the evacuation of that hospital and a couple of good things happen. Before we could finish evacuating 63 patients, they were actually able to restore power. And so only 40 patients actually got evacuated. But I wanted to point out that that really was an example of the kind of service that can come from a regional -- and a regional coordination center operation and from a regional concept of how to assist in homeland security and emergency

management situations.

I would point out to you that that whole process really was the result of three or four major plans that have been developed and exercised and worked out exactly as we expected.

In the final days of the recovery storm, we also reached out to the municipalities in the capital region and the 11 additional units that are in the towns and municipalities that are in Region 3. We were especially concerned about the same things that we've been talking about today, the downed trees, the power outages, the public works assistance, those sort of things. And we were able to assist and provide a commodity service for the towns in the capital region and really anyone else who would have asked for our assistance.

What we did was we used part of our homeland security equipment, which is a tractor that goes with -- obviously pulls any type of trailer or whatever, but we were able to secure a 32-foot beverage trailer from Hartford Distributor and it was the ideal kind of vehicle to use because it had electric tailgate on the back. And we were able to deliver 11 tractor-trailer loads of MREs, water and ice before the four-day period was over. We shut the operation down on Sunday just before Labor Day.

We delivered a total of 22,272 MREs, 756 bags of ice and we also distributed 46,704 bottles of water. And in many cases, we also activated our emergency response teams and it was really a pleasure to see these teams operating at shelters such as Andover, for example. Also talking about commodity

distribution centers such as Andover and also, for example, in East Haddam and other places.

These assets and resources assistant in the recovery phase and I'd like to point out once again that these assets really didn't exist before 9/11. And in the State of Connecticut we've spent \$340 million in federal money since September 11th, really since about 2003 in order to increase the response capability and regional safety that we should be enjoyed here in the state.

Let me thank you very much for the opportunity for speaking. And I would like to point out that we could reach out. We did that on Monday searching out the municipalities to see how we could assist in that process. We did regionally use Twitter for the first time and we did it in the emergency operation center and we also did it with our incident management team here in the region.

I would point out one age-old -- or I should say at least very proven communication method that I've not heard anyone mention today and that is that many of the municipalities have their own emergency AM radio station. For example when you see those signs that say, turn to 1630 or turn to 1610, those are very low powered operations.

For example, in my municipality of West Hartford, it covers the entire town of West Hartford. So by the time you get to the Connecticut river, you can't hear anything in the broadcast. Comes in very handy and it points out the fact that when everything else has failed, if you've at least got a battery in one of the old ancient type A and radios, you can get an emergency message in that sense



and it's very effective.

One last item that I would bring to your attention because we've had questions and concerns about regionalization, I'd like to point out that there needs to be -- in my opinion, there needs to be an increased emphasis by the Department of Emergency Management Homeland Security in the efforts of including the regionalization process and emergency response process that takes place in the state.

The most part we are an afterthought. For the most part the \$340,000 investment has not yet matured, not yet been realized to the extent that it should be. Even our state laws do not really include the concept of regionalization into state law.

Right now, if you look at the playbook, the playbook generally just as local government to state government to federal government and we spent a great deal of money, a great deal taxpayers money, to put a system in place which now provides a regional mutual aid concept. And in some cases, it's utilized and working very well and in other cases it still needs, you know, some work.

So thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

SENATOR CASSANO: (Inaudible) regional (inaudible) questions. Ken, I assume you're going to address the issues applying because you're famous for it.

KENNETH HANKS: Yes, we are unfortunately. My name is Kenneth Hanks. I'm Fire Chief in Naugatuck. I'm also the chair of the

Emergency Planning Committee for the Council of Governments in the Central Naugatuck Valley.

We've also been involved in a lot of regional planning for the last several years. On the -- for several days before the storm, we were contacted by our account representatives for CL&P just to verify phone numbers and contact information. We did find that that was very helpful during the storm to have the liaison.

We had our EOC in operation locally from Sunday morning until Friday afternoon. And we did have quite a bit of flooding.

One of the issues I think we need to look at first -- somebody already had testimony about tree clearing and that was by far the number one reason we lost power; 45 percent of my town, similar numbers in other towns were due to trees coming down. The other issue we had is the constant flooding. We have areas in our town that (inaudible) region towns that flood two or three inches of rain, constantly getting flooded. This issue is of local property ownership because some of it is down property, some of it is poorly engineered systems. That's something we do -- we really need to look at to address regionally or statewide -- is in addition with FEMA mitigation grants to control the flooding (inaudible) minor. We're fortunate we've not had any evacuation, did not lose any property as some of the other communities in the state did.

Although the restoration efforts -- we -- for most of the towns in my area were by Friday afternoon, most of the power was back on. We did have some issues communication from CL&P.

We were able to communicate with CL&P relatively easily. We had a liaison in our office. He was in contact with CL&P's emergency operation center and we we're getting information back and forth. The issue we had is we had -- in Naugatuck and Hartford had two incidents that involved live power wires underground that took a substantial amount of effort to have response. The first one in my down, we had a lot of power line on the ground burning for 24 hours before we got a CL&P crew to respond.

I had to have fire, police -- police officers and a fire engine standing by. What was really frustrating about that was that down the street (inaudible) down on Sunday, Sunday morning. On Sunday night we had (inaudible) structure fire down the street involving - the power being turned back on to a house and burning at the entrance, a relatively minor fire.

Using the priority dispatch that this Legislature and CL&P and put in place, we meet a priority 2 call. They responded to go to the scene and 20 minutes, disconnected the power to the house. Would not go a quarter mile up the street to disconnect the burning wire on the ground. That's extremely frustrating from my standpoint. It was about 24 hours before that was taken care of.

The town of Oxford, their fire chief had an issue where a power line came down and burned through a gas line and had took -- it took a substantial amount of phone calls and convincing to get that is a priority call. That's an extremely dangerous situation. I will speak with our regional coordinator from DEMHS. DEMHS really shouldn't be involved in

contacting CL&P to get them to respond to shut the power of. And that maybe something on the communication that they need to work with.

The other communication issue we had was again we were talking to CL&P, their EOC, but getting that information back down to the customer service area. The customer service reps is a problem. We were getting constant updates on when circuits would be restored and we were told ten hours, 15 hours by the end of the day. If a customer was called customer service they were being told three to four days. So there was that -- we're not getting the same information to both people and that causes frustration we get phone calls back -- you're saying five o'clock. They're saying Wednesday. Some of that was blamed -- well, one citizen complained it was that they were told the power was out because an accident, a motor vehicle accident that happened two days before the storm which was not the case at all. I understand that those call takers were very frustrated. They were getting indicated with phone calls.

As Chief Austin had mentioned, we've also made use of social media both in our town and regionally, while we were using Twitter, Facebook as well as the local online newspaper to get information out. We made extensive use of the code red notification system. We made approximately eight phone calls during the storm and in the aftermath to identify -- once we identified areas that were out of power we were able to focus a message to that area. We set up sheltering, showers, meals and provided water for people for use.

(Inaudible.) The response to CL&P was good, I mean, I understand they had an issue on road

clearing. Monday was the road clearing the. We felt that maybe they could have started their efforts a little sooner. The crews that were out there on the road or for a nominal. The guys that showed up with the trucks from out-of-state, I mean, the dedicated workers. I know they were up against time limits on their (Inaudible.)

It just seemed that allocating those resources to do not seem to be as effective (inaudible).

SENATOR CASSANO: Let me begin with a question. This morning I believe it was the president of CL&P indicated that the maps that we have, our local maps are dramatically different from the system maps that utility companies have, the grids.

I know being involved with CRCOG from the beginning of the development of the Emergency Planning Counsel, but we've drilled and we've trained and so on. Do we ever include the utility companies here? And what can we do to get them involved so all that -- they're the same, same maps, same boundaries so maybe we can get better communication.

KENNETH HANKS: We've never included them in that type of drill. One thing we did find is, though, when they -- when CL&P identified a circuit they typically are given a number and a street name. That may not have any bearing on where the actual circuit was.

CL&P could give us a circuit number. They could tell us the number of homes, the number of customers that are on that circuit that are out but couldn't tell me what streets they were on. Now, we do not have those maps.

The circuit may be on both sides of the town. It could be a mile or two apart. They're not necessarily set out and logical blocks. That was frustrating for us to try and locate. And we had a -- we had one circuit had 500 customers. We had no idea where those customers were so getting those maps would definitely be helpful.

WILLIAM AUSTIN: Mr. Chairman, I was only going to point out that when you -- CL&P is very good about training firefighters, training first responders and to assist in take your of these problems. To give you an illustration, in West Hartford, there's 17 different circuits that bring electricity into West Hartford and they -- and none of them originate in West Hartford so we're back always crossing boundaries going in any direction.

And the system really works well on a daily basis because even if one circuit goes down, it's backed up by a circuit coming from another direction and many of you have experienced where your lights will blink and then they will blink again, but then they come back on. When they blink the third time they don't come back on and that -- unless it's reset. And all of that is because of the backup circuits.

You know, the system is really designed to be very effective; however, it's not decide on any town or municipal boundaries. So it would behoove us to know where those circuits are really and truly because -- and that we can take up our -- we can use parts that really goes to our municipality. But unfortunately, as the chief pointed out, in many cases, you've got a problem, but it's been taken care of in some other municipality -- is where they

have to do the work to get it back up.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you.

Any questions?

Senator Hartley?

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And good afternoon to you and chief, I just want to say first of all thank you very much for being with us here today. This is a time-consuming process from your end. I recognize that also it's very helpful to have an opportunity to try to connect the dots and that's really what this is about and I want to commend your leadership in Naugatuck. They certainly have their share of outages. Your coordination with the mayor of the borough and also our local media from my constituent's input was very impressive and it really helped them to get through. They had some extensive outages there.

And you know, people needed to try to carry on their life and also to take care, especially where we have the senior housing projects. So my hat is off and thanks for being with us today.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SENATOR FONFARA: You did great, Senator.

Further questions?

Thank you very much.

SENATOR CASSANO: We're going to again continue.  
April Capone, mayor of East Haven. April,

welcome. April is representative of some of the shoreline towns here. There are others here as well, but if anybody really got whacked in the beginning it was the shore.

April.

APRIL CAPONE: We sure did. Thank you so much for having me and allowing me the opportunity to testify as the mayor of East Haven. We like many towns on the shoreline and throughout the state suffered damage. However the west end of Cozy Beach suffered severe devastation. We had about 25 homes that are what we consider a total loss and probably an additional 20 that are uninhabitable right now.

What I will say is that the response from the state in light of us literally losing houses into Long Island Sound was swift and appropriate and just a godsend. I mean, I could not have possibly ask more from the state. We received the National Guard. We received the state police and the urban search and rescue teams and they were all fantastic and sorely needed.

Our local forces including our local fire department was outstanding. A department of 52 could have easily been overwhelmed in this situation. And I've been saying instead of being overwhelmed, their performance was overwhelming. They were outstanding.

We are happy to report we had no loss of life and no injuries in this situation. And that was due to the fact that we issued a mandatory evacuation order the Saturday before the storm and many people heeded that warning. We did have several rescues, unfortunately, but they went well.



My main concern with the response to the storm had to do with United Illuminating. We had at one point, I believe, 90 percent of our town out of power, which was understandable and expected to some degree. My main concerns and what I've learned in this process and what I think would be helpful to us going forward, there were two issues.

Number one, when folks could not call into the UI and speak to a live person to get information, they called my office. We have two admins in my office who had quite a bit of work to do with what the Town had to contend with in this situation. And the concern was really that we were also acting as customer service for United Illuminating when we didn't have any information. So I believe that if there was a large -- and perhaps a larger staff -- if someone could call into UI -- if residents can call into UI and speak to a live person it would have greatly reduced the amount of calls that came into my office.

Secondly, the crews, the line crews that were on the ground with UI were wonderful; however, it was the coordination. What we could have used was a dedicated foreman for the UI line crews working with our public works team. And I'll give you an example. We had a tree that came down during the storm and took down power lines on South Street, completely blocked off the Morgan Point area of town. There was no access in or out of Morgan Point because of this tree and there was no power.

It's my understanding that a resident took it upon themselves before the storm was even over to cutback part of the tree and clear part of the road, which I certainly do not and would

not advocate. It's a very dangerous situation. It took over a day to get -- for us to get the notice that UI had cut the power to those lines that we could clear the tree. It's my understanding that power had been cut early Monday morning, but we couldn't get through to anyone and weren't notified of that until Monday afternoon.

Now, once we were notified we had the tree down and out in 20 minutes literally. I mean, it was a massive tree. We then had to wait for UI to come back out, which took another two days, and restore the power. Had we been working together we could have done this much more efficiently and effectively.

SENATOR CASSANO: Questions? Yes.

REP. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And April, on behalf of the Town of East Haven, as my mayor, I want to personally thank you for all the hard work that you did and your staff did. You guys did a phenomenal job and I also want to echo the fact that the state offices were very compliant and very swift in their response as well.

APRIL CAPONE: Thank you.

REP. DAVIS: But you talked a lot about the response after the storm. Do you think there's anything that you United Illuminating could have done prior to the storm to kind of mitigate some of these factors?

APRIL CAPONE: Absolutely. You know, our fire department was so fantastic on the day of the storm because they trained continuously. And you know, that's so important. You can't

underestimate the importance of being continually prepared.

And secondly, I think the two things I mentioned having more dedicated live customer service operators to field calls and having a dedicated foreman, line crew foreman to work with a public works foreman to talk about okay to work in concert with the tree that had to come down and lines that had to be disconnected and reconnected would have greatly improved the operation.

REP. DAVIS: Thank you very much.

APRIL CAPONE: Thank you.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you, Representative Davis.

Representative Candelora.

REP. CANDELORA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also just wanted to echo Representative Davis' comments.

Mayor, you did a great job at communicating with people throughout the storm. I know it was very difficult not just losing electricity, but when we lose our AT&T and Comcast and those services, it's very difficult to be able to communicate. And I think the town did a wonderful job using all of the sources of medium to get it out.

APRIL CAPONE: Thank you.

REP. CANDELORA: And I guess I want to just emphasize your comment, too, about getting the communication quicker in that first 24 hours. I've heard from other towns, including the one in which I reside in North Branford, that when

trees came down on power lines, it took over 24 hours to just ascertain whether or not the lines had been cut, the power had been cut so that public works could get in there. And I know there were situations where trees were hanging on wires, were in very perilous circumstances.

And certainly, if we can increase the communication and improve on it for those public safety issues first between a municipality and UI or CL&P, I think it would certainly go a long way for the next storm. But thank you and congratulations on the great job you did.

APRIL CAPONE: Thank you.

REP. CRAWFORD: Mayor, thank you for your testimony. I have kind of a roundabout question for you. Unfortunately for East Haven, Cozy Beach has kind of become the symbolic center of what the destruction was in the State of Connecticut. As some of us who are lifelong residents of the state and I represent Killingworth, Clinton and Westbrook. I've lived on the shoreline my whole life. When I was first informed that it would probably take seven to ten days for power to come back, I was incredulous because I'd seen real storms and this wasn't a real storm and I think a lot of folks, when they heard that news, they didn't believe it because I didn't.

What I'm curious about is if -- as the mayor of East Haven, you've heard anything from scientists or meteorologists or anyone that can help explain what happened that made Cozy Beach unique, that the characteristics of this kind of storm that can help us to understand what happened and be better prepared for

something that could come very easily in the future.

APRIL CAPONE: You know, thank you very much for asking. Someone asked me in the 24 hours after the storm why did we get hit so hard? And my response was only God knows why. I mean, I don't know why our little section of Cozy Beach was hit so hard.

But what I will tell you is that the houses that had been raised -- and I'll give you one for instance. There was a woman who I met when I was walking with the Fire Chief again less than 24 hours after the storm we were walking down the street and she could not qualify for the FEMA grant to raise her house. So she decided to do it herself.

She had the house raised and it can be a pretty substantial financial investment to have a house raised, an existing home. She had the house raised. She had breakaway walls on the bottom and she had no damage. She had storm shutters. She had no damage.

So what I can say is, why I don't know why it hit us where it did and when it did, we are looking on a case-by-case basis at how to rebuild the homes. I started getting questions again, you know, Monday morning when we were releasing the homes back to the owners, can we rebuild? We want our shorelines rebuilt.

You know, East Haven is one of the last places in the state where an average person can afford a home on the water and that's a wonderful thing and we love that. Some of these homes are cottages. They've been handed down from generation to generation.

You know, I said to Congresswoman Pelosi, it's not the Hamptons. With all due respect to New York, I mean, we're a very working-class little beach community and a lot of people do live there year-round or six or seven months out of the year so with that said what I am doing is we are sending a letter out townwide inviting anyone who has had any storm damage to come to meet with all of the pertinent officials at once, at one table, building, planning and zoning, engineering, fire marshal, our P and D attorney; to sit down with them all at once able and talk about their unique situations and what kind of precautions they can take while they're rebuilding and some of the state and federal mandates and statutes that I don't have the authority to waive. So that they can rebuild safely so that when the next storm does hit, and we know that it will someday, that they hopefully will be protected as those other homes were protected.

So if that answers your question -- I can't say why it hit, but I can't say that my goal is to have the shoreline rebuilt and by the current owners and to have it rebuilt safely and up to FEMA standards that will help protect the people in the future. I don't know if that answers your question.

SENATOR CASSANO: All right thank you, April.  
You've given us much to think about and appreciate it very much.

APRIL CAPONE: Thank you very much.

SENATOR CASSANO: We're article on the time. I'm going to try to bring people up in pairs, as an example, first selectman Joseph Mazza and

Anthony DaRos from Branford. Joe is from Guilford.

There's side-by-side towns -- and share a lot together. Join us. (inaudible).

JOSEPH MAZZA: I'm going to sit side-by-side, too.

SENATOR CASSANO: They talk to each other before.

JOSEPH MAZZA: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and committee members. I want to thank you very much for inviting me here this afternoon to testify on behalf of the people of my town, Gilford. Gilford is a town of approximately 23,000 people. We have 48 -- excuse me, 48 square miles of area which is quite large for a town on the shoreline. We go all the way up from the Long Island Sound to the (inaudible) line. It's a large area, like I said, and we have a lot of trees and we had a lot of damage, a lot of CL&P infrastructure damage and (inaudible) excess of about 60 AT&T poles that were snapped and had to replace.

We prepared for the storm following our operation plans. We convened our meetings. We had all our departments ready and we advised our citizens of reverse 911 who live south of the railroad tracks, which is basically a shore area to evacuate and this was done on Saturday morning. We told them that they had to evacuate by Saturday at six o'clock. We opened up the EOC that night and we kept it running until Friday the following week.

Not to bore you with -- or go over what my colleagues have said from other towns, the basic problem that we had in Gilford and I had as first selectman was communication;

communication with CL&P and communicating with our constituents. We didn't see anyone from CL&P until the next day which was Monday morning. I had an incident where during the middle of the storm we had a call on a structure fire, a house burning. We dispatched two emergency vehicles, a pumper and a rescue vehicle. As they were heading towards West Lake Avenue, a tree was -- they came across a tree that was blocking the road. They couldn't pass. As they tried to back out of West Lake Avenue another tree came down, hit the truck, hit the pumper and damaged it. Luckily there was no one hurt. If that wasn't bad enough, but we had live wires on that second tree that came down. We couldn't touch it. We had men inside the truck. It took me 45 minutes to get CL&P to deenergize those wires.

Thank God, and I really appreciate the fire department for North Branford -- Representative Candelora, thank you very much, your town -- who came to the other side through North Branford and extinguished the fire. That was the first incident we had with communications. We could get CL&P to realize the severity of the problem.

The next day we were told that we were going to have several crews. We wound up with one public safety crew, which basically was a crew to deactivate the wires, to deenergize the wires and another crew to come back and cut their way through. We requested from CL&P through the suggestion of our emergency operations manager to just send us a crew that could ground the wires. We didn't need trucks behind them because we had already contracted private tree contractors. We had already contracted brush clearing companies to



help our public works people. We could have got the job done a lot quicker had they grounded the wire first, but they went through the protocol of one line crew, one public safety crew up until the next day, when I contacted the Lieutenant Governor's office and our state delegation which is here today -- and I want to thank them personally -- for getting CL&P on the stake, so to speak, and we got response.

But still, it was by Thursday that 75 percent of my town was still out. At the beginning of the storm, it was a hundred percent and we didn't receive power to all residents, to all our businesses until Sunday morning, eight days later.

Now, I will say that we did have a coordinator that was in our EOC. She tried her best, but she wasn't being given the proper information from her command. It wasn't until that I had personal contact with Mr. Peter Clark who is the president of Western Mass Electric, who became the incident commander for CL&P out of the Madison office, that I was able to have a daily telephone conversation with Mr. Clark and that was tremendous help.

But still, still the problem was that I couldn't communicate to my residents when their power would be on. I believe I heard some testimony earlier that said they could tell you the grid, but the grid means nothing to me. I want to know streets, I want to know street numbers, I want to know neighborhoods so we can convey that to our constituents.

And that was the ultimate frustration, that we couldn't convey to them when their power would be turned on. We tried in every way to

communicate with our residents by social networks, like you heard. We also used our local GCTV bulletin board. Whoever had generators was able to see the postings. Finally we went to the old-fashioned way of just distributing flyers throughout the town to advertise our emergency shelter, who housed 37 people there. We gave out 1800 meals, almost 700 showers. So I'm confident that Gilford, as a government, did their job, but where I feel we fell down was our communications and getting the response from CL&P back to our constituents.

I'll let first selectman DaRos -- with his speech and then I'll answer any questions.

ANTHONY DaROS: Well, thank you, and thank you (inaudible).

You know, the preparation for the Storm Irene commenced many days in advance of the storm's arrival where -- such as equipment was inventoried (inaudible). The town stockpiled emergency materials (inaudible) sand bags and sent back so we anticipate (inaudible). Staff was instructed to remove all (inaudible) and also after (inaudible) and local contractors to stand by what you (inaudible).

Four days prior to the storm started (inaudible) the town started regular briefings with all departments to set expectations and responsibilities. In particular we focused on the possibility of having to function in provide services without any high-tech capabilities (inaudible) and also to deal with a hundred percent power outage. Three days prior to the storm I started communicating with the general public using (inaudible) messages at the end of -- at the same hour

every night (inaudible) ten days later (inaudible) 11:30 a.m. a state of emergency was declared in Branford. We imposed a mandatory evacuation -- was issued to all the offshore islands and our emergency vessels were brought to safe harbor.

During the storm, public works, fire, police made every effort to keep the roads open until it was apparent that the situation became too dangerous for their own safety, and during this time at no time was any (inaudible). By daybreak Sunday well over 100 roads in Branford were closed because of trees and wires. And they were impassable for a little while.

Also our water pollution control crews (inaudible) placed on 24 hour shifts and they remained made 24 hours for five days. On Monday morning, only one CL&P lineman (inaudible) were assigned to this area and a CL&P representative -- and I must say that this particular individual was extremely well-versed and knowledgeable and what was going on which was an extreme help to Branford (inaudible) really understood the system.

CL&P crews were willing to get working, but seem to be hamstrung by CL&P policies and that the first two days (inaudible) totally inadequate by any standard. The first 48 hours CL&P seemed to have issues with their own internal communications between their emergency operations center, their representatives and there were groups.

In addition, they failed to provide the necessary resources and (inaudible) in the stricken areas; however, once they were organized and had available resources they did

a marvelous job in restoration. I'll have to give them that. They did. In my opinion, though, in the beginning CL&P was more interested in its shareholders than they were with their customers. Corporate policy seem to be hell-bent on spinning meters than responding to a municipal priorities such as hospital, medical centers, nursing homes and public safety buildings.

In Branford, we had significant concerns with the amount of time to get our priorities back up and running such as our sewer treatment plant, which by the way was on emergency power for 144 hours. Our police department, which houses our 911 system and other medical facilities. Failure in any one of these facilities would have been disastrous.

As for restoration in regards to the communication companies, their efforts seem to be even less. In Branford the phone system at all levels failed, including the cell towers. My communication with the public was reduced to printing thousand of flyers and having them distributed by volunteers and by the Boy Scouts.

In the future, I believe better communication between the utility companies and the towns is paramount. Also I urge the citing council to take a little better look on how much hardware is allowed to be hung on these utility poles. Also commodities availability and deliverability need some further discussion. Additional the availability of the American Red Cross resources seemed to be extremely limited and the only resource that was provided to our community took over 48 hours to even organize. Our community took a real beating during the storm and we were extremely

fortunate. Despite all the damage that we did not suffer any casualties or severe injuries.

And I would like to thank the committee for allowing me to provide this information and I'll gladly answer any questions.

SENATOR CASSANO: Are there a couple of questions?

Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, the contributions that both of you made as the first selectman were extraordinary. You talked to us regularly. Your staffs were superb in clearing streets whenever you could.

I think across the State of Connecticut the General Assembly really appreciate the work of the towns, and I'm looking at you two in particular for what you did. The problems that you excited about communications, I just wanted you to know, as your State Senator, on the Wednesday afternoon after the storm left us I called the President of CL&P, Jeffrey Butler, and it was a very disappointing conversation because Mr. Butler was not apprised. When I asked him how many crews there were on the shoreline in Madison, Branford and Guilford, he was unable to reply. When I ask him to give an estimate of time in which power would be turned back on, he couldn't do it. All he could do was referring the as first selectman Mazza said to Peter Clark and Peter Clark was a help in that regard.

I had a chance to speak to some of the crews in the field from Indiana, Ohio, Louisiana, wherever, there was one common theme they all had in that was an all their work across the

United States they never had such coordination problems. One crew from Indiana told me that they have been waiting for six hours for an assignment just sitting in their trucks waiting for an assignment. Coordination problems were terrible.

I want to ask you just one question about an area that you didn't touch on and that is insurance. Representative Widlitz and Representative Reed and I represent Branford and Guilford, and we are hearing from constituents, particularly in Branford I might say, in the Short Beach section of Branford, but in other places as well, that their insurance is not being honored. And I have contacted the Connecticut Insurance Department in that connection, but I wondered if you all were sharing anything from people about insurance problems, whether it be homeowners insurance or flood insurance or both.

ANTHONY DaROS: Yes. We have heard that or at least I have. In particular on what they were categorizing the storm as, apparently if it's a hurricane, it's one deductibles, and if it's a tropical storm, it's another. We heard that complaint on them. And some people were very disappointed on what their insurance companies were doing and I believe that is across the board on virtually everyone down there when they got to reading the fine print they were very, very disappointed on that. And the particular losses that you get on the shoreline are probably uninsurable anyway such as losing the seawalls and the yards and everything else that goes with it, but the damage to the homes, I don't know why there seems to be any problem on that, but there is. And what the fear is, Senator, I don't know.

JOSEPH MAZZA: Senator Meyer, I've had that same experience that there seems to be a discrepancy on the classification, whether it's a category one hurricane or a tropical storm. And in conversations I had with commissioner Boynton, when he was down to visit our town, I was led to believe that pretty much our state government is going to insist that it be classified as a tropical storm. I don't know where it's going from there.

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

SENATOR CASSANO: And I'll add to that are -- homeowners were also told -- if they left appliances on, there was a concern over the definition of a power surge and whether the utilities and so on were affected by power surges. So I mean, there were different issues, but -- another question?

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA: I would just like to reiterate what Senator Meyer said. You know, we've heard good things and bad news today, but one thing we've heard repeatedly is how these communities, our local community stepped up and I get to see firsthand in at least Guilford and Madison and I know we met Branford one time, the first responders, the fire department, the police departments, the public works, the staff and their offices, the emergency folks in each town, it was remarkable. You know, they say when things are tough the tough get going. I think we're back looking at two very tough guys here today. You two led your boards of selectmen. I know it was very difficult, but it was a

proud moment for all these small communities that had to deal with so much so I -- on behalf of a lot of Madison people, we want to thank you and so many of your counterparts. Thank you.

SENATOR CASSANO: In the last question.

Representative Rovero.

REP. ROVERO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think what bothers me the most about Irene is the fact that what lacked in the storm was something we usually try to teach our children in the first grade and something utilities lack and I heard this from almost everybody who's testified so far. Something as simple as communication. And I think it bothers me that to listen to one first selectman or mayor after the other and talk about their problems and their biggest problem was communications. And this is something that, like I said, we start teaching our children in the second grade at how we can be lacking communication with big companies like our utilities. And I just hope that in the future, if nothing else is done from this testimony, is that somehow we learned to communicate with our mayors and first selectman in a better manner so we can maybe save lives in the future and have people not quite be despondent about not knowing what's going on. Thank you.

ANTHONY DaROS: Mr. Chairman -- I just like to add this I don't know if the seriousness of the laws of telephones can be voiced or not. I'll tell you this in my town we have people who went in two hours of their last breathe because of various machines that need life support. And you know, we have no way of



communicating with the doctors as well as trying (inaudible). Fortunately, we were able to go out door-to-door and actually locate these people during this whole process. So I think my greatest concern during this entire event was the lack of people's ability to be able to call for help. I think that was probably our biggest danger and are most critical (inaudible).

Anyway, thank you for (inaudible) --

JOSEPH MAZZA: I just want to add to that it also goes the other way. We could send out all the reverse 911s we want, but if people can't receive service, it means nothing. Thank you very much.

SENATOR CASSANO: It's astounding we have made so many advances in technology and we're still at square one. Thank you very much.

I'm going to ask Catherine Iino and Joyce Okonuk to come up together. Catherine is a first selectman of Killingworth and Joyce, the first selectman of Lebanon, two small communities who shared, again, the same experiences.

CATHERINE IINO: Thank you to all these committees for doing this today. It's obviously really important. I'm not going to repeat what so many other people have said. We had very similar experiences and communication is the crux of it. We're pretty -- we're a small town. We're pretty self-sufficient and we were, you know, we weren't the most significantly damaged of the towns around, but we did need to get our roads cleared. We had over 60 percent of our roads blocked at least once and our fire company and our road crew

were standing ready to come and clear those, but getting communications from CL&P was really a problem. I won't repeat what other people have said that I want to make a couple of points. It seems as if their internal communication was really not what it should have been. And my example there is that at one point I called about a transformer that was down and leaking something. I was told I should call the special spill line and guys in special hazmat suits show up at the site. They said that they couldn't do anything because access was still blocked and they went away, so you can imagine how the neighbors felt about that.

Yet, it seems there was no direct communication between that team and the tree clearing team and when I pressed on that I was asked, well, is that one of your priorities? Yeah. Obviously. Or -- but I should -- it really shouldn't be up to me to set a potentially hazardous situation as a priority, it seems to me. This whole priority concept I think was never clarified. At the beginning of the storm it meant one thing. It meant where do you have trees on lines and we got that information to CL&P on Sunday night, but then they started using the term "priority" to mean something different. I think that's a whole concept that needs to be clarified in advanced of the next disaster.

The liaison program was sort of bragged as an example of the preparations and communication systems that had set up. For us that didn't work. We never heard about the program before the storm. After the storm, I think on Tuesday, a liaison was assigned to us. She was, I think, pulled out of it desk position somewhere. She had no -- she was unable to

get answers to any of the questions that we had and didn't seem to be able to serve as our advocate in any way. From our perspective, that program did not demonstrate that CL&P had done serious advanced planning.

Someone mentioned the problem of town lines not guiding with power grid lines and at one point I got a -- I'm from Killingworth -- I got a call from Chester Village West, which is over the border in Chester, begging us to put them on our priority list -- that's an assisted living facility that had a lot of issues. And you know, we were happy to do that, but again it was patching together a system of communication after the fact.

And the other Point is like to make is that communications between CL&P and AT&T, Comcast and the other utilities should be a given. I mean, clearly in this day and age all of those are crucial to our communications and like other towns, we lost everything. I mean, I was at one point reduced to sitting in the one corner of the one school that still had some Internet access and (inaudible). There didn't seem to be any backup on the AT&T towers in the way of generators, at least not in our town. It was a little scary.

But these -- AT&T and Comcast to the extent that they were communicating seem to be trying to communicate through me to the power companies. Comcast asked me to put their power on our priority list. Of course I'm happy to try to do that, but it seems to me that these are huge corporations with lots of resources and they should be directly communicating with each other and making sure that this whole system that we have in place is working for us. So I'll leave it at that.

Thank you for --

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. It's very helpful solutions (inaudible).

Joyce.

JOYCE R. OKONUK: Good afternoon. Thank you all very much for allowing the mayors and selectmen to be here today to share our experiences from the Tropical Storm Irene. I'm also not going to repeat a lot of the things you've heard, but there are a couple of points that I would like to make.

The town of Lebanon is 52 square miles and we have a hundred miles of road. And even though we have a population of 7500, there's a lot of area to cover during a winter storm or a summer storm for that matter.

None of us were surprised that this hurricane was coming. We had days and days of notice, as did the utility companies. On the Town's level, we did everything. We took one of our largest lakes; four days early we lowered the dam so the water could drop to absorb the proposed rainfall. We had emergency management meetings. We put out 911 reverse, e-mail notifications. We decided that school would not be opening probably because of the weather. We tried to make plans for school. I think as a town we did everything possible to make sure our community was prepared for the storm. Unfortunately, I can't say that same thing about CL&P.

I sat here this morning and I heard Mr. Butler speaking and I feel like we were living in two different environments. Clearly this gentleman has absolutely no idea of the real

world because what we experienced -- and you've heard from other selectmen and mayors today was very different from the picture he's painting.

When I think back -- I've been in office for quite a long time and when I think back about September 11th, 10 years ago, and following that, those horrific issues and events. The state and federal government went to a great deal of money and time and effort to make sure that all local towns were trained. And if we weren't trained, meaning first selectman and responders, and we didn't have emergency management staff in place we would probably risk losing federal funding and we took that comment very seriously.

I can't even begin to tell you how many training meetings on NIMS I have attended along with many other people, highway staff, volunteer fireman. We did everything required, local meetings, regional meetings, state meetings to make sure we were ready and I really do believe we were prepared.

But what happened is that at eight o'clock on Sunday morning when the storm hit Lebanon we lost the entire town. There was no one with power. And it was, thank goodness, a pretty fast moving storm so by two o'clock it was gone and we sent our highway crews out to clear the trees in the roads that they could do without wire involvement.

By that night at seven, even in a town our size and any tree that didn't have wires, we had opened up and moved to the side or removed completely and there we sat. We could do nothing else because of the wires. I certainly wasn't going to risk the lives of

one of my men to work in lines and we've been preaching that for years.

We did get a team, one team the next morning that arrived from CL&P at eleven o'clock to our emergency operations center which did have a generator, so we did have some services there for the staff heading it. They were supposed to meet up with Tenant Tree Service, which was a good thing except that Tenant was there sitting waiting for them from eight o'clock in the morning. One team, this gigantic town. Together with the men in our public works department the three of these teams cleared one big tree on one road. I still had 20 roads that were totally impassable, some with as many as eight to ten down sections of wires, trees, complete matchstick crisscross. No way anyone could get out or in. One section taken care of.

And we expected that, you know, the next morning everything would be great. The reinforcements would come in the whole world would be a better place. Well, it didn't happen that way. Staff had absolutely no idea where they were supposed to go, who they were working for, who was giving them direction. They would come in and sit in our library in the morning, out-of-staters and CL&P.

According to Mr. Butler they were giving a buffet breakfast and given their emergency prep meetings there. That is not what happened in our town. Those crews showed up. They sat, I don't know how many trucks at our center on the green at the library for hours waiting for someone to tell them where to go. And then by our EOC, we had the Tree Chompers, this great big company out-of-state that were here to cut trees, but they couldn't do it

without CL&P and then meanwhile sitting in the highway department was my entire highway staff waiting to work since seven o'clock that morning. There was no communication. It was horrible.

We had a lovely gentleman who was our liaison who they pulled out of an office somewhere who tried very hard to make them look good. He really did. He couldn't have been nicer to deal with. He knew nothing more than I did. His calls -- oh, and then they would say to him, just fax us an update. Fax, e-mail; we didn't have any of that. How could he possibly give them a report by e-mail? We didn't have any e-mail or Internet connection.

It was almost laughable, but the thing I want to mention to you, which I think was very dangerous, which I haven't heard other people state today, was that on Tuesday morning CL&P have been working on Route 32 which goes north-south from Norwich to Windham and they had cleared that road enough to be able to reenergize a section of 32, but what they forgot to do when they did that was disconnect the switch to Route 207 that heads west into Lebanon. So they put that power on. We had wires all over the roads. Wires started arcing. Luckily we had volunteer fireman out checking for flooded basements. They saw the arcing, called the liaison. He tried numerous times, finally got them to back the power off at 32. Consequently that road was down for -- I don't know, the rest of the day, but it was a miracle that somebody wasn't killed because we had people at that time on Tuesday -- this one was Sunday. People were out on the road walking.

People were out in their cars, but then it

didn't -- it happened again on Friday. They were trying to re-energize a line in Lebanon coming out of Windham and we had an elderly woman who was on Bush Hill Road who had her entire garage blocked with a huge tree and wires from Sunday. This was Friday now. She had no power. She had no help. I just learned this, just learned this two days ago. They started back in power in that section of Windham, but didn't turn off Bush Hill Road. So all of a sudden she saw smoke in the house. She dials 911. They come out and the wires underground were catching on fire and smoking because of the energy coming off the street. There was all kinds of disconnect. But it wasn't thoroughly checked out before they did it. It was outrageous. She was terrified and it was extremely, extremely careless.

On Sunday morning, probably late morning I was driving the roads checking on any of them to see the progress. I'm going down this gravel road and out of the corner of my eye I see this utility truck backed into the -- sort of into the woods driveway area. I stopped and there were two guys in there; a tree cutting company that were actually sleeping in the truck.

So I stopped and I said, how are you doing? Thanks for being here. They are out of stators and I said, what exactly are you doing here, besides taking a nap? And they said, we're waiting for CL&P. Now, this was probably -- I don't know, maybe early, early afternoon. I checked with a neighbor down the road and he said that they had been there since early morning and they were still waiting for somebody from CL&P to hook up with them. Crews were waiting to receive direction from dispatch. Crews at one point were sent



to opposite ends of a closed road in my town to go they could not talk because one was CL&P, one was an outside contractor so they both sat their waiting for each other with eight trees down on that road. I don't even know how long they were there. It was ridiculous.

You have a liaison being paid to communicate sitting there every day faithfully. He could do absolutely nothing. He had no timely information. And oh, this grid map. When they finally talked to him, talking about grids and sections of grids. We don't have a grid map. The liaison didn't have a grid map. Grid maps do not parallel to road names, so they were saying this section of the grid is going on, and he'd say, well, what road? They're like, we don't know. This is -- you can't even make this stuff up, I'm telling you.

The crews that were here were terrific. They were polite. They were cooperative. We fed them three meals a day. We loved having them in our town. They were not the problem, but all I can think of is, what if this was a category 1 or 2? What if this was the middle of winter, freezing temperatures and an ice storm. How would those people for seven -- in my case eight, nine days kept warm? How would we have been able to communicate with them? I mean, we got off easy with the temperatures. We had a gorgeous week to repair, but that is not the way it's going to be the next time and where are we going to be?

Well, anyway I'm not just complaining. I have some suggestions and I would like to present to you. First of all grid maps. Every town should have a grid map from their utility. It

should be laminated. There should be a copy in the mayor and first selectman's office and in the EOC and fire departments. All utility companies need to have two-way radios when they bring in outside crews. The crew that they have working with outside crews should be able to speak on those two-ways. Relatively small expense, great communication.

Somebody at CL&P has to know the plan. They need to work their way down the flowchart and they need to figure out who's in charge of who and who reports to who and who's making the decisions. Clearly that did not happen this time. And somebody in upper management prior to the storm needs to decide, can our guys get paid overtime? My men were willing to work into the evening, nights. Many of the crews said, we don't think we are authorized for overtime. We were willing to do that as a Town to get the our town up and running. I don't think that message was ever properly explained until the very, very end no one worked through the night in my town from a utility company.

The staging areas, the tent cities, all of a sudden they needed to set up staging areas. We're going to come talk to you -- no, we're not going to come talk to you. Well, maybe tomorrow. These things should be part of their plan. This shouldn't be discussed after a hurricane. They should know where they're going.

And you know, during the conference call with the Governor, COO Butler indicated that they were having trouble getting crews and he repeated that today from the Carolinas and Virginia and other towns and states down south that were also hit by the hurricane. If you

see the hurricane coming up the coastline, why are you calling them? Why aren't you calling other states that don't have the impact? That's almost too absurd to repeat. Lag time to get the state crews here were unacceptable. You knew it. You had enough notice certainly to get people here and there needs to be a better place next time.

On the ongoing day-to-day, we continually identify dangerous trees in our town to CL&P, rotted limbs over -- too close to a line, maybe not hanging over, but certainly a going to go over in a wind or a storm event. They do not respond to those calls. They don't have the money. It's not part of the tree trimming plan. This could have saved, I think a lot of how to get a lot of response time and their staff.

We have a tree get hit by a car in the middle of the night -- and this is on a regular basis and you can talk to other departments and I'm sure they'll tell you the same thing. When we have a car versus tree in the middle of the night and our fire department goes out and that pole is broken or there are lines down, our volunteer fireman can sit there three, four hours in a non-storm event waiting for the power company to come out and turn off that pole before we can get those guys home to sleep so they can go to their real jobs in the morning. And this happens on a regular basis.

I want to work with CL&P. I want to work with all of you. I know we can do this better. And I hope that coming out of this hearing you will make sure that we do do it better the next time. And that's my story.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you.

Senator Prague.

SENATOR PRAGUE: I just want to thank you, Joyce, for coming in today and telling us your story. I remember going through your town on Friday and there were trucks there and I spoke to you. I was on my way to Montville and I spoke to you and I said oh boy, Joyce, the trucks are here. She said, yeah. They've been -- this was 9:30 -- they've been sitting there since six o'clock waiting for somebody to tell them what to do.

I, frankly, don't think CL&P could do a worse job than they did if they tried. For a big company, they really are an embarrassment to themselves. And I'm sure from this hearing that they're going to make a concerted effort to improve their communication, to improve the way they not only communicate with the chief elected officials, but with other working people who have come in to help them.

I mean, this is ridiculous. I don't know how many more mistakes they could have made. So -- but I do want to thank you for taking the time, the two of you for coming in and helping us figure out this problem.

SENATOR CASSANO: Your testimony has been very helpful. Thank you for your suggestions.

Yes, Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Yeah. thanks. Thanks to you both. And First Selectwoman Iino, I know how hard you worked and Representative Crawford and I were really amazed at your service through that storm and you had a particular unique story to tell because it tied in, not only

with CL&P, but also you pointed out with AT&T and Comcast and that's an important part of what we're hearing today.

I wanted just to ask you both one question. We are a Legislature, of course. Do you believe that we should try to enact legislative standards for utility services at least in times of emergency? How do you feel about us doing that?

JOYCE R. OKONUK: Well, I think that's a start. I mean, I don't know what else we can do. I think we've had plenty of time to get this plan in place and to implement the plan and I don't see it happening and I've been with the town for 16 years. And I'm comparing the performance now to two years ago, and I don't think there's any comparison. There's definitely been a change.

CATHERINE IINO: I have to agree. I'm not an expert in how legislation works so I don't know what the best method to do it is, but if you compare what CL&P promised us beforehand with what they delivered, as you said, it's kind of a joke.

And somewhat reminds me of thinking back on what you're Lamaze teacher told you after you give birth and how there might be a little discomfort at some point. Some of you will relate to that.

But you know, they were telling us how prepared they were and there's just of evidence that that (inaudible).

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you. Thank you,  
Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR CASSANO: That's something the committees will have to explore. So yeah thank you very much. The last two speakers from municipal -- again, similar experiences. Rudy Marconi is the first selectmen from Ridgefield. Jim Rivers is the first selectmen from Pomfret. Gentleman again thank you for your patience and look forward to your testimony.

Rudy.

RUDY MARCONI: Good afternoon everyone. I'm Rudy Marconi, first selectman of the town of rich field. Ridgefield went a hundred percent out on Sunday evening, in addition to Redding, Wilton, Weston and New Canaan. We're probably west of the Connecticut river, the five towns that did go a hundred percent. Mostly other towns to the east side experienced a similar situation. The frustrations you've heard here today or specifically this afternoon I can only say ditto. I'm not going to bore you with all the details and when we went out without power and the slowness of the response, two crews from CL&P and until day five into the storm did we receive 32 crews that had to drive all the way from Denver to get there and then take a rest. Not starting until 10:00 o'clock in the morning. More common than not. Communication, we did have a liaison in our office that I felt was perhaps the single best thing that had happened.

At least we have a voice, someone who could communicate directly with the substation and give us an update. As far as the grid maps, there's a reluctance to give those out for security purposes. They don't want everyone in the state having a copy of a grid map for obvious reasons have to do with security and I can understand that. But to be able to have

it in an emergency situation to communicate with chief elected officials I think is paramount.

And not that we have to let every resident know specifically when their power is going to come on. You just can't do that. Not only are there grid, there are switches all along the way and we had 140 of our roads closed, 140, virtually sections of town just unable to get anywhere and that went on for days.

So we did take a little bit of liberty and we began opening the roads ourselves. The problem as far as having the assessor, what they call patrollers assess the situation to let you know if, in fact, it was safe to cut or move trees. We fought -- and when the national guard came in on Wednesday we were able to have two crews finally assigned to the National Guard who began a very aggressive approach to opening our roads and it wasn't again, until Monday that we had a hundred percent restoration.

It was probably the single most stressful week I have had in the 13 years I've been doing this, including 9/11. It was just horrendous.

And communication, I've heard that a lot and we've all heard the word "communication" today. I have to say, thank you to whoever you are here at the state that gave the municipalities the CT Alert Bridge System. It was a lifesaver for me in terms of communication with the people.

Now, granted you've heard a lot of people did lose their land lines. Their cell phones didn't work, but there were those who did have the charges -- the generators to keep their

cell phones going and have service. And I can tell you that over the last two weeks, I've had an incredible number of people say, thank you for the communication.

And we've had to get aggressive and the police department felt, was this really an emergency. Should we be using the bridge system in this case. And I said, arrest me. We're using it and we did and we used it twice a day in the beginning of the storm and we went to one message every night beginning on Saturday ending with the final one on Sunday evening.

Line crews, that's the problem. They didn't have enough line crews. That's what we needed. Prior to the storm, we heard they had 300 crews on standby. Unfortunately, only about a third of those were line crews. We didn't need tree crews. As you heard many, many of the municipalities state we all had our public works departments. We had private tree companies. We were ready to attack and destroy all those downed trees. The problem was we didn't have the line crews or the, quote, unquote, patrollers.

I have asked CL&P to review a program where they'll allow us to recruit local electricians who certainly understand the dangers of electricity and to certify them as being patrollers in cases of emergency. We have to have something that allows us to get to the people sooner than someone saying, you can't touch that because it's a dangerous situation.

And when we hear that as CEOs we cannot that take the liberty of telling our crews, ignore it. Go in and cut the tree. It's a ridiculous situation that you would want to put yourself in. So there's no doubt we need



to see a change in the program.

The other really important area that I wanted to talk to you about was the structure of our state response and the DEMHS organization. I know that it's in a transition over to the state police and perhaps -- perhaps some of the problems that we encountered can be attributed to that because there's no doubt we had an extreme failure of our commodities distribution, an extreme failure.

We have practiced since 9/11 all over the tabletops and I don't know which first selectman was mentioned, or mayor, but we have spent thousands and thousands of manhours. We're all set. We're already locally and when we call for the commodities distribution we needed water, we needed ice, we needed MREs. We lost it. There was nothing to be delivered. They could not respond to us.

Finally, John Hodge out of New Fairfield, who is chairman of the HEVCO region had this commonsense to rent/lease the last tractor-trailer with a reefer, a refrigerator trailer from Ryder. He called the rest of the communities because we have had enough common sense to say, we need our own mutual agreement because we don't trust everything working and with Paul Estefan from Danbury, John Hodge in New Fairfield, Matt Knickerbocker, the entire greater Danbury area agreed to share the cost and send the trailer to Rentschler Field where all that was waiting for us to be picked up.

Only one thing, he got there and he was told they didn't have the right paperwork. He didn't have the right paperwork and waited 12 hours to get back to New Fairfield. Those were some of the problems we encountered.

Is it communication? Maybe. Is it lack of organization? Perhaps. But we saw a systemic failure across the board with CL&P being able to respond with like crews. We didn't have the line crews. We didn't have the patrollers that were able to assess each area that would allow us on an individual basis by community to open up our roads to allow people to at least to get out to go somewhere where there may be power or supplies they can purchase. And the failure of DEMHS with the supplies was miserable.

I have to tell you that the people on the street, the crews that came in from various communities, we need to be eternally grateful to them for taking their time, but the frustrations of our residents were probably peaked at the highest level that I've ever seen in the last 13 years. People were out of control.

At day six, they were still calling CL&P and told maybe another four to five days before they had power, when, in fact, we do that we were getting toward the end. We could see the light at the end of the tunnel, and at this point, we knew it wasn't a freight train.

So I think overall in terms of the question that Senator Meyer had asked earlier, I believe, what can you do as a Legislature? I think you need to do a thorough review. I don't think you need to legislate CL&P. I think the DPUC needs to wake up. We pay the highest electric costs -- highest, second only to the state of Hawaii. And look at the service we've got. Something needs to be done. The people of this state are going to demand it of each one of us, because we're all

elected. They're going to demand that something correct -- that something happens that changes the type of service they were delivered, because if they can deliver that kind of service then maybe our rates should come down. And we'll work on our own.

If DEMHS can't get their act together and get organized, deliver the commodities that we need for the people -- we see it every night on national news C5-A, C1-30s delivering goods all over the world dropping here and Afghanistan and Iraq and third world countries, but dammit the people in this state have a problem and no one responds.

What is going on in our country? What are we doing here is elected officials? We're not delivering the needs of people and I think we all need to do some soul searching, really take a good hard look at this and all except the degree of responsibility.

I made mistakes during the storm. There's no doubt about it. Made mistakes. We've all made mistakes in life, but we need to take this experience and really make something happen. Let's not give it the lip service (inaudible) the headline in the paper, a new committee that delivers nothing. We have to see change. Thank you.

JAMES RIVERS: You stole all my thunder. All right. Actually, all my colleagues did today. They did a great job and I want to thank all of you for having us here today.

I guess I'm last because I can always find something else to talk about and hopefully something a little different, a different view. My town of Pomfret is smaller perhaps

the most of the towns you heard from here today. We're 4200 or so. We're very rural, very beautiful and many of you have probably traveled through it. We have prepared for a long time for this and as we have a saying in our town, you're on your own. So have your generator. Have your own MREs. Have whatever you need. So we were pretty well prepared, but I don't think a 45 to 50-mile an hour wind would ever have -- we ever thought that we would need preparation for seven to eight days and that's exactly what occurred.

We have in our town also -- I want to make a different Point -- we're all volunteers. Volunteer fire department, volunteers -- emergency management director is a volunteer. He does not get paid. When this happens they all had to leave their families and they have to come out and make it work. They have to take care of the rest of their community and they did.

My staff, our town hall was down for seven days. My staff without asking when out on my morning and the meals were flying out of the shelf. The generator was going and the meals were flying. I didn't have to ask one of them. They brought their spouses, put them to work and for about a week they served their public without asking. They didn't get paid. They didn't get overtime and they certainly didn't get an executive bonus last year and that's the point I want to make today.

We had a great loss, not so much that a loss of life or even property damage, but the loss was our time. We spent a great deal of time on this matter whether it be preparation ahead of time and certainly during the restoration and recovery efforts, but even afterwards of

cleanup. Maybe a couple weeks of our town -- time, many volunteers. We didn't get any overtime and we didn't get any bonuses.

On Monday -- let me back up -- on Sunday, our town was a hundred percent out of power. And I was in contact with my representative in the storm center in Danielson, Connecticut, which serves 15 towns in Northeast Connecticut. And I had contact with him for a short time and maybe every hour through this storm after the storm I was asking for that one crew to free the roads up. Please send us one crew. We have emergencies. The pagers going off. We had structure fire. We had ambulance calls.

We don't know which way to go. We need someone that can at least head out with our DPW crew to clear the roads. My DPW crew was in our town garage at six a.m. with their sleeping bags and their MREs and their water. They cleared roads during the storm to keep as many roads as they could open for those emergencies, for those life safety needs.

When I asked my representative where the crews were from CL&P, well, we haven't called them out yet. We don't want to waste their time. They can't come out. I said, what do you mean, you can't come out? Well, only until it's after 30 miles -- or under 30 miles an hour. That was the answer.

I said, that's okay, but my volunteers are driving around and answering structure fire calls. They're not getting paid. There's no overtime. They didn't make any big profits or bonuses last year. They're driving around in the storm. I didn't see a CL&P crew -- in fact, I'll tell you the truth, I haven't seen a CL&P crew yet. The only crews I've seen in

the last two weeks were from New Hampshire and Michigan.

And again let me get to the answers and this is why I don't want to just complain. I like to get to the answers. I went to the storm center on Monday. I had lost contact with my representative at some point. There AT&T cell phones went down. So I drove to the storm center. That was my communication eye to eye. I went to see him. He pulled me in the back room, a lot of busy people at the storm center. White faced, he said it's really bad, Jim.

I said, no kidding. I've been driving around in it for two days. I understand it's really bad. So I asked him for some information and to be honest with you, I was giving him more information than he was giving me. How many breaks do you have? I knew how many breaks we had. I've been driving around counted them up for two days straight. They didn't know. They didn't know. Monday night they didn't have enough people. They didn't know. It takes it physical person to go out and then when you've lost communication, a physical person to go back and bring the information.

So I gave him my report and I knew I had about 50 line breaks anyway that I could count along the roadways. Well, my town is one of 15. I did some quick math operations management, 15 towns, most -- some of them are urban, some of them -- most of them are rural. I figured you've got to have about 500 line breaks.

He says, maybe.

I said, I'm telling you, you've got about 500 line breaks. How many crews do you have?

Danielson office, a crew is two utility workers and a truck. Ten. They're down to ten. Now, I don't know where those figures came from earlier from Northeast Utilities. I don't know if their area expanded or whether they're in a number town or another part of the state, but the crew in our town, in our area was in half. I asked employees past and present, they're half what they used to be.

So anyway that was answer. Ten crews. Fifteen towns. 500 line breaks. Found out a few days later it was 468, so I was pretty close.

So that was one piece of the puzzle. The next was, how many are coming? Well, they said, we don't know yet. On Monday night they didn't know. Two days later they didn't know. They didn't know how much of a problem they had. They have dispatch -- and I will correct everyone -- a day before the storm 15 crews from Michigan to my area and I got them Monday later today because I guess I was complaining the most. I got them for about two hours. I cleared most of my roads and I didn't see another crew until Friday morning, like you've heard today. Most of the other -- I don't know where all these crews went, but they weren't in my town and I don't think they were in many of the other towns you've heard today.

So okay. Thursday comes along. We have an opportunity. Senator Williams was there. He called together a meeting at the COG and we had a pretty good yell session. And CL&P did show up. They showed up with some of their executives. That was good to hear from them. And honestly, I don't think they really understood the whole -- they still haven't had the -- their hands around it.

One piece of information I didn't have Thursday. My Internet was down, my power was out. I'm thinking the recession is pretty bad. It's pretty. We're all hurting. Businesses are hurting. You've got to make cuts. You've got to cut. Hey, let's be realistic --

You've got to cut the tree crews. You've got to cut the utility crews and I'm thinking, you know, they are suffering like everyone else. Well, Friday when my Internet went up I didn't go look at my bank account or my e-mail. I went right to the Yahoo Finance website and I looked up Northeast Utilities publicly traded company -- and some of you may have done this already. Record profits in 2010, \$387 million after taxes on 4.8 billion in revenues, down from 5.8 billion two years earlier. They're doing a heck of a job, a heck of a job.

Lower inventories at the yard. I know (inaudible) another problem for us they didn't have the parts. Less crews. Not the tree trimming we used to say and there you go. There's the answer. I don't know how all that happens. Some of you might be on utility control. You understand all these things. I don't. All I know is when I need a tree crew to clear a road I need a tree crew to clear -- I mean, a utility crew, I need to clear that road for life safety.

The inconvenience of not having utilities on, that's another matter, but when someone needs to get an ambulance we've got to get it to them and I can't have excuses. Give me the crew. So I'm looking to all of you. I need those powers. I need a tree -- a utility crew in my town in my command at the beginning of



that storm to the end when all the wind has stopped. We need a crew right away. We can't wait a week to find out where these crews are going. And then afterwards we can figure out how to restore power.

Another thing I wanted to mention that no one else mentioned, I can only imagine the potential rate increase we're going to see from this hundred-million-dollar cost to CL&P, or the proposals that are going to come forward. We've got to cover the storm damage or we've got to cover all these new proposals. We're going to come forward. We're going to have more crews. We're going to have more parts. We're going to have tree trimming and it's going to cost some money. I hope that all of you keeping mind that profit that CL&P Northeast Utilities is made in recent years and hopefully they can take some of the profits, some of their assets and put it into preparation for storms in the future.

And as I said to a lot of people, I'm not upset with response they gave us. We had hundreds of crews in Northeastern Connecticut by Saturday. And I'm upset that they didn't respond earlier. Ten years earlier they didn't do what they needed to do. That's why I'm upset and it's too late storm day. That's all I have.

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. Thank you.  
Questions?

Senator Williams.

SENATOR WILLIAMS: And our time is of the essence so I just want to make a couple quick points and turn it over to other folks for questions.

But Jim, you're absolutely right and I'm glad you focused our attention back on emergency response as a key issue here in those immediate hours toward the end of the hurricane and immediately afterwards. I know there are many towns where roads were blocked.

In Pomfret, you've just talked about your experience. I know Larry Groh, First Selectman in Thompson. I saw, you know, I was communicating with people through cell phone, through case, everything. He posted on Facebook immediately afterwards that 31 roads were impassable in the town of Thompson immediately after the hurricane and about a quarter of the town could not be reached by emergency vehicles if there had been a fire, if there had been a heart attack and a 911 call. And that's where it's really critical to have that kind of coordination that you're talking about with the utility companies. Get those roads cleared as quickly as possible for safety.

And Rudy, I absolutely agree with your points on reverse 911. And I think that one thing coming out of this ought to be that we make sure all towns in the state are familiar with that system. I know out my way there was not a hundred percent familiarity. And during and after a hurricane communication using all sources of input are critical. That's radio, TV, newspaper, social media like Facebook, Twitter.

You know, we heard from Brian Sear from Canterbury, putting up signs -- sometimes everything goes down -- putting up signs for the community telling people where the emergency shelter is. But reverse 911 is a key tool. We need to also have more people

sign up for it on their cell phones so they get it there.

And then a final Point, commodities distribution. Some towns have reported to us that it worked out well, that they did have cooperation. Others experienced what you did. If the next storm is worse than Hurricane Irene, then we really are going to put more of our emergency response tools to the test and we can't fail in terms of regional operation emergency shelters and the distribution of commodities that you're talking about.

So that's it. I would ask for a comment. I just want to thank you for those points and I want to turn it back to the other members. Thank you.

SENATOR CASSANO: Okay. Several questions. Senator Guglielmo, we're going to start with and the Senator Hartley.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just wanted to thank you both for coming up and very important to hear the details. I wanted to thank Jim. He had the Governor come up to our area. We had kind of a heated discussion question and answer. It was only a couple of days after.

And I think the same thing Senator Williams said that the public safety issues are a paramount to me. I couldn't get in touch with anybody in Hampton and I tried to get on Route 97. I was blocked about three places. I was able to get through with my car, but you could get a fire truck through. If they needed mutual aid you may be able to get an ambulance through, but I don't think so.

And when I got in I talked to the -- I went over to the emergency center and I immediately went back and called my contact at CL&P. And it was still days before that was cleared up and Hampton had their crews ready to go out and clear those trees, but obviously, they can't touch them until the power is turned off.

So I think the public safety issues, yes, it's inconvenient to be without power. And in our area, rural areas it's really inconvenient because you're also without water, but the main thing is public safety. And I want to commend you two for coming up -- and the other elected officials, local elected officials and pointing that out. Thank you.

SENATOR CASSANO: Senator Hartley.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And very briefly if I can in view of our time, thank those for being with you.

And Rudy, if I might just be specific to ask you to submit to us the details that you experienced with regard to the commodities distribution and your DEMHS interface.

RUDY MARCONI: Absolutely.

SENATOR HARTLEY: That would be helpful as we move forward.

RUDY MARCONI: You will be amazed at some of the things that we encountered.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Okay. So if you want --

RUDY MARCONI: (Inaudible) knowing their own e-mail

addresses and a list of commodities.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Okay. So yeah. If you could give us that punch list it would be very instructive.

RUDY MARCONI: Be happy to do that.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

SENATOR CASSANO: Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Could you both comment on your experiences with either the cable or the phone companies, issues that you had, experience with this?

JAMES RIVERS: We had no cable. We had no phone for I'd say half the week and it seemed like some of that had come on as generators appeared at the AT&T substations. We started to see restoration of land lines. So we lost the Internet. We lost phone. Cable was out for half the week, but again, it seemed like they reacted actually quicker it seemed -- at least in restoration in my town.

We had phone before we had power in many cases.

SENATOR WITKOS: And did you have a contact person or somebody established, a rep like you did with (inaudible).

JAMES RIVERS: No. No. I have no contact with anyone from that organization.

RUDY MARCONI: We were given on Sunday a number to call. We didn't have much success with that, but it seems that a lack of communication,

once again that word, within AT&T and Comcast was as bad if not worse than CL&P.

At one point with the Fire Chief we were surveying one area of the town. We had about eight microbursts, many tornadoes that had touched down that raised havoc with quite a few sections of our town. And we came over this little rise and we saw an AT&T truck there. And we said, oh, great. They're finally showing up to help restore phone service. So I pulled up, rolled down the window and I said, you've got a pretty good mess going on down the street. I hope that the cavalry is behind you.

And he said, what are you talking about? And I said, well, you're here for a hundred yard over the hill. Aren't you? And he said, No. I don't -- I'm not here for any reason at all. And it was incredible and it points to me and exemplifies the lack of communication that exists within AT&T. Line poles, one truck was lost in a section of town. I pulled up. The police were with them. They had stopped traffic. I said, guys, thank you for doing your job.

And he said, hell, we're lost. We just saw we had poles here so we figured why not set them here. How do you get to Fire Hill Road? You know, and those were the types of situations that we experienced. And I know it was just only a small example of what went on when you deal with the entire state of Connecticut.

SENATOR CASSANO: Representative Crawford.

REP. CRAWFORD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

One thing that's been touched on, but it

hasn't really been explained to me fully is in preparation, for example, one of the individuals earlier said that we're always preparing for some type of disaster or an emergency.

When you establish priorities in town, in other words, what places need to be addressed first? Is that something that's commonly discussed with the utility companies.

RUDY MARCONI: Not commonly. This last storm it was. What we had is because we were a hundred percent down the first thing we requested come up were nursing homes.

REP. CRAWFORD: Well, Rudy, I want to interrupt you just because what I'm saying is there should be a list right now.

RUDY MARCONI: We did.

REP. CRAWFORD: Okay. And the list right now should identify all the places in the community where there are situations that are potentially extremely dangerous for individuals who have not the ability to help themselves.

For example, Anthony DaRos talked about several situations in Branford where people were literally two hours away from running out of oxygen or running out of some type of life supports.

So I'm just concerned that -- and I know it sounds strange talking about how wonderful technology is now, but there should be some kind of database, I think, in every community that has the name and address and contact information for every person who's potentially

at risk should they be in this kind of situation.

RUDY MARCONI: It's under HIPPA that it's pretty sensitive information so you can't have that much about the individuals, but we did work very closely with our VNA and with a program we have a town called, Are You Okay? That calls people every morning to be sure they're all right. We tried to put together -- we called during our preliminary meeting prior to the hurricane and asked the VNA to work with us and to be able to contact those people. If they lost contact, we would assign someone to go right to the house to help them.

JAMES RIVERS: Is the Representative's question, do -- that CL&P has this information or that we have this information?

REP. CRAWFORD: Well, I think they probably identify in general what they -- meaning CL&P -- they know in general what areas are high-priority, but you on the ground have a much better feel for the very specific --

JAMES RIVERS: Oh, absolute -- we have emergency operations plans. We've been working on this since 9/11, especially since then and --

REP. CRAWFORD: And they need to know that.

JAMES RIVERS: But I don't know that they have the same information we do.

REP. CRAWFORD: Somebody has got to share that.

JAMES RIVERS: And if they have it, we didn't see it this time.

RUDY MARCONI: Their priority is there system is



set up with a -- they'll call it the backbone and their priority is to establish -- and they use the analogy of a tree. The backbone of their system is that trunk coming up and the branches that go out are the feeders out to all the kind of little twigs and leaves that are out there, our homes.

Their priority is strictly restoring power on that backbone system.

REP. CRAWFORD: Do you know the backbone for your community?

JAMES RIVERS: I learned it.

RUDY MARCONI: I do now.

JAMES RIVERS: But they would not give us a copy of the grid because of security. I was allowed to go to the substation, take a look at it. You tell us where you want it coming from or going to and we worked with them that way only one night and that was Sunday night.

From there on, we had to work with the liaison and I never saw the grid map after that.

REP. CRAWFORD: Thanks.

SENATOR CASSANO: The last question, Representative Rovero and then we're going to move on to public safety.

REP. ROVERO: You know, going back to the medical health problems because of HIPPA I think you realize that most hospitals and doctors can't give you that information, but I will say this about our local hospitals (inaudible) hospital in my particular area. I had a complete list of everybody that was on a breathing apparatus

and so forth and so on that needed electricity and they went to see every single one of them.

So I think it was a problem that we probably don't realize that it was taken care of by most of your local hospitals. And because of HIPPA, I don't think they can give that information to local officials.

RUDY MARCONI: No. But we had a good idea of where the critical needs were.

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. Gentleman, thank you very much. To all those who testified, you have given us a tremendous amount of information for the committees to work with and I assure you that, you know, that's the purpose. Again, I can't stress that enough. We see many, many changes. Some of those legislative, clearly many of those operational changes. Communication changes highlight I think all of this so it's going to be the building of relationships to make these things happen.

The public safety area is a major part of the regional response and local response and so I'm going to turn it over to the Public Safety Committee, Senator Joan Hartley, Representative Steve Dargan, the two cochairs will take the meeting from here. Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Senator Cassano.

And I would just like to announce and welcome Senate Majority Leader Marty Looney.

Senator Looney, would you like to make some comments, sir?

SENATOR LOONEY: Thank you. Thank you, Madam

Chair. First of all, I just wanted to thank the utility representatives and the municipal representatives who have been here today and it seems that a couple of substantial themes have emerged. First of all on the issue of the need for improved tree cutting and maintenance in advance of storms and then for improved communication during and after storms and what we've seen I think is the fact that in some places this communication network worked quite well. Some communities we have heard that there is a very close hand-in-glove relationship between the utilities and the municipal administration highlighting areas that needed to be addressed first.

There was a priority listing I know that in New Haven targeted nursing homes and other facilities and it was close cooperation with United Illuminating Company on that. I've heard that another communities that didn't work quite so well that the municipal leaders believed that they had difficulty getting their priority lists addressed.

So that I think was somewhat uneven that worked from extremely effective to frustrating across the range. So I think that that -- there is an opportunity now to this hearing and next week's hearing to have a sense of what needs to be done to pinpoint the ideal response to the situation when it arises again.

We don't know how soon. Obviously, we don't know if 26 years will pass, has passed between Hurricane Gloria and Storm Irene or whether it will be a much shorter period of time than that, but it gives us an opportunity to focus in on what has worked effectively and also what needs improvement.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Mr. Majority Leader.

Are there any comments from I cochair? In view of the fact that we are on speed testimony, 35 minutes to go, I'm going to ask the representatives from the American Red Cross. We have Diane Auger and Mario Bruneau.

And if they would like to come together we welcome them to begin their testimony. If you would start by stating your name for the record.

DIANE AUGER: Good afternoon. I am Diane Auger and I serve as the CEO of the Connecticut region of the American Red Cross and I have with me today Mario Bruneau who is the chief operating officer for the American Red Cross in Connecticut. Thank you for giving us an opportunity to give you a brief review of the American Red Cross preparedness and response plan was for Irene. And I just want to let you know in advance that we do operate on a regional level. We cover the entire state of Connecticut. We work in a mere image to the DEMHS planning regions and we plan and exercise with DEMHS in those five regions. And also that the work of the American Red Cross, as you know, is largely accomplished by volunteers, many of whom are from the State of Connecticut who helped us with this response, but we also brought volunteers from more than 20 states in the country to help with this response.

Our pre-disaster phase happened a couple of weeks before the storm. We began by mobilizing our staff and volunteers, watching

the storm, meeting with our emergency management directors across the state to make sure that we had expectations that were clear him of all of us about how we would respond.

We participated on the daily briefing calls with the Governor and state agencies so that everyone would understand what the role of the Red Cross was for this response. We began to stage our material resources. And as you know, this was a large-scale response to the American Red Cross. It was not just within Connecticut, but across the eastern coast. So we had material resources that we staging across all those communities.

We also began to solidify and identify our shelter locations with our emergency managers and to distribute public information through various channels, including print and radio, social media. And that's about making sure that people understand how to prepare for a disaster that's impending. And also what they should do is if they have a shelter in place, what types of tips we can provide as the American Red Cross.

During our response, I would say that over August 27th and 28th, the height of the response, we supported or managed in the State of Connecticut 77 shelters. 1700 residents took shelter. Those were evacuations in some cases. The city of Bridgeport would be an example where there were mandatory evacuations. We supported three shelters there.

We staffed the state EOC 24/7 and again participated in every briefing with the Governor and all state agencies and local elected officials. We staffed multiple local

emergency operations centers. And throughout that time, continued via radio and other outlets to provide public information including where shelters were, what people needed to do if they were going to come to a shelter, and also during that time established our call center, which during that period of response and post-landfall took approximately 4,000 calls from residents who were seeking assistance. Examples of residents assistants were things like residents who have a health-aided machine for example and had no power; were able to communicate directly through us and we would route those calls and refer them to local emergency management.

Post landfall we began our mass care unable scale basis. What that means is we make sure that we had food and water in the shelters that were continuing to operate. We began our damage assessment. That's accomplish not only with the Red Cross teams, but also in conjunction with FEMA when they arrived on the scene. We continued to communicate with our of urgency management directors across the state to assess their needs.

And also we began our old bulk distribution of supplies that the Red Cross provided and in conjunction with supplies that the states provided.

Over the Labor Day weekend, 25 emergency response vehicles, some from within the state others that came from places as far away as Florida, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Red Cross volunteers who drove to help us; helped us distribute 350,000 meals and snacks and also 40,000 items, things like cleanup kits. We stationed a couple of emergency response vehicles, for example, in East Haven at Cozy

Beach to make sure that people had water during their cleanup and cleanup materials and supplies and they could access Red Cross services if they needed that; batteries, baby items, et cetera.

We did keep some shelters open and those were used either as personal-care sites or overnight shelters for a period of time. And throughout this time we continued to communicate with the Governor's office on the briefings and with the public about what the Red Cross is doing, how they can access information.

The thing that I think is important for us to remind people is that the Red Cross runs on volunteer power. We had over 500 volunteers working on this disaster and the work continues. We still are working with families who are affected. Our case work continues and we're helping them access their FEMA assistance, if that's appropriate or other referrals within -- within Connecticut.

There's also some lessons learned as there are after every disaster that we're a part of. We believe that regional planning is important and we know that it happens across the state because we're part of it. We also believe it needs to be executed, and in many cases, what we find is there's a regional plan, but then a local execution is what's desired and manpower sometimes gets stretched especially when you're dealing with a volunteer coordination.

We also believe that resilience is important. I know that lots of communities have come back quickly and others have not been as quick to come back and so we want to look at community preparedness and community resilience as

something we can help happen in the State of Connecticut.

I also realized, as we went on those Governor's briefings, that there was a lot of talk about infrastructure, bridges, streets, wires, et cetera. The Red Cross' role is to really make sure that people have the safety and comfort that they need during a disaster. And so that's the role that we play.

If there's something that people can learn from this, it's that everyone can be a Red Cross volunteer. We hope that as -- in the aftermath of this, this storm, that people realize that volunteers reported and that they can play a role in their own recovery and also help communities respond. Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Diane.

And do you have comments, Mario?

MARIO BRUNEAU: Yeah. Just a real quick. I guess one thing that came home from some of the comments that we heard before is that many people were on their own and I think we will remember that preparedness for an emergency starts at home. And we all have to do our best to make a plan, to get trained, like Diane said, to volunteer and to be informed on a regular basis.

There were many residents who purchased generators just before the storm. Many are purchasing them right after the storm, and hopefully, there will be resources out of the community for those people who want to prepare for future emergencies. There were people with water. There were people who purchased heater meals which are meals that can actually



sit on a shelf for him to two years and then when you open the package they get warm and you can use them up.

So I think it's important to also help the residents understand what's available to them in order to prepare for future emergencies and hopefully mitigate future disasters like this one. Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Mario and Diane.

I would just first of all like to thank the Red Cross for their presence in the State of Connecticut and also for their full participation here during this disaster as well as others in the past.

And we are ever indebted to, of course, all the volunteers who are from the state as well as who came into the state.

Are there questions from committee members?

Yes, Representative Boukus.

REP. BOUKUS: Thank you.

More of a comment. We're a very small community, the town of Plainville, and we can't thank the Red Cross enough for coming out and helping in an area that had difficulty, but it also pointed out to neighbors and friends exactly what you're talking about, how important it is to have volunteers. And as I walked the neighborhood, you know, I'm at the people from Florida, from Wisconsin, people that came in to help in our community. I recognized also the organization that takes place in order to get people in the right places at the right time. And they were

all great representatives of the organization.

So I just wanted to say thank you on behalf of my community.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Boukus.

Are there further comments from members?

I would also like to invite both of you to share with us any details that from your perspective would help us in helping to connect the dots and coordinating as we go further. You are a very important part of our emergency management plan and so whatever takeaways you have from this event we really would love to have your input to us.

If there are no further comments, I thank you once again for being with us and I would like to now invite Richard Porth, who is the president and CEO of the United Way of Connecticut.

Good afternoon, Richard, and if you state your name. You may begin, sir.

RICHARD PORTH: My name is Richard Porth and I serve as president and CEO of United Way of Connecticut, which is an association of all the local United Ways in the State of Connecticut.

And among other things we run the Two in One service for the people of the State of Connecticut. Thanks for the opportunity to share our experience during and after the storm and some observations and lessons learned. In Connecticut and across the country, 211 centers, which are most operated through the United Ways, support of many

emergency response efforts and we do that through information dissemination, rumor control and helping people to access needed services. We do that in a way that's designed to support 911 services, especially to take non-public safety calls and try to help people deal with those issues while police and fire and emergency responders are doing their work. And we've worked very hard to try to compliment state and municipal efforts of emergency response.

In Connecticut over the course of that five or six day period, there were 11,000 contacts with our 211 contact center. About 4400 of them were phone calls that we received resulting in 6700 requests for services.

I think it's noteworthy that three quarters of those requests had to do with municipal responses. And I want to say at this point that the municipal emergency responders and municipal leadership were terrific in our experience dealing with trying to help people contact and find the services they needed locally. You did a great job.

There were also 6500 inquiries on our website where people were downloading papers -- apropos to the last comment -- people were downloading papers ahead of the storm from our e-library on how to be ready for hurricanes and disasters and it was interesting to watch the progression of inquiries as the storm went through its various phases. At one point, there were lots of inquiries related to floods and then toward the end, power outages and food supply and so forth. And that that was -- we were gratified to see people using our resources in that way.

I can go through this quickly. We also were asked to staff the state's emergency operations center throughout the process, which we did. We made -- and early in the process, as the storm was approaching, leadership at the state EOC asked us to collect and post online all the available storm services and the changing conditions in towns across the state, including things like emergency municipal services, opening of Red Cross shelters -- which I want to say Red Cross, you did a great job in this too -- food issues, road closures and so on and so forth. We did that and were able to keep that posted with regular updates every two hours throughout the course of the entire storm. And a link back to the State's Irene website a lot of information to be available very widely for state residents.

At the request of the Governor and the leadership at the state EOC, we also collected almost immediately storm damage surveys from residents across the state. And in the space of just a couple of days, we collected 1400 of these storm damage surveys. The early returns were used by the state to make its application to FEMA for the individual disaster declaration, which as you know was approved by FEMA.

I'll just say we did this once before during a previous storm when our collecting these survey, these damage surveys helped the state to successfully appeal an initial FEMA denial so this is an aspect of the work we do. We feel that we really helped individuals in the state and the state government.

We also attended the unified command meetings at the EOC and made regular reports to the

Governor and state leadership. And it was interesting as the whole thing unfolded, I think other state departments realized that we could help them in their work as well.

So for example, the Department of Insurance asked us to help communicate to state residents where to go to file damage insurance claims, storm damage insurance claims. And just one other example -- there were a few more -- we helped the Consumer Protection to communicate which gas stations and highway service plazas were operational at different points.

We -- we really worked hard, despite the fact that we had our own power outage in our offices in Rocky Hill and there, I would say, just as sort a lesson learned from one agency standpoint is, while we worked hard to prepare for that kind of event and it worked generally well, what really mattered in the end was the way people stepped up and I think we've heard that throughout today's testimony, that emergency responders and people who were in municipalities and so forth really stepped up and made it a top priority to respond for people.

A couple quick observations and lessons learned. From our perspective, the engaged leadership provided by the Governor and other state leaders through the unified command structure and EOCs was extremely helpful in communicating clearly how the conditions were changing and what was needed from many agencies, state, federal, municipal, nonprofit, from the many agencies that were trying to help respond to the storm and we appreciate that.

The nature -- from our point of view, another interesting observation was the nature of the requests that were coming in from across the state; basically frontline communications back from people dealing with storm I think was useful as we made our reports to the Governor and the EOC leadership and in assessing emergency needs as the storm went through its various phases and then responded. And getting another cut, another way of understanding what was happening on the ground as the storm went through its various phases and we were happy to play that role and to share that information.

I want to say once more in terms of our observation, the response of state and local responders and municipal and state leaders was really good when we asked for help on behalf of the people that were calling in and we were gratified with that.

Happy to answer any questions.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much, Richard.

Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: Yes, Rich, one question. As I listened to testimony today, your agency probably was the one that had more statewide involvement simply because -- people looking for direction -- than anybody. Instead of town to town, or whatever, it was all 169.

Was there anywhere in the process where people were going to United Way and saying, what are you getting? What are you finding? Was there any way that you had input back to either utilities or anybody else as to what these series of complaints were?

RICHARD PORTH: Thank you, Senator Cassano.

At one stage of the storm, we were being asked to collect information from people who called in who were disabled or had some medical condition which required power supply and when we could and went people contacted us, we collected that and I believe by the time it was over, about 180 people who have those needs, whether it was to keep their medication refrigerated or they need some kind of medical equipment, which needed electrical power, we pass that information back onto the utility companies wherever they lived.

And as I mentioned, I think some of the information we collected from callers was also useful to the people back of the state emergency operations center at different stages of the storm to get an idea what was going on, you know, on the front lines.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Senator Cassano.

Further questions or comments?

And I also, Richard, would just like to invite you -- if there is additional information as you reflect on this in terms of how we can make a better operation.

Specifically we heard earlier today testimony about some of our seniors or people who are in fragile health conditions with regard to their oxygen supply and so forth. So if there are ways that you can support our towns, and most of all our citizenry with the involvement of the 211 and the United Way system, we would really welcome your input on that.

RICHARD PORTH: Thank you, Senator Hartley. We be glad to do that.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you. And we would like to now move along and invite Robert Dibella who is from the town of Glastonbury emergency management area.

Good afternoon, Robert.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Good afternoon, Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan, members of the legislative committee here before us. My name is Bobby Dibella, and since 1974, I've been emergency management director in the town of Glastonbury.

Glastonbury has 33,500 square miles -- excuse me 33,500 persons in our citizenry and we are on 52.4 square miles. In the past, we've had great relationships and great response that CL&P offered, however, with this recent Tropical Storm Irene, things were different. The service were slow perhaps due to workers.

Despite CL&P's efforts, 94 percent of the 15,400 CL&P customers and Glastonbury were out of power. Initially restoration was very slow, with complete restoration nine days after the storm. By the way, we were the first EOC in the capital region to open and the last to close.

Lately, we have been speaking of communications, both noun and verb, with a CL&P being a problem. However, we did have a CL&P Representative, Mr. Bob Borne, in our emergency management command center from the day after the storm through the ninth day of the storm. We provided him with information on outages and he electronically forwarded it



to the CL&P war room in East Hampton, Connecticut. I'd also like to point out that Mr. Dimorro, our account executive for CL&P was very helpful before, during and after the storm as well.

Most importantly we found that the underground circuits to neighborhoods were without power for eight days as locating the problem -- many problems and digging those up for repairs was difficult and required special crews. Today, United Illuminating team did address this as a different restoration scheme than that of the aerial wires. Please, I urge you, this was presented to many hundreds of people, not just customers, but people in my town. Look into the upgrading of these old underground lines to condo units and such. We found that anything greater than 20 years old really became a problem and I urge you to please look into this.

The town of Glastonbury immediately made water available to all residents at our firehouses for those who needed it for drinking, flushing toilets, et cetera, as homes with wells and pumps could not function without electricity. Showers and charging stations for cell phones, Blackberries and like devices, as well as laptops, were available at the high school and town hall had these charging stations available as well.

All of the information was broadcast and announced on our local emergency low-power radio station, which I created in town 17 years ago and we have been on the air every minute since 17 years ago starting with public safety information to our citizens. This tool that we had for Irene was the most beneficial. We have a phone bank that I established 30

years ago which became the most valuable -- one of the most valuable tools that we had -- for those that were fortunate enough to have phones and other digital devices as well. We did not use the Ever Bridge Reverse 911 System as we -- particularly I witnessed cell towers dying out to little service to none at all.

And it was the first time in my career that I've ever witnessed a wire line system going down -- that was the AT&T system. Now mind you, the cell towers as well as the wire line systems of AT&T at least are powered by large battery banks. Without the electrical power, commercial, to restore that energy, the systems died.

Using Ever Bridge or 911, if we had done it, would have kept pinging the phones and that would overwhelm the system, especially when service was restored with very dated information. So then the information shared would not be accurate whatsoever. It would be days old and would lead to confusion and ruins.

We had our social networks, police, fire, our dispatch point, town hall and the emergency management center phone banks handling thousands of calls for our citizens. Just the emergency management center alone handled 2,500 calls in that phone bank that I mentioned. And we put in 800 manhours in that EOC just handling inquiries from citizens and assisting them as well.

Governor Malloy updated the media and his conference calls to the towns and cities were very helpful to us in understanding the situation and our giving feedback, but still with slow restoration, the citizens became

very frustrated.

I asked on the first conference bridge about residents having special needs. And there was no place to set up regionally to assist and house them. We understood some time ago it was supposed to be taken care of by the state and region. There is still no place to properly care for our special-needs citizens. Please, Legislature, let's do that.

I know that Senator Cassano and a few representatives did visit us and I made that clear as well to Senator Cassano and our two representatives.

All of our municipal functions were working properly. We did use the regional concept of a shelter, of East Hartford emergency management. Although they were capable of 800 persons, they had five persons show up and we had no one show up, even though we make that information available. Having a regional shelter concept seemed to be very pertinent in this case and we have planned for this through the Capital Regional Council of Government system for many years.

Trees and branches fell on the wires during the storm requiring CL&P to check for live wires. Of the following wires as town employees could not work with these live wires until CL&P established that the wires were not live, our crews could not act upon this situation. Once the wire was determined to be dead our town crews went to work cutting the trees and then clearing the roads.

CL&P, please look into appointing a person, as Senator Cassano asked some hours ago, to work directly with our crews -- a couple of other

towns did ask that as well -- a person to work directly with our crews so that work in restoring power can be expedited. Communications and articles in the press all stated that communication should be better to the towns and cities, a fact that Mitch Gross, the publicist for CL&P did point out in the media.

And final, the state emergency management department was great throughout the storm and had ice available three days into the storm, but by the time we have handed out the ice it would have melted into water as the outside in the temperature was 85 degrees Fahrenheit. Having been available late in the event, this already frustrated the folks because without power for three days they did lose their foodstuffs in their refrigerator as well as freezers.

In closing, I'd just like to point out that the FEMA teams in town after the power was restored were great in giving information to the towns, businesses and purpose -- for the purpose of assisting persons with recovering funds. I want to thank you very much for this opportunity. Are there any questions?

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much, Bobby, for your (inaudible) testimony. Are there questions?

Yes. Representative Ritter to be followed by Senator Cassano.

REP. RITTER: Thank you very much.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Yes, Representative Ritter.

REP. RITTER: Thank you for your testimony. I have

a couple of -- a few really basic questions about reverse 911 systems that perhaps you can help me with.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Certainly.

REP. RITTER: And the first one I guess is -- I guess the first thing I'm looking for is kind of a synopsis about how those telephone numbers get in there.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Okay. That's easy.

REP. RITTER: In language -- here's the hard part. In language that I can understand.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Okay.

REP. RITTER: Thank you.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Let me answer that by giving you just a slight amount of history on it. Okay. The office of -- okay. In the former Department of Public Safety -- it changed its name recently as of July 1st -- there is the OSET, Office of Statewide Emergency Telecommunications. They have been the staff to the reverse 911 -- excuse me, the 911 commission. They put their heads together, the two entities I just mentioned and came up with what they felt -- and it is a good system, the ever bridge system of reverse 911. That database is, in fact, the database for total telecommunication with the citizens and towns and even the state, that is of the proprietary 911 database, which is essentially everyone who has a phone.

REP. RITTER: So that helps me and maybe gets me quickly to the second piece. Okay. Where I'm going with this.

ROBERT DIBELLA: I think you are. May I -- go ahead. You first and then I --

REP. RITTER: Yeah. I'm interested in pursuing a cell phone opportunity through reverse 911.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Absolutely. Ma'am, there is a second portion and other portions of the Ever Bridge system which allows for opt in -- of a family if you will can opt in their cell phones and other media devices to keep pinged along with that of their wire line, should they have a wire line phone and the system will inquire those cell phones, those other electronic devices, even fax machines until which time someone answers it and the messages will go through. That's the opt in portion of it.

There's also another portion of the Ever Bridge system -- in fact, I guess we're back on today the reverse 911 system -- that allows for other type of communications within a town. There's conference calling, we had. There's -- the fire chief could talk to his or her staff, all of them at once. The zoning commissioner, if you will, can tell there's a meeting or not a meeting coming up and so on.

REP. RITTER: Thank you. And if it's possible quickly, is there a reason why a town that maybe uses the reverse 911 system now or (inaudible) would have trouble moving to incorporating those cell phone numbers that you're aware of?

ROBERT DIBELLA: There's a reason why they can't. State Police Lieutenant J. Paul Vance has been on the media now for several months asking them to register all these other devices as

well as the standard reverse 911 landline phone that's available through -- to the 911 network and that is essentially anyone with a wire line phone.

The cell phones and other devices, you can opt those in and that's what he's been talking about, you know, call and here's the website and so on and so forth. Call an 800 number. J. Paul Vance has been very steady on that.

REP. RITTER: Thank you. And thank you for helping us put that out there on the record.

ROBERT DIBELLA: You're entirely welcome.

REP. RITTER: Yes. I would submit that we need to do some work on that.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Yes, Representative Ritter. I really feel we should. Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Ritter.

Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: Yes. Bob, thanks for your testimony.

I want to pick up because we had talked a little about this earlier. In fact, I was in the office when we got a call for oxygen and we found that some of the providers didn't have telephone service so people couldn't reach their companies. And there were others that were asking the ECO to move people, you know, from one home to another because they had no power and their machines could go, whatever it might be.

It's a much bigger problem than we could imagine simply because of the reporting requirements or the confidentiality of HIPPA, which if the town visiting nurse goes to your home and provide services she can't tell somebody else that you need assistance. And we need to do a better job with these public type agencies who service these people to make sure kind of a -- no, a could -- there's no reason they can't bring a piece of paper that says, fill this out, get it to the town and you're on a list for, first of all, for fire, fire and police calls, particularly emergency calls.

We don't do that and we've got to do a better job of doing that. We were, you know, it's a good thing this didn't happen in March or April, February or March because the results would have been much worse. We were fortunate that nobody died here and those are the kinds of things that we could do to make sure that nobody dies.

So just being in that office and seeing those calls, they were coming in; and one to be moved and one for oxygen. It just -- there, that tells me something so we have to follow up on that.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Again, please, Senator, if I may respond to that further, Senator Cassano. This was one of the most difficult components of this storm mitigation and I really urge this, this body the Legislature, the General Assembly of the State of Connecticut to please look into this.

There's got to be a better way. There's got to be a positive way to help the special needs folks who really need a great deal of



professional help in a situation as such. And as Senator Cassano just pointed out, God forbid if it were in the cold of the winter. We're very lucky on this one. Sheltering in place was the thing to do.

But for the people who had no power and their oxygen was depleted and other needs they had as well, they were not met. They were not met and it's very difficult for most municipalities to care individually for them. It's very difficult because of resources available, both physical resources and otherwise. So I urge you to please, Mr. Dargan and Senator Hartley, please do something about this, folks. I urge you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Bobby.

Thanks, Senator Cassano.

Representative Jutila.

REP. JUTILA: Thank you. And thank you for your testimony.

Throughout the early part of the afternoon, we heard what I consider to be very consistent testimony from the chief elected officials who testified about a lack of communication, poor communication, poor coronation, particularly between the tree cutters and the line people. Not any fault of theirs, the people on the frontline.

I've heard nothing but good things from my first selectman and other officials back home about the people on the frontline. But the communication up above, we heard about a lack of setting proper priorities. And my case in two of my towns major arteries were cut off by

trees and wires being down for a lengthy period of time and I think CL&P's response was, in one case it was a very small town and not a lot of people there to get power back turned on, too, but critical arteries that are actually emergency evacuation routes for us and things like this.

And the testimony I heard earlier is absolutely consistent with what I heard from my own local officials, first selectman, emergency management directors, public works directors. I also heard was nothing but good about the response on the frontline, the emergency personnel locally and everyone else who was involved at the local level.

And now you, it's good to hear from you by the way after we've heard it from the chief elected officials.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Thank you, sir.

REP. JUTILA: And we hear consistent testimony from you as the guy rolling up your sleeves and actually running the operation in Glastonbury.

And one of the things I heard is that the liaison from CL&P did an exceptional job in my towns and I think I'm hearing the same from you. But there was a bottleneck up above. They'd provide information, the liaison would take it, he would go up with it and somewhere up a level or two it would end up in a black hole somewhere. And it sounds like that was your experience and I think you eluded to some things we might want to do and we have a lot of work to do in this whole area.

But is there anything specific that you would recommend to try to fix that problem? And my

second question is, did you have any of these kind of problems, communications coordination, or any of the things we heard about CL&P with any of the other agencies, such as the Red Cross, the United Way and you know, others, emergency management department at the state level?

And I know I've asked a couple of questions. We're running real low on time so I ask you to be as brief as you can. Appreciate it.

ROBERT DIBELLA: You had about five points in there which I will try to address and if I don't address them all, please trigger me and we'll get it done.

Sir and friends of the Legislature, the communications with the State office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and in particular the command post, which is the just building to here, was excellent. It was excellent. It was constant and excellent good information flow.

Yes indeed we did have the representative. He happened to be one of the lawyers for CL&P in our command post. I really didn't let him out of my sight for nine days and he was just a great person. He was feeding information into them, into their war room in East Hampton, Connecticut or our side of the river and it took time for information to get back that they would, in fact, be there to do something.

Clearly, clearly in reference to CL&P, I'm sure they were trying, but the storm did hit the entire state of Connecticut. So their crews initially were very sparse, very, very sparse. They did get in this other help from other states and I heard from our citizenry

that when they saw these trucks come in from the state these men and women really worked hard and did restore neighborhoods and such.

But it took several days for this to occur. By the time they were communicating. I believe, sir, that you asked me, was there, but there's two types of communications we're talking about today, the electronic communications in among the trucks and so on and so forth especially within disparate out-of-state power crews and also the communications that really was not coming back early on in the event. Early on in the event back to us that they would, in fact, take care of certain neighborhoods.

Low and behold our town manager and I, we did request that they come in with a prioritized list. They did. Initially they tried to stick to it, but they didn't have the crews. Once they got the crews our restoration did facilitated itself very, very well and we started knocking down from 94 percent to 60 and to 40, 30 and 20 and then as low as 4 percent, with final restoration on that ninth day.

So that's how it went. It took a while for them to -- for they, CL&P, to get the crews to attend to our problems in Glastonbury. And it was the fourth and fifth day. This frustrated people and there was no information coming so we couldn't give them information. We would like to. In the past, we've been able to. CL&P has always been great. I don't think they ever got hit with a storm as such that the width and breadth of the state was inundated.

That was the problem I believe that as far as

I could see and I've been in this for a few years now as you now. So with that in mind they did basically the best job they could, but that wasn't good enough because they didn't have the resources initially in the event to mitigate the situation in a fashion that would be favorable to the citizenry of my town or the State of Connecticut as well.

I hope I answered all of your questions, sir. If not, please tell me.

REP. JUTILA: No. That's fine and I really appreciate your testimony and your responsiveness.

I think the thing that is clear to me is that communication was probably the biggest issue.

ROBERT DIBELLA: It is the biggest issue.

REP. JUTILA: And there were issues with coordination and setting priorities and things like that and we're here to hear from you and learn everything we can in order to improve this the next time around and your testimony has been important part of that and I thank you for it.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Thank you. Thank you, Representative.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative, and thank you very much, Bobby, for being with us.

ROBERT DIBELLA: You're welcome.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Appreciate it.

ROBERT DIBELLA: We were fortunate to have -- we did have our facilities powered by generators,

which means we did have our radio station, our media website up and such and our phone systems were up.

And we were able to, you know, get the word out to the public as best we can, but we need more information from them, CL&P, so as to put that on that information pipeline, myriad of pipelines that we have in town, in the town of Glastonbury to our citizens thus relieving frustration and rumors and they would have had a plan themselves, the citizenry of what to do, how to handle their family situation, especially if they knew when power was or was not going to be restored.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you very much, sir. I appreciate it.

ROBERT DIBELLA: Thank you very much.

SENATOR HARTLEY: I'd like to now move along and invite Scott Schwartz from West Haven, the assistant fire chief and director of emergency management. Thank you for being with us, Scott.

You want to just state your name for the record, sir?

And Dargan, is going to tell you that you've got to (inaudible).

SCOTT SCHWARTZ: Thank you, Scott, for your testimony. Next speaker.

I'll be quick, I hope. Good afternoon. I don't want to go over everything we've heard before. We did have a great liaison in our emergency operations center. The problem, as you've heard, was it was one-way information.

She or he, depending on which one was there at the time, did feed the information to them via the Internet and also on the phone when they were able to get through to somebody on the phone. We never got any feedback.

From time to time, we were told that we did have 12 to 14 crews working in the city. And a lot of the problem was, was that we would have information coming back from our police officers and firefighters that there is a line down here, there's a transformer down here and we would set as our priority to get somebody out there and by the time they would get out there, either it would be removed already or the power to that area was restored from another crew.

So my suggestion to the UI company would be to, if you were going to -- we'll need to work within the incident command system. And the incident command system runs from you and your children to you, your wife or your husband. You know, there's always a structure and somebody is always in charge. And we know who -- I know, my wife.

But that being said, if we were able to work within the city of West Haven, which we were told we had dedicated crews, that liaison person should have been dealing directly with me and the people, the supervisors within the city.

And we could have gotten our priorities set down a lot quicker. I understand that the UI has priorities. They have a list of people that are in special needs that have oxygen, electric oxygen powered generators that need to be fixed, but none of that came back to us.

I think we were three days into it and I finally got a list and it wasn't a list for me.

It was a list for them that they wanted me to put out a reverse 911 to the special needs people. At that point, the frustration that went back and forth, we already had identified who our special needs people were. We've been dealing with them right along and we really didn't need to put out a reverse 911 at that point, so we didn't.

But the UI just needs to be more responsive to us. Believe me. I'm an operations guy. If they need help, if they want to sit down at regional meetings and actually say, we can sit here and figure out what went wrong and what went right. No reason to sling mud anymore. It's over and done with. We need to move forward and see what we're going to do as stated.

As stated, the storm I was worried about. I can deal with hurricane. I can deal with a tropical storm in the summer or the spring, but when we get that ice storm that none of us are ready for, that they said it was going to be a rainstorm and it turns out to be an ice storm like it did in New Hampshire two years ago and they almost lost a lot of people up there. So that's something we need to look at it and say, let's take a step back here and see what we're going to do about fixing the problems quickly. We all knew we were going to be without power, but we also have priorities within our town. They have their priorities and we need to work together.

I never spoke with another person from the UI company other than my liaison. I got to speak



## ON TROPICAL STORM IRENE

to a lady one day that said, what is your main issue? I said the main issue we have people running around like dogs chasing their tail. I'll send one crew one day of the top ten priorities. We'll go out and find out that both of them have already been fixed.

Well, they should have been able to tell me that overnight. We were doing this stuff overnight while everybody was resting to see what our priorities were for the next day and they just kept going around in a circle. After two days, they finally listened and said, okay. We're going to give you a dedicated crew. They're going to listen to strictly what your priorities are. We put one of our people out on the street with them and it worked out great.

So I do believe that that system can work and it should work for any community as long as we have, as you stated, communication and the communication just wasn't there.

The other -- the other big issue that we see is that if you do go out and you to say that something is safe to work on, their needs to be some type of the marking to be able to say that is safe, whether it's spray-painted. If it's dry out, spray paint to put some type of a caller on the line to be able to -- when are people go out there, or the tree crews go out the to cut that line we had a lot of issues. We don't know if it's been rendered safe.

So now we're trying to call back their office. We're not getting any response back from their office through the liaison. So they were dead in the water with that one so they can move on to the next one. So those come back onto our list for the next day. There shouldn't have

been that redundancy. There shouldn't be the redundancy from the police officers and firefighters that are out there; is this a new line down? Is this an old line down?

They need to have some type of a marking if they're going to take some green plastic tape or something and put it on it that everybody can identify and say, that's been rendered safe. The crews can work on it.

If we ask our public when they're calling into the 911 system, can you see if there's something on the line? We won't have to send a police officer back out there again for the fourth or fifth or sixth time, and we can use our people in other areas that we can actually get some other stuff done.

The other thing that I am part of, I'm part of the regional emergency planning team within Region 2. I'm on the steering committee representing the COG under emergency management.

The UI and CL&P have been invited to the table. There is a spot on there. There is an emergency support function group for them on there. We don't have a representative and would like to have a representative from them on that. That's where we do all our planning. That's where we do everything that comes together within the region that then feeds up to the state level so that something that we definitely need to get them involved in.

Going onto the reverse 911. I've been hearing a lot of grumblings about the reverse 911 and I know you have on here afterward you're going to talk to AT&T and the cable companies. Reverse 911 for us worked great. We want to

thank you from West Haven anybody that voted on that that actually put it into the state. It worked great. We got great feedback from people. These were all pre-announcements.

You're always going to run into trouble as you get into the storm and the lines go down so we do need to find another way to be able to communicate. I did hear some other people talking about going back to the old AM radio, which does work sometimes.

But it worked great. The part of getting the cell phones onto it, there is another system coming out and this is what I want to talk to you a little bit about. There's another system coming out from the federal government for cell phones only. If you look at AT&T and you can ask them the statistic, but the phone lines, hard lines are dwindling. People are not using them in their house anymore. They think they can save money by going cell phones only if they have coverage that's well enough.

So another system that's coming out is strictly for cell phones. The problem is I don't know if it's going to be integratable with the Ever Bridge system. The other system that we have within town is the Ever Bridge system, but it's on the city side.

So the other problem that we're having is, you know, the State does a great job saying, you know, go on one-stop shopping. You can sign up for it on the Connecticut side, on the government side, but we don't -- we've been putting out to our people that we want them to sign-up on our side also a lot of people don't want to -- they think they can do it through one. If they go on one it will be okay to transfer over to the other. And we're talking

with Ever Bridge right now to try and integrate the two systems, our system and the 911 system to be able to put the two Ever Bridge systems together.

So when I'm making a phone call I use the state system, the PCEP system to be able to send it out through ever bridge. Those are hard lines. Unless people called in and actually put their cell phones on it, I didn't reach those people, but if I turn around on my city side, which is the white pages -- it's 911. The 911 you get everybody that's unlisted. Our side is strictly the white pages and anybody that opted into it.

So if I put that out as a second message and those people started getting two and three phone calls from me on the same message, I've had the issue before where they're upset about that. I heard you the first time. So it's not an integrated system and it really needs to be.

So I do agree on the concept of regional shelters. I think that we had approximately 120 people in our shelter that we asked them to evacuate off of the shoreline. I don't think people took it seriously enough.

We had Mayor Picard at home one time looking over and there was an elderly lady when the storm surge came in trying to get out of her front door with four feet of water up to her chest. So he was out there actually trying to effect a rescue when I'm in the emergency operations center. It's kind of backward at that point I think.

But he -- you know, he was down there trying to help out. Those people didn't heed the

warning. The storm surge that came in all of the shoreline, as Rep Dargan understands, it was pretty drastic and it was almost like a tsunami coming in for the people that were inland. And it was definitely affecting a lot of people down there.

So with that being said, I do agree. The other fact was we have an emergency operation plan. We've worked hard to get our emergency operation plan together. The state assets, we're told that we would have a drop point. We set up a point of distribution which we had all the plans all in place. Talked with all many people. They understood what would have to happen. The State said that they would bring all the commodities to the Rentschler Field. They would bring them to Rentschler Field and that they would bring them down to us with tractor-trailers. At night, we would unload. During the day you would come in and get your commodities. That didn't work. I get an e-mail from the state stating that you have to come to Rentschler Field and pick it up.

Who at that point would like to give me some type of a truck to go up there and pick up pallets of water and MREs? It didn't work. The game plan changed right in the middle and didn't help.

The other effect was the cots we were told that the cots would be delivered down to us. They were never delivered down to us. We had to go and pick them up. And when I did make a call for the second batch of cots they did say that they bring them down in a truckload. So half of them we had to use University of New Haven's trucks to go up and pick them up in Newtown. The other half were delivered down

from Brainard Airport.

So there was some communication issues and there were some delivery issues that the State had promised us and we did not get. The CERT teams; I just want to touch a little bit -- nobody talked about CERT teams. My cert team ran our shoulder unbelievably. It was incredible the way that they handled it. I didn't have to worry about it and I want to give a big hand to the CERT team within West Haven and anybody that doesn't have a CERT team should look into doing that and actually move them into the sheltering portion with the Red Cross because they were invaluable when it came to that.

211: We heard a message go out to all the people stating that you should call your damages in. Well, we need to know what damages are also and if 211 can pass on to us we would be greatly appreciated. We have to work with the IA as well as the PA, the public assistance and the individual assistance FEMA teams that come into our town and we do need to know where those are as well.

And with that being said, the only other thing -- and I hear a lot about communication, communication, communication. Our EOC never went down with power. Never went down with phone lines. I had communication the whole time. We used to get sat phones from the state level, very expensive to give out so satellite phones through the State was a very expensive endeavor. I would recommend that there be at least one distributed to each of the emergency operation centers within the state of Connecticut. That way at least you have some type of communications back to the state EOC or your regional office.

The other thing within Region 2, which I would recommend anybody do, is that we are going with satellite Internet. We've done that through our REPP, and we've approved it to put them into all of the emergency operation centers. So when your cable goes down we're going to have the ability to still get onto the web EOC up at the state level and at least order things through the Internet if we had to. So that's just another thing that you should look at.

And with that, I think that I'm not so I can let you go home to dinner.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thanks very much, Scott. That was very informative testimony.

Are there questions from committee members?

In respect for the time, this is probably much longer conversation, but I just want to bring it up with you, Scott, because I didn't have a chance to ask and earlier of other shorefront first selectpersons. And you being West Haven, you talked about the mandatory evacuation and people who will always overlook it for -- and I can understand, you know, folks do not want to uproot sometimes, you know. No one trusts the weatherman and they say trust him, but you know, it doesn't materialize.

And to your illustration about the elderly person who was in four feet of water trying to get out her front door, she was in, obviously at that Point great peril as was your first selectman. Do I recall that's who was going to --

SCOTT SCHWARTZ: Yes.

SENATOR HARTLEY: And so on and topic I think there's a whole other discussion to be had about mandatory evacuation. There are some states -- and you probably are very well aware of this certainly more than I -- that have civil penalties for denying and not following through with the mandatory evacuation. There are other states that require an individual to pay the cost of whatever their rescue might be. That is most in the instances of -- how shall I describe it? Extreme athletes who want to take on mother nature and go down the rapids in the kayak or the canoe and we've had that in my neck of the woods this time.

And once again, it puts our emergency personnel at great risk, the individuals at great risk and it is at great cost to the Town. And so I would like to, you know, hear from you -- and we don't have to do it now -- what your thoughts are about that kind of thing. There are eight states right now that have that kind of legislation.

We've also witnessed what happened with Katrina where, just by virtue of police power, individuals went in and did forcible, if you will, evacuations. There are a number of those situations in the courts right now that haven't been decided. So not that we have to go into any extreme direction, but perhaps maybe we can learn from this and once again have a preemptive.

So I would ask you to think about that and if you could get back to us I would be grateful for that.

SCOTT SCHWARTZ: Absolutely.



SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you.

Are there --

Yes, Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN: Scott, thank you very much for coming up here today. I know that UI in earlier conversations I had with him today are going to try to do a review with each of the municipalities that they represent and I think that's a good idea with the mayors and first selectman of those communities and directors of the EOC. So I think that's important and I did state earlier that it is important that we bring the utilities on board with us when we do these as other first selectpeople have said earlier, and mayors, tabletop, that we have them on board. Because first responders do do a lot of training and I think it's important, as you stated in your remarks, that we have the utility companies on board with us and we work in a collaborative way to share that information.

So once again, I know the work that you did. I saw you inaction at our EOC and I thank you for your service and all first responders. Thank you.

SCOTT SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Scott.

And if there are no further questions, thanks for being with us again.

SCOTT SCHWARTZ: It gets better as the day goes on it seems that you don't get a lot of questions. That's nice.

SENATOR HARTLEY: The best is yet to come.

SCOTT SCHWARTZ: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: For sure.

And we would now like to invite the Connecticut Police Chiefs Association as the final few testifiers on the public safety side. That is Chief Strillacci and Chief Salvatore. Thanks for being with us.

JAMES STRILLACCI: Good afternoon. Could we get a prize for being last?

SENATOR HARTLEY: For the wait, huh?

JAMES STRILLACCI: Yeah. Thanks for having us and thanks for your patience being here. We'll try and keep it brief because you've been buried in details.

We have our own experience to speak from and we solicited some feedback from our brother and sister chiefs and got a few e-mails from them as well. I think we were lucky with this one, that think the timing of the storm, people were at home on the weekend. They were home in bed for the worst of it.

We sent out reverse 911 messages to tell people to shelter in place and for the most part they did what they were asked. We had lots of time to plan, set up an EOC, set up a shelter, get extra staff in, check our generators, make sure the cruisers were fueled up, all our caution tape and flares and all that sort of thing, make sure they were stocked up.

And we had all the pertinent decision makers in the room of the EOC. We opened it up on Saturday night. We were there over night into Sunday and we had people that could say yea or nay if we had to make a call.

We were lucky in West Hartford. We only lost about 19 percent of our power customers. Our dispatch center was not affected. I haven't heard from anybody that lost a (inaudible) in the state, they either had generator power or primary power. So our dispatch facilities were good to go.

We had a CL&P rep in our EOC from Monday morning -- Sunday morning on, excuse me. They did coordinate with our public works folks employees to clear by priority. We sent the clearing came out with the line crew, DPW crew to move the trees and the police to direct traffic around it.

I think our expectations were conservative. I know people were concerned about the length of time, but my point of view is we didn't want anybody to die in the storm. We saw the forecast, the huge storm battering the entire coast and heading straight for us and you know, we didn't have any casualties. We thought it was a good day and also we're somewhat practiced and mutual aid and emergency planning and we understand if you have a local event, you've got mutual aid. It's going to be on the way.

When it's a regional event, you're going to be waiting a long time on your own because your neighbor is going to have the same trouble that you have and we experienced that. You know, all the towns in Connecticut were hit in some way or another. New York got hit.

Massachusetts got hit. Vermont got hit. The places that are the closest sources of help were dealing with their own emergencies.

So we expected that this is going to be a long time without power and saving life was first and getting power back on was second. So all and all, we thought it worked pretty well. We did get some feedback.

You know, I had three different chiefs e-mailed me on the same team that it took too long for the power companies to get there. Too few crews, not enough staff. Communication was a little bit lacking. The one that did have an EOC rep from CL&P said, they were nice, but they weren't getting good information either. That was Guilford, Brookfield and East Hampton all had some issues with that.

Gilford also said they didn't see any DOT truck for a while. That was a separate issue, but they didn't get any help from many (inaudible) for three or four days.

On the other hand, the chief in Westport said it was a pretty good experience. That they've got together with CL&P due to do a storm in 2010, got a good working relationship going. The communication was good. Mostly positive feedback. Their 911 reverse system worked pretty well as well. They didn't think they did as well with AT&T. They were not as communicative with them.

As far as the reverse 911 issues, a couple of other departments and some outages. New Haven had a bad switch, so they were out for five hours due to that, on their reverse 911. Derby said they had a three to seven-hour

delay for evacuations in low-lying areas and I'm not sure what the reason was for that.

ANTHONY SALVATORE, SR.: Thank you. My experience was very, very good with all the utilities. We had about a 41 percent outage at the beginning and we went from some sections having no outage to four or five days with individuals being out of power. But all in all our experience was really good.

Some observations, though. I've been around long enough, 30 some odd years as with Chief Strillacci, 20 years both of us each as chiefs.

Aggressive tree trimming works. We encourage you to encourage that, but not only for the power companies, for all utilities. In other words, the higher lines are important but just as important now are the lower lines with regards to telephone, cable service, et cetera. People have to remember to the most reliable source is a hard-line telephone. You can't count on your cell phones because we do lose the cell sites and most cell sites do not have generators.

In my town, we've got one which is our main emergency site, which is also piggybacked by five vendors which also has a generator so we didn't lose that site. But most cell sites will go down once the batteries are diminished.

As far as emergency evacuation with potential penalty, I don't think we encourage that. What we do encourage, though, is probably a law that would allow public safety to -- or the municipalities specifically to charge if we do who have to go in there and rescue. In

other words, I have a section of town where right after the storm we had to deal with the flooding along the Connecticut river. If it got to a certain point where we felt it was going to endanger the citizens that live there and we go in there and tell them that they're on their own, but if we have to come back, whether its myself or fire, whoever, and rescue them, then there should be a mechanism possibly for billing them.

I do not want to go in there and have to forcibly take him out and I don't think any of the police chiefs want to do that, but it's probably something that needs to be discussed and I think if we have to go in there and rescue them, that probably the only alternative would be at least to talk about billing them for that service.

Again, all in all our experience in our town was really good, but can we do better? We can always do better and that's the benefit of going back after this event and taking a look at it. Thank you very much.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Representative Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, gentleman for being here.

A question that going to ask, if you can't answer today I would ask you to bring back information, but can you tell me what the requirements are for the municipal police officers to be present for traffic control for tree trimming?

ANTHONY SALVATORE, SR.: That ranges from each municipality so it's up to the individual municipalities. And my town for instance, it

depends on where the location is, the type of road, et cetera. Whether or not if flaggers are used -- actually let's start off with if no one is needed, a flagger is needed or a police officer is needed, but that's left up to the individual municipalities.

REP. NARDELLO: So it varies from town to town.

ANTHONY SALVATORE, SR.: Yes.

REP. NARDELLO: Can you respond to the fact that the costs for municipal police officers has risen significantly by more than 50 percent in terms of, you know, the costs -- and again, when we look at this the reason that it's important to this discussion is that anything that is cost be sent to the ability to trim trees because you need a number of people there and you have less money for tree trimming as each cost rises. You have any thoughts as to why these costs have gone up so significantly?

In other words, have towns changed these -- these requirements or what could be the reason why the costs have gone up so high?

ANTHONY SALVATORE, SR.: Any -- most of the costs would be through contractual agreements between the bargaining units and the municipalities as far as what the officers are being paid. And then it depends on what municipality this charge based on private duty rates.

REP. NARDELLO: If you could bring that information back to the committee because I am concerned about that, the fact that this cost has gone up so high, and again, the impact on what we're able to accomplish.

ANTHONY SALVATORE, SR.: I would be happy to -- as long as you understand, each municipality is a different rate because, again, as I had previously stated, it's the individual municipality based on bargaining units with their local bargaining unit negotiated contractually.

REP. NARDELLO: I understand that, but maybe you could give me some general information as to what the range is across various different towns and how much that range has increased. In other words, it only matters if they reach has increased. If it has basically stayed the same then it's not pertinent to this discussion. And also if the requirements in any way have changed in the various towns. Or have they pretty much stayed (inaudible).

JAMES STRILLACCI: The requirements are not statutory. They are a matter of the local traffic authority, perhaps local ordinances. Some towns do not require a police officer to be there for tree trimming. They may be the option of the contractor. If they are going to block a street or a large portion of the street they may want to have an officer there to direct traffic. Those that are largely off the right-of-way, we'll do with cones or a flagger, but if the town has a strict requirement and they're going to have to have a police officer there to watch traffic.

They set the rates. They're usually based on the amount that's going to have to be paid to an officer precontract, but many towns do add an administrative cost for the scheduling, for the benefits to be paid to the officer or the pension contributions, so the taxpayer would pay for that.



REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Thank you, Representative Nardello.

Chief Salvatore, if I just might, you brought up the issue of the mandatory evacuation and just to comment. Yeah. It's a lot easier to I think have the conversation about the person who is personally and overtly negligent by going by kayaking down the Housatonic River or, you know, windsurfing in the midst of a storm versus those who are in their home. So that's probably the first part of that conversation, those who are personally negligent, but it's a conversation worth having.

ANTHONY SALVATORE, SR.: I definitely agree.

SENATOR HARTLEY: Yeah. Thank you.

Are there further comments? If not, thank you, both for being with us and your patience for staying with us.

And at this moment we would like to turn the hearing back over to the Energy and Technology Committee.

Senator Fonfara and Representative Nardello. Thank you very much.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much. At this time we are going to have our telephone, cable and wireless providers. And our first speakers are going to be the telephone providers and they will be John Erma from AT&T, Richard Bozsik from Verizon wireless and Marissa Mitrovich from Verizon wireless and if

Mr. Erma would like to come first and then we'll have our other two speakers. Thank you.

JOHN ERMA: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is John Erma with AT&T. We've provided you with some fairly lengthy written comments, but I'm just going to give you a very brief summary. I know the hour is late.

As an international telecommunications provider, AT&T has vast experience in dealing with all manner of natural disasters, be it hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, tornadoes and the like. This experience has provided us with invaluable knowledge that we make part of our everyday routine.

We began preparing for hurricane Irene as the storm initially formed in the Atlantic and approached our assets and our customers on the island of Hawaii. Because we have customers basically throughout the eastern seaboard, this was a major event for our company from Puerto Rico up to Florida and then all the way up to Maine.

In Connecticut, we activated our local response center, a state-of-the-art facility in Meriden. Our local LRC is one of 25 such facilities that we've built across the country and is a good example of the best practices that we brought to bear. These initially came from BellSouth who has dealt with hurricanes for years. It's a practice they put into place and then after we acquired BellSouth we started the practice here and in other parts of the country.

The LRC is designed to allow AT&T to prepare for and respond to natural disasters by housing key company network leadership in a

single facility. That allows us to understand and address the full breadth of challenges faced during such an incident and to bring to bear our resources and the most timely and effective manner. We went live with our LRC on Saturday August 27th. In addition to the LRC, we also put our own staff on a 24-by-7 basis of the state emergency operations center.

I think, to my knowledge, we were the only telecommunications company that staffed the facility on a 24-by-7 basis and we did so throughout the EOC's operations. We also, I would mention, embed our own personnel inside the electric utilities EOCs that they operate so that we could coordinate our activities together. The reality is for the telecommunications industry that quite often our restoration efforts are very much at the mercy of the electric companies. They need to clear and make areas safe before our own work on restoration can begin.

At its peak, we had approximately 14,000, or about 2 percent of our wired access lines out of service at any given time as a result of Hurricane Irene. By Friday, September 2nd we had pretty much returned to normal operating levels. There are more than 840,000 utility poles here in the state of Connecticut. During the restoration efforts, we repaired about 590 utility poles throughout the state. That is a time-consuming process, I can tell you, one where you have to coordinate between both the electric companies who have to make the areas a first and on all the other companies that are also attached to the pole.

We face the same issues, the loss of commercial power that frankly everybody in the

state of Connecticut faced. We made over a thousand generated deployments across the state and we also activated our text generating capacities located in all our central offices. We spent in excess of a million dollars just on fuel on those portable generators during this time.

Let me just talk about some of the things we thought could go better. We think learning is both from the State's perspective and from AT&T's perspective. You know, I think one of the think that's important all this is obviously wireless communications has become really the norm. It's the way that most people choose to communicate these days. Nationally, 33 percent of the American public has cut the cord entirely and has only a cell phone.

So as the state looks at kind of the future planning, it might want to consider the restoration of commercial power to communications infrastructure as a priority in the same manner as it looks at hospitals. Most cell phone towers and cell sites have battery backup in them, but the backup will only last a certain amount of time. Not all cell sites have generators for a whole number of different reasons. Some just can't to generators because they are on private property and the private property owner doesn't want a generator or they are located on a rooftop and they don't want to generator there. So it might be important to, as the State looks at restoration efforts on commercial power, look at cell sites first.

I can tell you one of the good things that Commissioner Esty at DEEP put into place and Kevin DelGobbo helped to head this effort, was

that delicate mitigation task force that was established inside the EOC shortly after Irene hit us. It was a very valuable exercise. I think it was good from the industry's perspective. It was good from the State perspective. It brought to bear everyone who had an issue with respect to communications. We could all speak freely and those meetings, giving answers to the state officials they wanted to, make sure we brought to bear things that needed to be fixed and do so in a quick manner. So we'd like to see something like that adopted at the EOC on a going forward basis. I know that's something the State is already looking at.

As you look at cell phone tower siting, you know, you'll hear a lot of concerns, right, that folks that, well, you know, battery backup necessarily died and cell sites. The reality is there are parts of Connecticut that still don't have cell phone service today what everybody is up and running with electric juice. There are areas that just don't have cell phone sites and there's a number of reasons for that, be it a neighborhood that doesn't want a cell phone site and also be it frankly that there are statutory prohibitions on building some sites in areas like state forests, for example, or in watershed areas. That might be a great place to build a cell phone tower that can serve a neighborhood that wouldn't impact a neighborhood, but today those are statutorily prohibited. So that might be something that's a good idea to address.

Finally, let we just talk about our licensing process. All of our technicians have what's called a public services technicians license. We like the licensing process. We think it

makes a lot of sense. I'll tell you we did run into some issues with bringing in technicians from out-of-state to make sure they have the appropriate license in place.

It may make some sense -- even though our technicians in Michigan, for example we brought in here on a temporary basis to help our Connecticut workforce during this time, they have all the same training that our Connecticut workforce has. They just don't happen to have that same license because Michigan has a different licensing process.

So it may make some sense to allow the licensing requirement to be waived at the time perhaps that a Governor declares a state of emergency. That may make some sense to at least allow and alleviate and make it easier for us to bring crews in from out-of-state. That's all the prepared comments I had and be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, John. You've been here for pretty much most of the day.

JOHN ERMA: Most of the day. Yes, ma'am.

REP. NARDELLO: And I would say that you've heard the comments from municipal officials and some of them were directed specifically to their inability to communicate with AT&T. And so can you comment on that and why you think that occurred and better yet, what you will do to keep that from happening again.

JOHN ERMA: Why it occurred, I'm not sure. But that is obviously, here, an important learning -- we need to do a better job of communication. There is somebody who's

assigned from AT&T to every municipality in the state who's an external affairs manager who has that relationship. We need to do a better job of making sure that the local officials know who that person is. I think that's an important takeaway from here.

I went and talked to Mary Glassman for a bit after her testimony to kind of hear some of her issues. She explained them a little bit more to me and I said to her that I would go back and figure out exactly what the issue was with utility poles.

The reality is if a utility pole goes down, whether it has AT&T stamped on the side of it or it has CL&P or United Illuminating stamped on the side of it, we can't start to replace that pole unless the power is makes it. But that doesn't mean that town should have to feel like they're in a runaround between AT&T and electric utility. So we're going to try to fix that.

I told her I promised her I would do that and I'm going to do that in the next couple of days and I said if I -- she'd like me to come and talk to CCM and to other groups, I'd be happy to do that and tell her what we've done to fix it.

REP. NARDELLO: And with the advent of less people having land lines, although some of your landlines did go down as well, although I keep telling people that you need a landline in an emergency.

JOHN ERMA: I'd be happy to put you in a commercial, Representative Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: I may have to do that, but at any

rate, what I'm concerned about is what ended up happening for a lot of people is people who had phones through their Internet or the other -- and a landline really lost their service.

And for emergency situations, do you have any suggestions as to how we can address that, particularly to address the emergency aspect where I think this is most critical?

JOHN ERMA: I think the reality is -- and I think you're really talking about VOIP-based phones. Right. That's the issue. And they require commercial power. You know, I can tell you we deployed almost 500 generators just to address the issue of loss of commercial power to our V-rads that helped to power VOIP telephony.

I don't know that I have necessarily an answer for you, Representative Nardello, on that. I do think cell phones helped to address the issue. I can tell you one of the learnings that AT&T will have coming out of this is how do we deal with portable generator capacity? How do we make sure that we have it in a manner that meets our needs?

My guess is you'll probably hear likewise from people who are going to speak after me, are going to say the same sort of thing. I think we all realize, you know, you can't necessarily build into your system dealing with a 30-year storm or a hundred-year storm, however, one wants to claim the size of the storm. That's hard to do on a day-in operating bases.

You can, I think, try to plan for the more typical loss of power and that's something for an example we've done. So the portable



batteries on our V-rads, for example, they'll last -- they say the last 4 to 8 hours. The reality on an operating principle is the last more like 20 hours. That's a pretty good length of time. And we also have alarms on the system and make sure that has that power starts to dwindle, that we get out there and get those generators.

I'm not sure, Representative Nardello, I have a real great answer for you on how to deal with that. I also think cell phones to an extent helped to solve that issue and we just have to make sure that we have the generating capacity at cell sites.

REP. NARDELLO: Just to be clear, VOIP was one of the big concerns, but the cell phones were down as well. It was rather interesting. I mean, I had the direct experience. My own daughter, I couldn't reach her for several days actually for that reason, yeah. Other than driving out there.

JOHN ERMA: Yeah. And that was a couple of issues. It was not just a commercial power availability. It was also backhaul capability. I mean most people don't really recognize this, but a cell phone, a wireless call is wireless only until it reaches the nearest cell site that happens to be servicing that conversation.

Once it reaches that cell site it travels over either fiber optic cable or T1 back to a switching station. That's happening continually, by the way, as you're driving your car so that you can think about how the technology works. It's constantly handing off back and forth.

And there was backhaul that came down. I mean, you know, if you lose a pole line as a result of a 300-year-old tree hitting it you're going to lose backhaul. And that was one of the things that happened as a result too. And that's frankly a very hard thing to deal with and I think we've talked a lot about -- you've talked a lot about trees today and I think that's the reality.

REP. NARDELLO: Important for people to know this stuff, that they -- that these are the things that they're going to have to deal with.

JOHN ERMA: I agree.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Are there questions from members of the committee?

Senator Prague and then followed by Senator Cassano.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

John, something happened in my town yesterday. I live in Columbia and yesterday afternoon a telephone pole went down and knocked out two other telephone poles and pulled down the wires.

When the town manager learned about this, he immediately called CL&P. And to their credit, they came out, he said within 20 minutes -- or no. They turned off the power to those lines that were knocked down, but the folks from AT&T didn't come until earlier this afternoon.

Apparently it's now repaired but one of the problems was that one of the poles was rotten

and that's why it all over. And it occurred to me that with each town having a town crew seems to me that AT&T ought to be in touch with the towns and work out some kind of an arrangement so that if somebody on the town crew detected the fact that there was a telephone pole that was rotted at the bottom, that they could report that to you.

I don't expect you to have men out there all the time checking the polls.

JOHN ERMA: No. But we do actually have an 800 number that's answered by a live person that's designed just specifically for when polls go down. But certainly if somebody in a municipality says that they have a problem with a pole, they think that it's rotting, they certainly did feel free to reach out to us and we'll go out and inspect and if it has a problem will fix it and replace it.

SENATOR PRAGUE: But we ought to know before it goes down so that you can replace that pole. I mean these people were without telephone, without power again from yesterday afternoon until this afternoon.

JOHN ERMA: And I agree with you. You know, our engineering staff continually goes out and evaluates to make sure pole lines look safe and are safe. Sometimes you can tell something is rotten. Sometimes you can't. Sometimes it's from the inside.

I remember we lost a number of trees in my town about 18 months ago during a wind storm and these trees that looked like these huge mammoth 500-year-old trees, when they actually came down you could see on the inside they were completely hollowed out and rotted out.

You just didn't know it from the exterior look at it.

But, Senator, we do make sure and make sure things are safe and examine our facility on an ongoing basis.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Well, but it took you an awful long time to get out there and repair it.

JOHN ERMA: And that's something that -- that is a different issue, and you're right. I feel like it did take a long time to get out there and if you let me check it out for you and find out what the issue was I'd be happy to do that and get back to you.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Well, I think it would be important to call the town manager and have some kind of communication with him so something like this one happen again.

JOHN ERMA: No. I agree with you, Senator. We'll find out exactly what the issue was and why it took so long too because that's not appropriate.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Okay. Thank you.

JOHN ERMA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: Yes.

Thank you for your testimony, John.

Kind of a conceptual question. A former mayor and I've listened to mayors and first

selectman today and their frustration. And I know exactly where they're coming from. They want to know what's going on.

I'm wondering if in some ways we're being unrealistic in Connecticut where we expect 169 cities and towns to all get that response; whereas, if we had a strong regional system and many today, in fact, refer to the COGs or the regional centers and so on. Should we be looking to focus on those regional centers and have them as the focus? I mean, would that increase the communication or what would it do?

JOHN ERMA: I think it might, Senator. I mean, I can tell you one of the other things to take away from this and having this conversation with Mary Glassman, you know, she was not aware that there was an AT&T representative stationed in the State's EOC 24 by 7.

She had no idea and I said to her, shame on me. We should have made sure you knew that, made sure that all cities and towns knew that. I think it kind of goes to what you're talking about. I think, you know, the reality is we can't staff 169 EOCs. I think the state facility allowed us to do a lot of different things being in that facility. Something that is also manageable from our perspective.

So I tend to agree with you, Senator, that you know, on an individualized basis is probably not something that's necessarily going to work all that well, but I also think it's -- it requires better communication, and in this case, on ATT's part, that we're out there and proactively telling people, if you do have an issue you call the state EOC and we're there. We're there to find out what's going on and

fix it for you.

SENATOR CASSANO: And that's a must because I mean, they talked about the communication between CL&P, AT&T and so on and so on. If you were to move in that direction that it would almost be imperative that it had to be effective or it would really (inaudible).

JOHN ERMA: Absolutely. Absolutely. And that's why one of the things I pointed out was the fact that we embedded our own people inside CL&P's and UI's facilities so we had as much communication going on is possible.

SENATOR CASSANO: And a follow-up to that, those people that you had in place, were they trained?

JOHN ERMA: I'm sorry?

SENATOR CASSANO: Were they trained? Were they trained to handle those responses because a lot of people were taken from offices and placed in various places that worked for a company perhaps but were not trained to do what they were doing.

JOHN ERMA: The people who were our state EOC are my close colleagues who I think are the best people inside the company, frankly. They're very adept. They understand the inner workings of AT&T, which is probably as much an art form as there is and I think they also know how to communicate and do so effectively with members of the public, with other folks who are inside the EOC.

So I thought our people were very well adept at it and we can also learn as well and give better (inaudible).

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Other questions from members of the committee?

Representative Lesser and followed by representative Boukus, and at the end, Representative Flexer.

REP. LESSER: Thank you, Madam Chair -- Chairwoman.

And I have two quick questions and I think the first one is just based on some comments that I've received about wireless response, specifically that cell phone towers owned by AT&T -- maybe you can clear this up -- did not generally have generators on hand or perhaps battery backup as some of the competitors did.

And one of the -- one of the people in my district who works in the cell phone tower industry told me that specifically that in some cases there's as little as a couple of hours of backup for cell phone towers, for AT&T towers. Is that correct? If not -- or am I wrong?

JOHN ERMA: I think that's a generalization, Representative. A number of our towers have generating capacity built into it. Not all of them do.

I think the answer with respect to how long the battery life is very much a function of how much use that power is going to at that moment. That it really is going to be what draws down the power, the same as, frankly, how long your battery lasts in your cell phone. How much are you spending time -- how many data sessions, or just talking, for

example?

So that is very much a function of how much the towers and the use of them at any given time.

REP. LESSER: And I did want to say that in my region and in my district, the district I represent, I have to say that for the most part the service provided by AT&T was terrific and people got their telephone service restored quickly, in many cases before power was restored.

And that, at least to me, stood in stark -- sharp contrast to some of the other providers, the VOIP providers that are also out there and I wanted to know if you could comment on some of the standards that you, as a regulated utility, has to meet that may not be met by some of the other providers out there in terms of customer service and restoring reliability.

JOHN ERMA: They're obviously very differing levels of regulation. The reality is that VOIP is generally free from state regulation by virtue of FCC order.

I don't frankly think that the level of regulation is what drove the system, you know, landline, wired line to work versus VOIP not to work. It was a function, frankly of commercial power and not commercial power. The reality is on a wired landline, a lot of it, if you're sort of directly out of a central office you don't really -- you aren't at the whim of commercial power.

So I don't think regulation had any reason or any -- it wasn't why VOIP from one provider worked and wired worked and wired didn't work.



That, I don't see as an issue.

REP. LESSER: Okay. Well, I appreciate that because I do know that in the area that I represent that I was hearing from folks saying they wish they had AT&T because they saw their neighbors having service when they were still struggling with their VOIP providers to get service restored.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Boukus.

REP. BOUKUS: Good afternoon and thank you for coming this afternoon.

JOHN ERMA: Good afternoon.

REP. BOUKUS: And from someone whose service was impeccable throughout the entire storm.

JOHN ERMA: I don't hear those, too, often I have to tell you. People don't usually say, good job.

REP. BOUKUS: But I'm appreciative of this. But I would be remiss if I did not tell you about the phone calls that I've been receiving from your customers and customers of other phone companies.

And as much as they love to travel, they felt that they were put around the world when they were calling for questions as to what they could do to establish -- reestablish their phone connections. And the one, the last one I got at 7:45 this morning was that she had been sent to the Philippines.

We were so happy to have all the (inaudible)

set up and communications among our municipal leaders, communications between our government but the final part is our customers. And it seems to me that we've got find people in the state of Connecticut that could work in regional centers, as we just spoke about, but to have that personal contact with people who know what Connecticut is, who understand what we're going through who may be even -- a neighbor or a friend or even a family member on the other side of their vote just to give some kind of recognition to what they're going through would be greatly appreciated.

And I just ask the state that this is a big issue as I go around the state. And I just give it to you for what it's worth and hope that it doesn't fall on deaf ears.

JOHN ERMA: It won't. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. Representative Flexer.

REP. FLEXER: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon.

JOHN ERMA: Good afternoon.

REP. FLEXER: In the three towns I represent, Killingly, Plainfield and Sterling, there were a lot of different issues both with landline service and with wireless service from AT&T and from other providers, such as Verizon and Sprint. But particularly in the town of Sterling, it became a serious problem.

And I have a number of questions related to the fact that for almost 48 hours the town of Sterling had no landline service and no cell phone coverage whatsoever, meaning anyone

located within the town could not call 911.

And I happened to know that there was someone at the state EOC because I happen to know to call Abby and I appreciate her help very much, but in the town and within the chain of command which heard about so often during the course of the storm, folks weren't aware. When I, you know, was able to say, oh, I know who we should call, folks in the town were surprised that there was a point of contact at all, which was a serious problem.

So I just had a number of questions. First of all, can you just explain to us in understandable but technical terms what happened to the land lines?

JOHN ERMA: So let's talk about landlines, and I don't know for a fact, but I'll -- I'm going to surmise something. So if you have typical landline service you are either served out of a central office, which is that sort of nondescript ugly little brick building. That's -- there's about 120, some of them in Connecticut.

But not all customers are served out of a central office. A lot of customers are served out of what's called a remote terminal. That's basically much more modern technology. And when I say, modern, that's probably 30-year-old technology. And remote terminals depend on commercial power. So when the commercial power -- and they have battery backup. So when we lost commercial power to those remote terminals battery backup kicked in. That lasted for an amount of time, again depending on the amount of usage of what's going on in the network. And then we deployed generators out to those sites.

So that's probably what happened, Representative, in that case, but it have to do a little bit of research to find out and ask -- if you're all right, I would like to go back and find out exactly what happened in that case. My guess, though, is that there is a remote terminal that services part of that or all of that town and it lost commercial power.

REP. FLEXER: Thank you, and I would very much appreciate knowing the answers to that question.

Another thing I kept hearing during this period of time was that, you know, 50 years ago this didn't happen. Fifty years ago you did it lose your landline phone service. I've been admonished for years for not having a landline at home, that that really was the way to be safe. So I'm just trying to understand what has changed.

JOHN ERMA: That's perhaps a little bit of a misplaced nostalgia, to be honest with you. And the reality is remote terminal technology has been out there for a long time. So let's just use Connecticut as an example. We have like 120 some -- 121, I think, central offices in Connecticut. I might be getting that off by a couple. Metropolitan, I think has four. It's mostly served by remote terminals.

So to say that, gee, this never happened and the old days is really necessarily not accurate. Remote terminals have been out and be part of the network and the use for a very, very long time. And if they'd lost power back then they would have the same issue as your constituents just went through this time.

REP. FLEXER: Okay. Well, thank you. And my third question really has to do with the cell phone towers, but I guess it would really to these remote terminals that you're describing as well.

Why don't these facilities always have generators? And in addition, I know that the towers that provided service to the town of Sterling, in particular, after I had the conversations about the lack of service in town, the phone lines were turned back on which is great -- I mean, the cell phone service was turned back on, but then after a period of time clearly the generator ran out of gasoline and no longer worked. And once again the cell phone service went down.

So why isn't there a plan in place with the schedule, because you now need to go back out and fill those generators as the power outage continues?

JOHN ERMA: So two questions. Right? One, why are there not generating capacity everywhere all the time? I think the short answer to that is I think that frankly most people wouldn't like generators there all the time.

I'll give you an example. We have started a video build as V-rad cabinets. We've got, say, a raft of complaints about these cabinets and their size and their location -- would be a mild understatement. If we wanted to build generating capacity every one of those V-rads, it's like a remote terminal, if you will, so the next generation remote terminal. I hesitate to think of the pushback we would get from neighbors. People necessarily -- just don't want generators at all those facilities

all the time.

Now, not all facilities also limits himself to generating all the time either. If you build a cells site, you know, one of my colleagues from New York City talk to me about this. In New York City, you can't put a generator on a rooftop and most cell sites are located on rooftops. So that's one of the issues who have.

In terms of refueling, again, I have to look at the specifics to see whether or not it could have been something else that stopped cell phone service from working for a period of time. It may not necessarily have been that it ran out of fuel. It could have been.

There was a plan in place. Actually, had contractors who worked specifically just refueling the thousand-some-odd generators we had out there. I can tell you it was a tough thing to do and I can also tell you the specific location where the site you're talking about was a little more problematic because it was on private property.

So it's tough to -- A, you need to go and make sure that the private property owner is okay with to plug a generator because a generator for a cell site and for a cell tower is not a small thing. It's not something you go pick up at Home Depot. It's much bigger. So it's not necessarily something that people want running all the time. So you need to make sure the private property owner is okay with it. And then you need to get it there also and fuel, too. Right.

So you might not be -- you may run out of fuel at a time you can't get in and access that

private property. So that might have been the issue, but I'd like to maybe do a little checking if I could on that one as well.

REP. FLEXER: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. Are there for the questions from members of the committee?

Thank you, John and we'll see you again in the following segment.

JOHN ERMA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: I'm going to bring up Marissa Mitrovich, if you don't mind I'm going to go out of order. My understanding is she is going to miss her plane if she doesn't come up so if we would all indulge her and have her come up and give her statement and be glad to answer questions. Thank you.

MARISSA MITROVICH: (Inaudible) just in case, you know, we need to continue.

Thank you, to all leaders here today from the many committees. This is my colleague with me. I let him introduce himself.

RICHARD BOZSIK: Good afternoon. My name is Rich Bozsik and I'd just like to take a couple of minutes -- I don't want to repeat everything that John said, but just give you a high-level understanding for -- I'm sorry did someone say something -- just give you a high-level understanding for how we fared throughout the storm and the events prior to it as well as how things worked after the storm had passed.

SENATOR FASANO: Rich, are you on Marissa's flight?

RICHARD BOZSIK: I am not. I can stay forever.

SENATOR FASANO: Why don't you let her speak, then.  
And then --

RICHARD BOZSIK: Unfortunately I think she's --  
what she and I were going to do is a tag team,  
if that's okay with you.

MARISSA MITROVICH: (Inaudible) we both were going  
to represent both (inaudible).

SENATOR FASANO: As long as you get to say what you  
need to do in the time you have.

MARISSA MITROVICH: Thank you.

RICHARD BOZSIK: We'll make sure of that. From a  
Verizon landline prospective, John mentioned  
the number of central offices that AT&T  
provides service out of it Connecticut.  
Verizon is a much different in that respect.  
We have one central office that we have  
service of. That's in the Greenwich area. We  
don't provide service to the entire town of  
Greenwich, just a portion of. As far as  
wireless is considered, we obviously are very  
large, have a very large appearance in  
Connecticut.

John mentioned a couple of things that we did  
in preparation for the storm. We did the same  
as AT&T did. One of the reasons why is  
because we both, our companies both have  
representation on a national panel of  
individuals who determine what the best  
practices are for the industry. Those  
practices are implemented based on the various  
situations that we face in local communities



as well as in various states.

In addition, John mentioned that we had taken steps prior to the storm and we all did and we made sure our generators were fueled to handle the demand about electricity that would be provided from them if need be. Also what we did is we have plans in place that have been put in place years before an event like this to ensure that our network fares very well. Obviously, one of them that I think is probably the most critical is to ensure that we have a generator at a location in case we lose commercial power and for any reason the batteries fail or are unable to provide service out of those batteries and until commercial power is restored.

We have contracts with companies to provide fueling for those locations. We go through steps, exercises prior to in order to make sure that things are working the way they should. For arguments sake, a perfect scenario of that is we test our generators on a monthly basis to make sure that they will be working upon demand. Overall the number of landline customers who had a problem was about 1 percent. So 99 percent of our customers served in the Greenwich area did not report that they had a service problem, which is obviously very good news from our perspective given the volume of the storm and the impact that it had throughout the state.

On the wireless side, our network fared extremely well. In addition, you know, generators at locations, a very large percentage of our cell sites were working on generated power throughout the store. There were a number of cell sites that we had lost connectivity to because of issues associated

with backhaul, whether it's because we lost commercial power, but all said, it was a relatively small percentage of those locations that we lost connectivity to.

As John was saying, you know, one of the issues is that you lose backhaul to these cell sites. If you lose backhaul, that basically what you have is an isolated cell site which is obviously not good for the community. I mean, obviously wanting to keep in mind, though, is just because you lose one cell site as long as there are cell sites in the general facility, customers may be able to get a signal from that other cell site. Service may be degraded because one cell site is down, but overall we'll be able to handle the calls that are coming in generally.

I think, all said and done, there was one thing that we learned as a lesson. And I think this is really a very interesting point -- and John mentioned it earlier which is sort of took the opportunity away from me to present something which is, you know, sort of mind blowing. And the fact is -- that I didn't realize this until after it was mentioned on a call. I didn't realize that cell sites are on the power company's list as a customer, just a customer.

You know, don't get me wrong I'm not saying that all customers aren't important to get electricity restored to, but taking into consideration the impact of lost electricity that a certain location has on the network itself really plays into the observation that it's critical that they're prioritized as need be.

So that commercial power can get restored to

these locations so that obviously emergency individuals can use their cell phones as well as customers. So I think that's one thing that I took away from this exercise, to we've got to do whatever it takes to make sure they receive the priority that's needed.

I think one other thing which is -- which helped out quite a bit, and this happened shortly after the storm, is that we put a task force together under Commissioner Esty's guidance and what that did is really brought the organizations, various organizations and companies together to try to get the information on a real-time basis so that we can pass it along to the appropriate government agency where there was a local municipality or state entity, to get that information to them as in real-time as possible.

We had calls throughout the day and I think it was very effective to say the least. And I do commend them for putting this group together because not only did we -- were we able to accomplish the things that we needed to accomplish, get communication out there between organizations during the storm, we're continuing to look at like a lessons learned that happened during the storm and try to take the money going forward basis and incorporate them into our plans in the future.

So with that said, I mean, and to echo what John had said that most of the issues he had discussed, I'd be happy to take whatever questions you guys have and if I don't know the answer, once again, I'll take it back.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. Do you service the state emergency operations center in terms of

wireless?

RICHARD BOZSIK: We were not present at the location; however, we did have one individual who was in contact with that organization 24 by 7. The individual works for me and very similar to what John had mentioned.

It's critical that not only is that individual available to get questions from and issued, you know, requests from state employees, but it's critical that that individual knows who to contact and what organization within the company to get the job done. And that individual had had ability.

REP. NARDELLO: Do you contract with the state for its services for wireless? I'm trying to determine which of the three companies -- it's Sprint. Okay. Thank you. My question will be directed to them.

Next question. What percentage of your customers lost power during this -- or lost ability to use their phones during this?

RICHARD BOZSIK: Well, let me ask you when you say, customers, do you need landline customers?

REP. NARDELLO: If you have specific the landline versus wireless.

RICHARD BOZSIK: Yeah. Landline, yes. Only 1 percent of our customers lost service -- had reported a service problem to us. From a wireless perspective, it's difficult to come up with what the calculation is, because obviously, the wireless service is a transient service. You're able to bring it from wherever you are.

So for arguments sake, an individual coming up the road may be on a call, but unfortunately would lose connectivity to the cell site and obviously be able to redial that call in the future.

REP. NARDELLO: Maybe I'd better ask this in this manner. Were all of your sites equipped with backup battery power or generators? Did you have any that failed in terms of either not being able to have a generator or having the backup battery power?

RICHARD BOZSIK: There were a few, a very small percentage. I don't have that percentage with me, but what I will say is that 11 percent of our cell towers lost connectivity, whether it was because that there was no backhaul from that cell tower to the central office serving the area or if it was off because of no generating power due to various reasons like we don't have the ability to put a generator.

In total, it was 11 percent at the height of the recovery effort during the storm. But that percentage dropped very quickly over the course of a few days following that as a result of the task force that was put together and the ability to communicate the importance of getting those sites back up on commercial power. We were able to get that restored very quickly. But for your benefit, I mean we had about 27 percent, 27 percent of our cell sites were working on generated power at the height of the storm. So a lot of our locations have generated power.

REP. NARDELLO: And Mr. (inaudible) I should have asked you the same question, so you can provide that. You don't have to do it right now, but you can provide the information

because you're coming up later if you wish, whatever, on the percentage of cell sites that you lost during this time and also the numbers that have generated power and yours as well. So we can ask the same question basically.

Any questions from members of the committee?

Marissa, did you want to make --

MARISSA MITROVICH: No. I just wanted to just echo again, as we were talking about backup and cell sites, the majority of our wireless towers -- they're all battery backed up, but they also do -- unless there's, for whatever reason, it could be (inaudible) don't have generators and those and we did deploy backup generators in those instances.

REP. NARDELLO: Yes. Questions from the committee?

Senator Gomes.

SENATOR GOMES: It was listed with your negotiation with the unions that you have 45,000 members nationally. Are all those people concerned with cell phones or are some of the landline people?

RICHARD BOZSIK: Those are all landline employees except for --

SENATOR GOMES: (Inaudible.)

RICHARD BOZSIK: I beg your pardon?

SENATOR GOMES: Those are all landlines.

RICHARD BOZSIK: Yeah. Except for a very, very small number which are in the wireless end of the business.

SENATOR GOMES: How small?

RICHARD BOZSIK: I think it's 20 or less employees.  
A very, very small number.

SENATOR GOMES: You said, 20 or less?

RICHARD BOZSIK: Yeah. In the wireless end of it.

SENATOR GOMES: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Further questions from members of  
the committee? Seeing none, thank you very  
much for your testimony.

MARISSA MITROVICH: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

We're going to move onto the telephone  
providers and Mr. Erma, you are up for the  
telephone providers and actually we have  
Mr. Bozsik and Ms. Mitrovich as well. So is  
that going to be a problem in terms of your  
needing to leave? You'll cover it? Okay.  
Thank you.

JOHN ERMA: This is more of a discussion on  
wireless sites, I understand. Is that  
correct?

REP. NARDELLO: Cable provider section.

JOHN ERMA: Oh, on the cable provider section. I  
apologize.

REP. NARDELLO: I'm sorry. I should have  
pronounced that. Cable provider section.

JOHN ERMA: Cable provider section. I don't have

anything more to add beyond what I added earlier. The reality on our operations is, as we like to say inside AT&T, it's one AT&T. So those facilities, you know, wireless or our video facilities or our wire line facilities, it's all one integrated company. I'm happy to answer any questions you might have on that.

You know, we experienced again, the same issues on the video front that we experienced elsewhere in the business. So a loss of commercial power and we deployed generators as necessary.

REP. NARDELLO: I'm going to ask you to do something for informational purposes. Since, John, you're listed under telephone providers, cable and wireless, would you like to distinguish for the people watching this the difference between the three? Because I think, you know, for the audience's view, they may not know that.

JOHN ERMA: Sure.

REP. NARDELLO: And then we'll --

JOHN ERMA: Sure. Absolutely. So you know, there are a number of different lines of business that AT&T is in. Its legacy business, if you will, is the wired telephone business, wired local telephone business. We are in that business and 22 states across the country.

The second and really the growing biggest part of our business is the wireless business. So it's wireless, the mobility part of our business. We're the second largest mobility provider in the United States behind Verizon. And lastly, as our video business which is branded under U-Verse. We offer that service



in I think 20 to 21 state. I'm probably forgetting one state but we offer it here in Connecticut. We offer U-Verse and it is a video product. Also a VOIP product and also a high-speed Internet product offered both singularly and as either double or triple plays and we offer that service to little more than half of the state's homes at this point in time.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, John.

JOHN ERMA: You're welcome.

REP. NARDELLO: In that case, we're going to move onto our next speaker.

JOHN ERMA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: We'll bring you back one more time, John. Our next speaker is going to be Richard Bozsik, please. Anything to add from -- in this line of business that you have.

Oh, I'm sorry. It's Michael Chowaniec. I apologize. I loved down at the wrong -- okay. It's Michael Chowaniec, cable providers.

MICHAEL CHOWANIEC: Good afternoon, Chairwoman Nardello, Chairman Fonfara, Chairwoman Hartley and other distinguished numbers of the committee. My name is Mike Chowaniec. I'm here on behalf of Cablevision and I'm joined by my colleague Dodie Tschirch who is also with Cablevision.

There's been a variety of tissues addressed by several others, telecom-related in the last few moments. We've also submitted written responses to the questions and I will try and be brief in terms of offering some opening

remarks and that we are obviously both available to answer any questions you might have.

Cablevision welcomes this opportunity to discuss the impact of Tropical Storm Irene and they recover efforts that we made in its aftermath. We have approximately 1400 employees here in Connecticut. Many of them were personally impacted by the storm and we are very pleased and very honored by the performance that they offered during the restoration efforts.

Before the storm hit, we put our customers on notice that they should anticipate that if there was a significant outage, there was a high probability that our service would, in fact, be disrupted. We, in fact, communicated to them via phone and via e-mail that we would be in fact monitoring our network and so we would be in a position to know if their modems or if there set boxes went off-line.

So on a near-term basis to the extent power went out they didn't need to contact us if they didn't have electric service at their home because we would, in fact, know that our service was not working at that point in time. We've are also very sensitive to not wanting to have our call centers overwhelmed in the near term when service restoration was just beginning because we recognized the fact that at that point in time phone service or phone traffic would be very heavy and potentially needed for emergency calls. And so we wanted to give customers a certain period of time to work that through so that we could begin our restoration efforts in a timely and orderly fashion.

As power was restored across the region we communicated to our customers that if they received electricity at their home and they still didn't have our power, we asked them obviously to promptly contact us because then we would be in a position to address those repair efforts on an immediate basis. We were obviously monitoring that on our end of the equation as well. We were seeing as devices came up and didn't come up what was happening from our end, but it was very helpful for us in terms of a check if customers were in a position to reach out to us if they, in fact, have electric power restored to their home or business but the not in fact have our service back online.

Our network held up very well. We had a very limited amount of damage to our system, and as a result of that, we were able to of actuate our repairs in a very prompt fashion and as a result of that, generally speaking, and there are obviously exceptions to this, but as a general rule as commercial power came back online our service came online almost immediately. It was remarkable that somebody who is working with folks at the state armory and the various regulatory agencies; at the beginning of the process we had done our assessment and we had made certain assumptions about where our facilities had been damaged and where repairs needed to be effectuated and we were making assumptions about how the restoration efforts would go and that, in fact, our service would follow the restoration of electric power. And that, in fact, ended up being true.

We -- a couple of points that I think are worth noting here and I'm going to echo some of the comments that others have made about

kind of lessons learned and I think some valuable -- valuable elements that all of us can take away from this process.

One is we benefited from this, and I would credit the state officials at PURA and at the state armory who were a part of this process. We benefited very much from having our staff embedded or stationed with the electric utilities at their respective EOCs and we appreciate UI's and CL&P's work in that regard. That put us in a position to basically stage our staff, you know, to follow theirs as they went through the restoration efforts.

As a general rule, for those of you who don't live in this sphere, what ends up happening and municipal officials had spoken to this earlier, the restoration effort generally takes a certain sequence that involves clearing roads, clearing debris, clearing trees, replacing or repairing polls, restoring electric power and then we are generally third or fourth in that sequence.

So there's a lot of value to us being in a position to know where the electric utilities are and to follow them because it puts us in a position to be very efficient and effective in terms of our restoration efforts. I believe the gentleman from AT&T and from one of the other wireless providers spoke to the fact that the state set up this communications task force immediately after the storm. That was very valuable in terms of us sharing information. It was a resource for us.

There were several incidents with local officials where we needed a communications pointf on a Saturday and it was fantastic that

we were able to shoot an e-mail, make a call and be in a position to have somebody from the state armory reach out to a municipal official and help us work through an issue.

In closing, and we're obviously available to answer any questions we are obviously appreciative of the patience that our customers showed in working through this issue with us and we obviously appreciate the opportunity to be here before the committee today and Dodie and I are available to answer any questions.

REP. NARDELLO: Michael, could you just tell us what percentage lost connectivity in your system as well.

MICHAEL CHOWANIEC: As a general rule by way of background for those of you -- and I know Representative Steinberg is from our service area -- we cover about a quarter of the state, primarily Southwest Connecticut, lower Fairfield County and a portion of Litchfield. We lost about half of our customers at the front end lost service.

REP. NARDELLO: And can you tell me do you have backup generators or backup battery power in these areas? And could you tell me to what extent you have that, discussed that?

MICHAEL CHOWANIEC: Yeah. In terms of our larger facilities, call centers, distribution, important distribution points in our system, all of those have backup generating capacity. None of that was disrupted at any point during the storm. In terms of our -- the facilities that we have out in the field, you know, the units that are actually on poles and are spread out throughout our network, they, in

fact, have battery capacity and that is necessary we supplemented those facilities with generating capacity.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Are there other questions from members of the committee?

Representative Steinberg.

REP. STEINBERG: Thank you, Madam Chair. As a customer of Cablevision who was fortunate enough not to lose power that entire week, I almost feel guilty about that, I very much appreciated Cablevision and its communications function. News Channel 12 was really on top of the story all the time.

My question relates to your communications leg of your triad along with the Internet and the phone service. Given that half of your customers were without power or access to your services, how might you in the future be able to reach out to them to keep them informed in that fashion?

You're seeing more and more use of cell phones or other communications means. Is that something that you could consider doing so you keep your customers informed of the status? You're very good at being proactive and letting people know what it is that there would be a problem, but how are you going to be effective in the communications medium in keeping customers informed when they don't have power?

DODIE TSCHIRCH: You know, it is a complex world that we live in now and we're very careful when we sell our telephone service, which is a

VOIP service, to disclose to people that it may go out and eventually will go out if the battery backup in our system goes out once we lose commercial power.

We're very much aware of that. We warn people in advance, as I said. And as we worked into the storm, we assumed that in most instances people still had some cell service so we still continued to communicate with our customers via e-mail because they have other devices and for those customers that we have that don't have our telephone service, if they were out of our service, but had other services we sent telephone messages. We also had within our facilities an option for people on the IVR where they could choose to have updates sent to them periodically via telephone and we continued to do that so that we were trying to the best of our ability to talk to our customers in as many ways as we possibly could depending on their situation.

REP. STEINBERG: Thank you. That answers my question and sounds like a good model for other purveyors as well. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Are there other questions from members of the committee?

Seeing none, thank you very much for your testimony.

We are now going to move on to Tim Noonan director of operations for Charter Communications.

TIMOTHY NOONAN: Good afternoon. I did also on behalf of Charter submit -- on the questions that came out, submit a lengthy response, but I'll touch on high-level and answer any

questions. Preparation for the storm was different from storms we've dealt with in the past such as the Massachusetts hurricane back in -- I mean, tornado back in June, which kind of just came upon us and hit us. This one we knew was coming so we started preparation really three or four days before the hurricane hit with conference calls pretty much throughout the day seven days a week -- or through the weekend preparing for the storm.

Some of the things, you know, we did, we documented all lines of devices prior to the storm to keep track of customers that did lose either an MTA, a services VOIP phone or a modem that services their high-speed Internet do kind of keep track of where customers were off and where we needed to react to that folks that did have power. As soon as the storm passed, we quickly documented where all our flatlined nodes are which the communities in order to put generators on those nodes or on those power supplies that the feeds those nodes in order to get customers up that had power, but did not have services because the power in the areas that they were serviced were without power.

In order to be prepared generator-wise for a storm of this magnitude, we were proactive and brought a trailer from our Alabama system to Connecticut and stationed in our Newtown facility and deployed half of those generators to our Willimantic facility so that we were sure that we had enough generators on areas that customers that had power but no services.

We had a group of construction coordinators that we proactively, after the storm passed, sent out into the field to document plant



damage that we had sustained from trees followed. We had approximately 280 locations that that happened in. Most of those locations we were able to be proactive in and get a temporary cable fixed or the cable fixed completely, depending on power situation. The areas where we weren't -- were not able to do that was in unsafe areas that power had either a tree down on their lines and they hadn't been in there to work or road were impassable.

Again, in the height of the outage, we had approximately 80,000 customers without service. Of those 80,000 customers without service, 7,000 of those customers were due to either a drop being down at their home or an area that was damaged along with power that we were unable to get to. The rest of those 80,000 customers we had up either on backup power within 24 hours, or backup of commercial power within 24 hours.

With that, open it up to any questions, but I'll -- if there's any questions or if I missed anything.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. If you do just answer the question of 80,000, what percentage of your customers is that that lost service?

TIMOTHY NOONAN: 80 percent, 80,000 customers is 1 percent of the total customers in Connecticut. Is that your question? I apologize, but I don't have that number with me, but I'd be happy to get it back to you in a written response.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. I'd appreciate that.

And just also to ask you basically the same question, did you -- it sounds to me as if you

have backup generators for pretty much all of your sites. Is that correct? Do you primarily backup generators as opposed to relying on batteries?

TIMOTHY NOONAN: No. We have battery backup in all of our power supplies that feed our system and including our HUB sites and our -- the battery backup is in our power supplies. Correct.

The only reason we brought and all those generators was because the lifespan of those batteries and those power supplies is, you know, 10 to 12, 16 hours and we knew that commercial power would be out a lot longer than that and we wanted to be prepared when we lost those batteries.

REP. NARDELLO: Questions from members of the committee?

Seeing none, thank you very much.

TIMOTHY NOONAN: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Next we will have Rob Early from Comcast government relations and Daniel Glanville from regulatory affairs at Comcast Cable as well.

ROBERT EARLY: Good afternoon, Chairwoman Nardello.

My name is Rob Early and I'm Comcast senior director of state government relations and on behalf of the company thank you all for the opportunity to be here today. We also like to take this opportunity to thank our incredible employees who worked around the clock, took extra shifts, volunteered to do all kinds of things that helped get our services up safely and as quickly as possible to our customers.

And for our customers, too, we'd like to thank him here today as well for their patience and understanding has worked in the hours after the storm to restore our services.

And last, we'd like to thank the electric utilities for their valuable partnerships in helping us get our services restored efficiently as possible.

We're really going to use the balance of our time to answer questions, but I would first like to introduce Dan Glanville, who is Comcast vice president of government and regulatory affairs for Comcast cable's Western New England.

DANIEL GLANVILLE: Thank you, Rob and thank you very much for welcoming us here this afternoon to speak to you. I'd like to make a few brief comments with regard to what we expect as impediments in best practices and then hopefully take some of your questions.

As you may know, Comcast is the largest cable television provider in the state and we have our regional headquarters down the road in Berlin, Connecticut. It's important to note at the outset that all of our facilities and stationary generator backup in them. That would be our Berlin facility, our facility here which is a head end in Hartford, and throughout the state all of our HUB sites had generators on-site that were up and running throughout before the storm, throughout the storm and if we lost power during the storm.

Also our call center operations, whether they be up in Enfield, Connecticut, or in our Berlin, Connecticut, facility were also

operational throughout the store.

Without ever meaning to minimize or understate the damage and the suffering of the storm that caused to our customers, our colleagues and their neighbors, Comcast believed that it was fully prepared for Tropical Storm Irene, and we believe that we performed well in preparing for and responding to the storm.

First and foremost, through experience we have filed our emergency response plan with the former DPUC, now known as PURA, on June 30th, 2011. In addition to that response plan that was made available to all of the municipalities that we served throughout the state of Connecticut as well.

But some of the things that we did in leading up to the storm and during the storm which we believe are important actions were that we steadily track the progress of the storm in advance of its arrival and completed are prepared checklist that were outlined in our plan. Prior to the storm's arrival, we had connected directly with PURA and set up conference calls to take place the day of the storm and following the storm.

In addition to that, we were active participants over at the armory and on the telecom task force immediately following the storm. We were embedded -- excuse me -- at the beginning of the storm, we were embedded with UI, and after the storm, we were embedded with CL&P and found that jointly beneficial to both enterprises.

We conducted an internal storm calls multiple times daily in our emergency operations center in Connecticut and throughout our region. We

have an operations center set up in Middletown, Connecticut, and Berlin, Connecticut, so that we would be actively able to conduct all of our employees and all of our folks who are out in the field.

In addition to the stationary power sources at all of our main facilities, at any point during the storm we were able to activate and put to work 250 portable generator units throughout our region. We monitored our network through our network operations center as outlined in our emergency response plan. Immediately -- excuse me -- we communicated with state and federal emergency operations agencies concerning their plans and how we could operationalize and best perform with them.

Immediately post storm, we performed our own writeups to ascertain the damage to our network and to identify any down drops in roads that are either accessible or inaccessible. And as stated earlier, we worked closely with power companies to determine best practices during the storm and best practices immediately after the storm and we maintained call-center operations and inadequate staffing levels during and after the storm in the state of Connecticut in order to ensure timely responses to our customers.

It's important to note that with the redundancy of our fiber network that in most instances with the return of commercial power all of our customers had all services reactivated. Immediately following the storm, we had probably a total of roughly 20 percent of our customers impacted, but that number declined very quickly in the day coming -- and days following the storm. We initially had

after we completed our storm activity we determined roughly 5,000 down drops throughout our service are in the state of the best majority of those that were repaired in day one or day two following the storm.

We're happy to be here today and report that we believe in collaboration with our emergency response plan and working with power providers throughout the state and working through experience of our professionals on the ground, that we were able to respond to our customers needs in a quick fashion. We would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Also would like to -- we have some of our other regulatory folks, Jim White who is joining us here today, John Simeone and John Fascendini from our technical operations department also.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. It appears -- if I heard you correctly, you said that 20 percent of your customers were impacted by the storm. Is that correct?

DANIEL GLANVILLE: That is correct.

REP. NARDELLO: Can you give us -- and it appears to me that's a relatively low number comparatively. So can you give us what you think are your best practices that you've put in place to allow you to do that?

DANIEL GLANVILLE: Well, what we did is -- I think that Mr. Noonan stated before me that we had some preparedness training probably in the spring with the tornadoes that occurred in western Massachusetts. In addition to that throughout the winter months, we readily engaged in storm preparedness. So as these

weather events hit, we automatically put folks on conference calls and determine what overtime is needed, determine people that we may need provide our New Hampshire or Vermont or western Massachusetts or even our Boston or outside areas to come in and assist with the restoration plan.

As I stated earlier we did have about 5,000 down drops that took place, but due to the fact that we were able to readily activate and the resources because of our presence in New England, we were able to replace a large percentage of those within day one or day two. Also -- but for and I don't want to engage obviously in any -- certainly this is not meant as bashing, but for the loss of commercial power, we believe that because our head-end facilities located in Berlin and throughout the state had stationary diesel generators that were constantly running, that the services would have been up and running in addition to the deployment of those 250 portable generators that I spoke of.

So it's those practices and probably experience throughout the country in responding to natural disasters and being a large provider that we believe has enabled us to respond so readily.

ROBERT EARLY: And chairwoman Nardello, just quickly at the outset, the plan that we referenced that is a public document also clearly lays out the responsibilities of employees, provides checklists for teams that we have set up to go through and make sure that we're following the procedures in response to a storm.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much.

Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Two questions. You mentioned that 20 percent of your customer base went without service. Were you able to, from some central location, determine what areas of the state or a specific town those occurrences happened? That was a problem that we heard this morning from utilities, that they could tell as a percentage of the town or the tell on a grid, but couldn't translate that to a street map and I was wondering if you're a technology allowed you to do that.

DANIEL GLANVILLE: Well, we found out after we were embedded with Connecticut Light and Power that we had some joint benefit because with the restoration of power we would see that our modems would ping back to us and we would be able to let the electric company know that power was restored in certain areas.

So one of the benefits of a two-way network is that we can see where outages are taking place. I will tell you that it is not always perfect. There may be some instances where there is a downed drop, where it will take customer contact for us to realize what it is, but more often than not we are able to the network operations center that I discussed to tell where we have a fiber issue that we may need to get a fiber restoration team out to immediately to correct. So we are able to see our network in action from the center.

SENATOR WITKOS: And my last question is you placed a document before the PURA on June 30th outlining the emergency procedures. And does



it list the contacts of somebody within your agency that mayors and first selectman can contact during the storm? Or what procedures do you do? That seem to be bone of contention this morning with some of the first selectman, that they didn't -- they weren't aware of what their contact folks were from the different utilities.

Could you describe what actions, proactive -- that you did take or if not, what you're going to do in the future.

DANIEL GLANVILLE: Sure. Thank you for that question. On June 30th, we did file the emergency response plan with PURA. And in addition to that, we made each of the municipalities that we serve throughout the state aware of the emergency response plan. I do have a copy of it here today.

And the front cover of the emergency response plan has the 800 number for folks to contact our network operations center. In addition to that some of the folks that are sitting right here today are listed in that; my office number, my personal so number is available in that -- well, my business cell number is available in that as well. So that if we get a call on one of the calls that we are involved with internally, we can respond appropriately.

I will tell you that sometimes in these emergencies this document may not be the easiest to find if a municipality is focusing on other things. But we did, for instance, I did notice that there was some communication gap that was spoken of this morning with regard to Simsbury. And I remembered that during the storm itself, we had a particular

instance, and I went back during the lunch break to grab some data.

And that we were actually in contact with the Simsbury Police Department because we do provide their Internet service and we had been made aware of on the day of the storm that there was an outage at 2:45 p.m. We rolled a truck at 4:37 p.m. that afternoon and restored service by 7 p.m. that night.

So although there may have been a communications gap with part of the town, I can ensure you that we were in constant communication where we were made aware of a situation. It's our goal to have this number reintegrated into every community that we serve so they can have it readily available to contact us in the event of an emergency like this, should it ever happen again.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Questions from other members of the committee?

Thank you for sharing those best practices. I think that it is something that we will be thinking about as we go forward making some recommendations, but we appreciate that.

DANIEL GLANVILLE: Thank you for welcoming us.

REP. NARDELLO: And should you have anything further feel free to submit it to the committee.

DANIEL GLANVILLE: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Our next speaker will be Paul Yatcko from Thames Valley Communications.

PAUL YATCKO: My name is Paul Yatcko. And those of you who were here this morning are probably wondering what this electric guy is doing sitting in front of you this afternoon. Well, the electric guy also wears another hat. He's the president of Thames Valley Communications. Thames Valley Communications is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Groton Utilities and provides broadband service to a five-town service area in Southeastern Connecticut.

Rather than repeating a whole lot of what you've heard already, let me give you the headline. We saw limited physical damage in our system during the storm. Only eight hard line cable breaks, no fiber-optic damage and 48 service drops were taken down. That's the good news.

The bad news is, is that over 90 percent -- that's nine zero percent of our service territory was without broadband service and that was as a result of loss of commercial power. Clearly, our preparation did not identify sufficiently our vulnerability for the loss of commercial power.

So despite the fact that we had a number of portable generators available to us and that were deployed after the storm, clearly we didn't have enough, and in fact, we have one fewer today than we had that since one of the units that we placed in service was stolen from us several hours later.

Second area that I think we found to be a serious lesson is the same one that I've shared with you this morning which is that we need to have better predictive capability with respect to restoration of the system after outage and also we need to be better prepared

to find different avenues under which to communicate the status of our system and restoration times to our customers.

That's the high-level headline. I'd be happy to take any questions that you've got.

REP. NARDELLO: I'm just trying to be clear about this. So you lost -- 90 percent of your customers lost service. How many customers do you have?

PAUL YATCKO: I don't have that information with me right now. I can get that to you.

REP. NARDELLO: Okay. And are you a publicly-owned cable company?

PAUL YATCKO: We are owned by the City of Groton.

REP. NARDELLO: And your service territory is?

PAUL YATCKO: Groton, Ledyard, Stonington, North Stonington and Voluntown.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. Are there questions from members of the committee?

Seeing none, thank you very much for your testimony.

PAUL YATCKO: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: We will now hear from wireless providers.  
And Mr. Erma, if you will come up first, please.

JOHN ERMA: Deja vu all over again. I'm just going to -- Representative Nardello, if it's okay with you, just answer a couple of those

questions that you had sort of put to the person from Verizon Wireless.

First, all of our cell sites have battery backup. Roughly approximately 40 percent of them required generation power as a result of a long-term loss of commercial power and that generation power is brought into all of them. Roughly 5 percent of our cell sites lost connectivity for other reasons, like backhaul going down for example, so they took slightly longer to restore.

I do want to just echo the comment that Verizon Wireless made earlier. It's important to note that just because a single site goes down does not mean there's a loss of connectivity for all customers within an area. Typically cell sites, they overlap each other if you think a little bit -- I'll start with a visual of the Olympic rings. That's probably a good visual to consider when you think about how cell sites work. They often overlap each other.

You may have service degradation. Certainly, you know, if you have an area along the shoreline for example that was very hard, that was a tough place anyway with not necessarily a lot of cell sites. You would -- you would probably have even greater issues.

That's all the prepared comments I had. I'm happy to answer any questions anybody has.

REP. NARDELLO: Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: John, I apologize if you've answered this already. I might have been out of the room. But is there a standard battery length on each cell tower? Or is it depending

on the size of the tower and how many units are on it.

And also I know -- I did catch you when you said that it depends on what it's being used for, how fast it drains. But is there an average on what can be expected of the life of the battery before you need a generator to boost the power back up?

JOHN ERMA: To get to your first question, you know, guess it very much depends on the tower and the site so you could have -- you could have a single what we call, "dirt site," that has, you know, five providers on it. You know, that requires a lot of generation capacity and a lot of battery backup.

Typically, you know, 8 to 12 hours worth of battery backup on a site. It may be less. Again, it very much depends on the usage, on how big the site is. You know, some sites like a, church steeple for example, you're not going to put a generator on as a matter of course. You're going to rely on battery backup. So it very much depends, Senator.

SENATOR WITKOS: Is that a regulated decision? Or is that just a company decision?

JOHN ERMA: It's a company decision.

REP. NARDELLO: Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: Just a quick question. Going back to some of the testimony earlier -- I think it was Bob Dibella from Glastonbury -- he raised the issue of underground wires and basically I guess they were older and so on. I'm just wondering -- I see Northeast is still here -- if anybody is -- for a lot of people

they keep saying, let's put everything underground.

Well, apparently it wasn't the panacea that it was supposed to be and if any of you guys have experience in that area plus or minus, it would be helpful to us because I don't know that we have testimony on that, but at like to see that.

JOHN ERMA: I think what I can say to you and I think someone else had said this earlier, you know, it is not a panacea to having everything underground. I think the reality is we're not going to have underground facilities in Connecticut.

I can tell you in Connecticut roughly 80 to 85 percent of our facilities are aerial. If you looked at our operations in the southwest for example, 80 percent of them were underground. Why is that? Because they are greenfield bills. It's just over -- and by the way, the nature of the soil is different. It's very rocky here. If you want to underground all that stuff that's there today it would cost you an absolute fortune.

And that would require that you're ripping down facilities that are already there. I don't know that any of us really want to bear that burden, to be honest with you.

SENATOR CASSANO: And even in new construction, if they're doing a development or whatever it might be, it might be, quote, an answer, but the testimony earlier in the day was that it was almost dysfunctional. One of the last places to be fixed was the underground area because of flooding and the aging and all the other things. So I mean, if that's the case

we didn't know that.

JOHN ERMA: You know, undergrounding can create a whole number of issues. And let me give you an example, you know, this is a 30-year storm. Right, but it was a hundred-year water level flood level because there was so much rain.

So, you know, when you put things underground you get shortages, you get shorts and particularly in the telecommunications industry, shorts are going to knock out service and calls surface construction. Putting things underground is not necessarily going to solve anything for anybody, to be very honest with you.

And when you do have outages, you know, you think your constituents don't like having outages, wait till somebody comes along with a backhoe and digs up their pansies. They won't be very happy either. So --

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you. I appreciate that.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Rovero.

REP. ROVERO: A quick question. Does every one of your towers have backup power?

JOHN ERMA: Every one of our towers has battery backup on it.

REP. ROVERO: And what is the minimum and the maximum?

JOHN ERMA: Again, it will vary on the size of the tower and the expected usage on the tower. You know, it can be 8 to 12 hours. It might



be less than that. It depends how much the tower is really used.

REP. ROVERO: Okay.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: John, I've looked back at my notes and I apologize if I asked you this previously.

JOHN ERMA: Sure. No problem.

REP. NARDELLO: What is the percentage of your U-Verse customers that lost power during this? And I want to do this because I've done it for the other companies (inaudible).

JOHN ERMA: Yeah. No. Understand. I actually asked for that number earlier and they were almost all the result of a loss of commercial power. There were some that lost, you know, drops were down. We had about -- overall I'm not just talking U-verse drops, but overall we had about 3300 drops that we repaired. Now again, that could be for any number of reasons. That customer could be buying any number of service not necessarily U-verse. As a percentage basis, it was probably around 35 percent of -- if I'm doing my math correct -- maybe slightly lower than that, who were out as a loss of commercial power.

And as commercial power -- generation got up and then commercial power got brought back into the system was back up and running.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Are there further questions from members of the committee?

If there are none, thank you, John.

JOHN ERMA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Last but not least Benjamin Aron from Sprint Nextel.

BENJAMIN ARON: Good afternoon. I'm sure you've all been here quite a while so I'll try to keep my prepared statements short and allow you to follow up with questions.

Sprint considers it an honor and privilege to provide service in Connecticut and recognize that along with that, that honor and privilege comes a duty and that is a duty to provide reliable service to our customers. And that is a duty that we take very seriously and amongst the ways that we attempt to live up to that duty is to prepare for events like the tropical storm that we just experienced. Storm preparation involves planning, extensive planning in advance of storms, during storms and after storms.

It involves practice, that is to practice the plans that we come up with and try to find where the flaws might be and to review those plans and how they held up after the storms have passed. It also involves ensuring that we have the personnel and the expertise to implement the plans that we put in place for disaster recovery.

In advance of this particular storm we mobilized assets, and that's personnel and equipment, that we deemed would be key in the recovery effort and that's generators and personal. We also deployed a cell site on wheels also known in the industry as a COW to

the emergency operations center to make sure that they would have continuous service and a COLT, which is a cell site on a light-truck, a variation of the same team; although, it's starting to sound like a farm. But the COW and the COLT were stationed at the EOC and there remained -- the COLT actually was called up by FEMA to Vermont so that wasn't there the entire time, but the COW was available in case there was any loss of power to the EOC throughout the entire storm. But fortunately, that didn't happen. The sites that serve the EOC remained operational at all times.

In terms of the storm itself, we experienced four major categories of outages. One was cell site equipment and that was virtually negligible compared to the other three. The other three would be the loss of power, the loss of power and T1, and the loss of T1 alone. The largest of the categories is power, which is hardly surprising considering what all of you have heard throughout the day.

The second leading cause would be T1 and in a grouping with the power and the T1 lossage such -- loss. The T1, as I believe heard already, but just in case you haven't, the T1s are the large pipes that connect each individual cell site to the network and allow communications as we know it.

And those -- that is the end of my prepared statement. And again, I'm happy to answer any questions that you may have.

REP. NARDELLO: Question for you. It's my understanding that there were some difficulties in the initial communication with the emergency operations center. Could you tell us a little about that and the placement

of the COW and the COLT.

BENJAMIN ARON: I'm not sure if that I'm aware that there is any difficulty. If you could define the question further, I perhaps could provide a better answer.

REP. NARDELLO: I guess it's my understanding that it took a little bit longer than anticipated to get those up there and running so that the emergency operations center could be fully functional. Again, I'm asking just to address what you perceive as possible difficulties or what the difficulty may have been.

BENJAMIN ARON: Well, to make it clear, the COW and the COLT were never put into operation whatsoever. They were never needed. The COW, the cell site on wheels is essentially a device that would be limited if you had a cell site outage. It would also be implemented, most commonly you would think of it in terms of events or of the Governor were to give a speech, for instance here in Hartford, may be here in the capital. Maybe you would have a massive crowd outside and as you can imagine if you have 10 to 30 thousand, 40, 50 thousand, a couple hundred thousand people standing in a very close space you're not going to be able to cover that with your ordinary network capacity.

So the way to bridge that gap is to take a COW, which is a cell site on wheels and rollout a number of them to the site or all of these phones are anticipated to be. At that point in time, you would turn them on and you would, through engineering, make sure they don't cause interference to each other which is also possible. But this, in this instance, the request for the cell on wheels, the COW

and the COLT. Were made on a Friday afternoon and they arrived on Saturday night before the storm had ever reached Connecticut. So as far as whether there was a failure to be responsive to the state and having them in place before the storm had any impact, I think would be responsive.

As far as their usage during the storm, again, the COW's primary use would have been to cover the EOC if any of the cell sites that cover it already had gone out, but none of them have.

The COLT is more of an emergency response vehicle that's use is a little bit different, but the idea behind sending it out was actually the same, which is to say that if communications had been wiped out at the EOC, the idea was that the SAT COLT would be employed. It's a satellite enabled system so that it can communicate without a T1 line dedicated to it. That's in contrast to the cell on wheels. The COWs do need a dedicated T1 and that's why, as I said before, if you have an event where you anticipated all these people showing up you roll out the COW, but you would order the T1 circuit from the common carrier in advance of that.

The COLT rather is a satellite-enabled vehicle so it's able to have communications without any preplanned circuit. You'd generally bring what we call a go-kit with that COLT. So the COLT would have maybe 50 phones with it for instance. Now, if there's a complete communications loss you could lift the tower on the COLT, set up satellite communications and distribute those phones and replicate -- I mean, obviously the phone numbers everybody has would be a little different. It's an inconvenience, but it's -- I guess you could

say, a last solution of choice -- or a solution of last choice.

REP. NARDELLO: And what percentage of your towers lost connectivity? And what percentage have generator back up?

BENJAMIN ARON: Well, generally speaking, the generator backup at the towers is mostly by battery. The company has made a decision to try to be environmentally friendly, and as anyone can imagine a battery-powered site has a much smaller footprint, environmental footprint than the diesel-powered site.

So the vast majority of the power, backup power is via battery and cell tower sites I think are almost universally enabled with backup power. As you've heard some of the gentleman indicate earlier, not all sites lend themselves to have a backup power at all. So in some instances, there are a small percentage of sites that don't have any backup power.

REP. NARDELLO: What percent lost connectivity?

BENJAMIN ARON: I don't have that information with me, but we could try to follow-up with you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. I appreciate that.

Senator Fonfara.

SENATOR FONFARA: Good afternoon.

BENJAMIN ARON: Good afternoon, sir.

SENATOR FONFARA: I listened to your answer to Chairman Nardello regarding the timeliness of you providing the backup for the emergency

operations center and it may have been there late Saturday, as you've testified, but I guess that was cutting it pretty close for the folks at DEEP who I have spoken with. They were not happy about that. So I think it would be worth your while to go back to your folks and re-examine that, that policy firstly.

In addition, it's my understanding that you, your company failed to provide plans for how to -- you would get service up and running as well as failed to provide plans to DEEP on how you intended to keep service in operation.

Can you comment on that?

BENJAMIN ARON: I guess there's two different elements to that. The one is, did we respond timely? So in terms of, you know, in terms of the timely response again, a request was made Friday afternoon. It's an eight hour drive in that kind of weather with that kind of traffic and the truck arrived there a little over 24 hours later. So -- or the two trucks arrived slightly over 24 hours later. I'm having a hard time characterizing that as anything but a timely response.

You know, if they had wanted it earlier then it certainly was not communicated in perhaps the proper avenue -- on the one hand.

On the other hand the state --

SENATOR FONFARA: Before you move on from that.

BENJAMIN ARON: Absolutely, sir.

SENATOR FONFARA: Why is there not a unit of the nature necessary here in Connecticut already?

You are throughout Connecticut. Are you not?  
You have --

BENJAMIN ARON: Absolutely.

SENATOR FONFARA: -- a footprint throughout our  
state.

BENJAMIN ARON: Absolutely.

SENATOR FONFARA: And yet, you don't have such a  
vehicle or a device here in the state now?

BENJAMIN ARON: I don't know that there is or isn't  
one now. We were asked to leave the state  
operations center after the storm and we did.  
If you're asking where they're stationed in,  
you know, in ordinary circumstances I mean,  
they are stationed throughout the United  
States. So is there one in Connecticut now?  
I don't have the answer to that. On the other  
hand --

SENATOR FONFARA: But there wasn't one at the time.

BENJAMIN ARON: At which time? The time that was  
requested?

SENATOR FONFARA: Prior to the storm.

BENJAMIN ARON: That's right. That's correct. And  
one of the services that we offered to states  
and larger customers in general, but states  
are the most typical example, is emergency  
response team service, I guess you could call  
that. And what the emergency response team is  
designed to do is to come into an area where  
communications are lost and to provide a  
communications solution for the short term.

So they will -- and this is why the COLT that



we drove up was called the Vermont by FEMA. FEMA had no communications in Vermont. Immediately needed to set up the ability to communicate so they could set up for operations for restoration and whatever else they might have done with it. But the point is that those services are available from Sprint and those services at this point, to the best of my knowledge, are not contracted for.

So one of the things that we did for Connecticut just as a courtesy was to send COLT up there even though it's an ERT vehicle and is not --

SENATOR FONFARA: What is an ERT vehicle?

BENJAMIN ARON: As I just said a moment ago, it's the emergency response team. And Sprint maintains separate from its ordinary disaster response --

SENATOR FONFARA: Can I ask you something?

BENJAMIN ARON: Yes.

SENATOR FONFARA: Aron, is it?

BENJAMIN ARON: Yes.

SENATOR FONFARA: Did I hear -- did you just testify that even though the services that were needed in advance of a tropical storm that you provided us with were not contracted for?

BENJAMIN ARON: No. What I said was that the COLT that we had sent up we had sent up to Connecticut as a courtesy, but those are not services that are ordinarily under the State's

contract as I understand the State's contract.

SENATOR FONFARA: I just asked you that. I just asked you that question.

BENJAMIN ARON: Maybe I misunderstood the question.

SENATOR FONFARA: The services you provide us --

BENJAMIN ARON: Yes.

SENATOR FONFARA: -- provided us in anticipation of a storm that was -- had more impact on Connecticut in terms of electricity, in terms of telecommunications services, you see as a courtesy to us.

BENJAMIN ARON: No. Not at all.

SENATOR FONFARA: That's what you just said, though.

BENJAMIN ARON: No. That's not what I said, sir, and I'm sorry to disagree with you forcefully about this, but what I'm trying to explain to you is that the state orders communications from Sprint, right. Under a contract and that's the number of phones and certainly the ability to maintain those phones.

The State Emergency Operations Center, as I understand it, is covered by three cell towers and from those sites the emergency operation center should in all instances be receiving service.

In the instance of a storm, the ordinary course -- ordinary best practice would be to make sure that those sites have adequate power, that the equipment is fully functional and that it remains fully functional

throughout the storm and all those steps were taken at all times. And as I said, those sites did maintain operation throughout the entire storm.

Now, the request for a COW and the COLT for that matter this was not something, as I understand it and again, I'm not an account manager I can say that I would have been part of any negotiation regarding the deployment of the equipment up to Connecticut, but my general understanding was that these requests were made and they were fulfilled; however, the COW, which is something that would be used to replace -- stand in, if you would, for a damaged cell site -- is something that is perhaps under the state contracts.

But very, very separate from that is Sprint's Emergency Response Team and that's a separately contracted service, but I don't believe the State contracts for that at this point. The State could, but at this point, that was set up as a courtesy not as part of the service that Sprint provides under the contract necessarily.

I hope that makes sense, but --

SENATOR FASANO: I think you just repeated what you said earlier, that you're viewing this entire process as a contractual negotiation or something that is beyond your contract that is done as a courtesy to us, as a benevolence.

BENJAMIN ARON: Oh, No. Not at all, sir. As I've mentioned before, the COLT that was sent up here sat at the EOC ready to provide service for a couple days before it was requested directly by the federal government, ordered to go to Vermont to provide service up there.

The resources that we have that are available to provide responses -- response to storm situations were in use. Some of them in Connecticut and some of them, you know, again, you know, COLT being a perfect example, some of them were sent to other locations at the request of the federal government in some instances or perhaps even other governments.

I know in Vermont there was obviously quite a bit of problems within their infrastructure and what -- I guess we're getting --

SENATOR FASANO: May I ask you one other question?

BENJAMIN ARON: Absolutely, sir.

SENATOR FASANO: Isn't it true that Sprint is the contract holder for the State of Connecticut with respect to state employees having cell phone service with your company?

BENJAMIN ARON: I believe that is true. I can't say that --

SENATOR FASANO: Isn't that even a further reason to ensure that -- that state officials in the effort to coordinate activities around the state to ensure that we restore service both in terms of electricity and telecommunications from the Governor on down -- and I can tell you I sat in the DEEP commissioner's office fully four days, five days after the storm and his -- I don't think we had five minutes uninterrupted in our meeting because of the number of people calling him for assistance.

So I guess I'm somewhat taken aback by the message that you're sending here, as a representative of this company, that is a --

that is the primary provider for services to state officials in the midst of this significant storm event hitting our state.

BENJAMIN ARON: If my message is anything other than that we're pleased to serve the state and we hope to perhaps to understand better, maybe by dialoguing with you are with other officials who are in charge of the process to understand better what's perceived to have been a disconnect in the process, then by all means we would so they like to engage in dialogue.

We are proud to provide service to the State. We were under the impression that the State received continuous communications throughout the storm. We had staff at the emergency operations center at all times (inaudible) who is the -- one of the few people I'm going to have to apologize -- I'm forgetting the name of the other gentleman, but there were two people who were there 24/7 throughout the duration of the storm and I believe after the storm had trailed off they were only there about ten to 14 hours a day. Tried to get some sleep after that, but at all times the PURA folks and the folks at DEEP had my telephone number as did Mr. Zito and as did Mr. Raymond have my cell phone, which I kept on all weekend and I talked with both of them after-hours regarding specific issues that we try to work out.

You know, we can work with what we can work with and it was a really good experience for us to work with the state officials and we welcome doing it again. If there's something that I've said, and you know, I'm certainly not sure I can identify it, that's giving you the impression that Sprint feels that the

State owes it something and it's a hundred percent the opposite. As I said at the beginning, we consider it a privilege and an honor to provide service in Connecticut and we understand our duty is to provide continuous communications. And that's been our effort throughout.

SENATOR FASANO: Well, I would just say that I would -- I think we're fortunate to not have experienced a similar attitude on the part of -- if that, in fact, has been the attitude of your company -- from the other utilities and other service providers in the state over the week, week and a half of the impact of the storm; if they all had looked at their contractual obligations or seen things as a courtesy to get the power back on and to restore telecommunications service, whether that be landline or telephone or cable, I would -- I think we're fortunate to not have to experience such a circumstance.

Could you comment please on the issue of the failure to provide plans for establishing service and then maintaining service to the DEEP?

BENJAMIN ARON: We were involved in conversations with the DEEP commissioner in advance of the storm and we gave him a high-level overview of the plans that we have in place to maintain communications during the storm. And that was the conversation that was joint. Verizon and AT&T the were on that call as well. I had conversations with Commissioner DelGobbo and PURA staff throughout the week as well as Mr. Raymond and Mr. Zito. I mean I think we were responsive to all requests regarding the plans, but if there was a specific response that we didn't provided I'm not aware of it,

but again we would be happy to follow up and would look forward to the opportunity to maybe establish a better process going forward.

I mean, I know that -- and maybe this is overkill by the process that sprit generally follows in terms of preparedness and planning is to look at what didn't work and make sure that that doesn't happen again. And it sounds to me like there might be an opportunity to work with the State to make sure we understand from the State's perspective and our perspective both what, you know, maybe where the disconnect was. Was it a lack of information flow? Was it --

SENATOR FASANO: If I could say that in my conversations that the response or the feeling regarding your response was visceral coming from that department and you can take that and do with it what you will.

But I agree with you that this whole forum here today and what will happen next week is about fact collecting, information collecting and we will move forward to another level, a more detailed level with providers, with utilities, with municipalities and the State of Connecticut in determining how we can better address the issues that have been testified here today and have been -- and heard about over the past few weeks.

So that opportunity will be provided to you. I hope you will take advantage of it.

BENJAMIN ARON: Appreciate it.

SENATOR FASANO: Thank you, Chairman Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: Are there further questions from

members of the committee?

Yes, Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

If I may, just a clarification. At some point in time sprit had answered an RFP from the state of Connecticut to provide the service and negotiations took place and the contract was developed as to what -- and stop me at any point if I'm not speaking factually -- what services are being provided to the State. And those are outlined in the four corners of the page signed by a member of the state agency and your company.

So my questions to you are, was there anything in a contract that said that you have to have a COW or a COLT be maintained in the state or delivered to the state by certain amount of time from the request? Is one question.

And my second question is, from what I gather with your colloquy with Senator Fonfara was the COLT was part of the contract with the state of Connecticut that -- am I to believe that it was the good nature of the Sprint Corporation to send that along with the COW to aid in whatever assistance we may need in the state of Connecticut?

BENJAMIN ARON: I guess to the first question I'm going to have to apologize, but I have virtually no familiarity with the contract or the RFP.

So I absolutely agree with you that, you know, the four corners of the document are what they are. Having never reviewed it, going to apologize, but I don't think I have any way to



answer that question, but you know, if you want we can --

SENATOR WITKOS: Well, at some point, if you're the counsel for the corporation I would assume that something might have reached your desk by now saying that you did not meet the agreed-upon language of the contract by having this equipment here by the time that you said you would.

BENJAMIN ARON: Sir, I don't work hand-in-hand with the sales group at that level. So again, I've never seen the contract. If there's communications that you're referring to I'm sure I've not seen it yet. And I apologize, but --

SENATOR WITKOS: And I'm sorry, but the longer we talk, it gets more questions. What specific area of counsel for the corporation do you represent? Now, we're not talking an individual resident that's entering into a contract with Sprint. We're talking about the entire state of Connecticut or an entire state in our country.

At some point when -- what expertise, I guess in the company, or focus, do you have? And it's not dealing with the contracts with the individual states than why -- no offense -- why are you here testifying?

BENJAMIN ARON: Well, I guess my quick answer would be I wasn't aware that there would be a question and answer directly about the contract. If I had been aware of that perhaps I would have asked to be made better aware of the terms of the contract.

There is a specific group within the legal

department that works specifically on state contracts. I'm not part of that group. My expertise or area of expertise for the company is in government relations. And most often, I actually work with -- with PURA.

So, you know, again, I do apologize for not having a little familiarity with the contract. I'm aware we have a contract. I'm aware that the contract, as you said, in the four corners of the contract obviously dictate what services the State and Sprint have agreed to. The ERT program is just something entirely separate and it's my understanding that that's not a service that Sprint provides to Connecticut. Certainly, we could. We'd be honored to. On the other hand -- I believe the second part of your question was, I'm going to apologize -- I believe I forgotten -- had to do with the COLT that was here and the answer is that ordinarily the plan at the time was to have the COLT remain at its point of origination before it was driven up here to be centrally located for the storm's response in the broad region of the storm affected, but when it was determined that we were going to send the COW up here to Connecticut the idea at the time was that if we were going to provide a response we would want to make sure that we had a wholesome capability at that time and Connecticut is obviously concerned about that. So we wanted to block adequate resources to make sure that Connecticut have them there on hand at the EOC.

SENATOR WITKOS: And I just assume that you'll get is something in writing that answers the question as to the contract?

BENJAMIN ARON: What specific question was that?

SENATOR WITKOS: The question was: What is included as far as the emergency response and is the COW a part of that?

BENJAMIN ARON: Sure. Absolutely, sir.

REP. NARDELLO: Are there further questions from members of the committee?

Seeing none, it's my understanding that Mr. Erma would like to make a correction to a statement earlier.

SENATOR WITKOS: Mr. Erma made an error?

JOHN ERMA: I made an error. I misspoke. I had a number wrong. Representative Nardello, you asked me what percentage of U-verse customers were impacted. I said, 35 percent. That's wrong. It was 15 percent and I apologize for that. Too many numbers in my head.

REP. NARDELLO: Can you provide us with those, the numbers of customers, if you would, please. Or do you know that off the top of your head?

JOHN ERMA: The actual -- the number?

REP. NARDELLO: Yeah.

JOHN ERMA: We can provide that to you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much. Are there any other questions?

Seeing none, I thank everybody for spending the entire day with us. Those of you that are here and still in your seats, I appreciate that.

And just know that we will be continuing the

292

September 19, 2011

rgd/mb/gbr JOINT INFORMATIONAL HEARING 9:30 a.m.  
ON TROPICAL STORM IRENE

hearings on the 26th. It will begin again at  
9:30 and we're looking forward to seeing  
everyone then. Thank you.