

Doyle, Dan

From: MacDonald, David
Sent: Wednesday, September 21, 2011 8:46 AM
To: AfterIreneCT
Subject: FW: Loss of Electricity due to Hurricane Irene

From: sonia.matthew@charter.net [mailto:sonia.matthew@charter.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2011 11:26 PM
To: MacDonald, David
Subject: Loss of Electricity due to Hurricane Irene

We reside in Heritage Village, a retirement community of 2550 condos and 4000 residents in Southbury, Ct. Unfortunately the hilltop area of Heritage Village did not have electrical service for 2.5 days. Cold showers were unpleasant but possible. If the situation had been November - March in this geographical area, cold showers would not be tolerable.

Sadly, due to electrical loss, we lost approximately \$500 worth of frozen food and some refrigerated items (we had placed frozen bags of ice cubes in refrigerator in an attempt to save milk, juice, cheeses, etc). I called 211 as suggested by the Governor but repeatedly received a message stating that all operators were busy and the wait time was 6 to 8 minutes. When power was restored, I called 211 again and the previous situation was repeated. Then, I went to the computer and found that the only help for food loss was to access a Food Bank (we did not go to a Food Bank). I realize that \$500 is a minimal loss compared to citizens that suffered extreme property damage and loss but covered by insurance. In retirement, the sum of \$500 is a large loss...and it was not covered by Homeowner's Insurance.

During the entire power outage we were forced to eat out...another unexpected cost factor for retired citizens. Yes, we could have gone to the grocery store and purchased deli prepared foods or canned fruit. Yes, this alternative would have saved some cost per meal.

For individuals that are dependant on medical devices that use electricity this situation would require them to leave their homes and move onto an area with electrical service in order to utilize medical equipment.

Previously I mentioned the severity of a storm occurring during the months of November to March. Pipes would have frozen and burst. Citizens, especially the elderly or ill citizens would be forced to leave their homes and move into hotels ... possibly traveling to another State to seek shelter. If the storm involved excess amounts of snow or ice the elderly would not be capable to driving under such conditions. The death toll would be significantly increased. Family survivors may consider seeking legal representation for a Wrongful Death litigation.

In closing, I am hopeful that the Connecticut Light and Power considers this experience as a learning tool and aggressively make changes. Community based 'rumors' stated that that CT Light & Power does not have the field staff to meet a challenge such as Hurricane Irene and that administrators would not authorize contracting out of state electricians. So sad to place citizens at risk and financial loss.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonia K. Matthew
9/20/11

9/23/2011