

CHAIRMEN: Senator Hartley
Senator Fonfara
Senator Cassano
Senator Prague

MEMBERS PRESENT:

SENATORS: Duff, Fasano, Gomes, Guglielmo,
Witkos

REPRESENTATIVES:

Adinolfi, Aman, Bacciochi,
Becker, Boukus, Candelora,
Dargan, Davis, Flexer, Genga,
Gentile, Grogins, Greene,
Hartley, Hoydick, Johnson,
Jutila, Kokoruda, Lesser,
Miller, Mikutel, Nardello,
E. O'Brien, Orange, Rebimbas,
Reed, Reynolds, Ritter, Rojas,
Simanski, Steinberg, Tercyak,
Yaccarino

REP. NARDELLO: -- of storm Irene.

Let me give you a little bit of protocol before we get started. For those of you that haven't been here before, and there may be some that have never testified, what you will be doing is I'll be calling your name, you'll be coming to the front, and you will get three minutes to give your testimony. If you have written testimony, I would suggest that if it's longer than three minutes that you summarize it. And at that point after your testimony, the members will be allowed to ask you questions and answers.

So at this point, what I would like to do is I would like to introduce our House Speaker,

Christopher Donovan, for a few words today.

HOUSE SPEAKER CHRISTOPHER DONOVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just like to welcome everybody here for our second hearing on the -- our State's response to Hurricane Irene. I want to thank everybody for coming here. And it's great to hear from the various groups who are coming here today. Thank you very much.

I'd like to say at the outset I want to thank all of the thousands of men and women who worked tirelessly to protect our public safety, help our citizens during this tough time restoring power. We also know that there were problems along the way. It's our responsibility to understand what worked and what didn't, and in terms of how we prepared and how we responded.

I look forward to hearing directly from the residents themselves. We -- they deserve to be heard. And we'll find out in the next few hours what ideas we could have to -- so we can be better prepared for the next event.

I want to thank again the committee members for coming here, listening to the public and others, and formulating a response working with the various institutions that work on energy and other technology, and public safety within our state. So thank you all very much.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you to Speaker Donovan for being here with us this morning. We appreciate all of his help on this, by the way, and because it is the leadership of the House and the Senate that joined with the committees to bring these hearings forward. Thank you.

Can I please have Nick Coscia. He's our first speaker.

NICK COSCIA: Board, and ladies and gentlemen, I am a retired qualified electrician from the power company. Before I -- I think you have -- all have my testimony in front of you up there? I sent all a copy up there so I'm trying to save time so I can be accurate and get right to the point.

I'm a qualified electrician that knows this entire state and switching and tagging. One of the issues that have been brought up about the 16-hour corridor then getting the guy off the job, let me just explain one issue right there. And if you want to throw questions back at me you can.

When you take a qualified person that's on the switching and tagging list off the job and put another person on after a 16-hour period, that means you have to get another person on the switching and tagging list that -- because you're replacing that person to send him home. That will not only slow the job down, number one. Number two, you're taking that qualified person that's been on that job for 16 hours, they can call into the centers, and in turn get the people back in service.

My contention here is -- you've got that letter in front of you so I don't want to waste time and read the whole thing in front of you. You can see what it's about. You can see my qualifications. My whole thing here is safety, education, qualified personnel for a storm. Bring back the retirees, not only for storm duty, but have educational programs, safety, and responsive qualified people with the fire and police and work with the

communities.

Now, you don't wait for a storm to do this. You get people educated ahead of time so that these people will know what's going on prior to a storm. Once every three months, I would suggest, that we work with the communities, the police, the fire, and everybody else that are responsible first responders.

I was in the 1955 flood when this whole state got turned under martial law. And the first thing that they had -- I was 17 years old in the National Guard -- the first thing is we went to the responders. We went to the first responders.

Now, there's times that CL&P becomes the first responder. I don't like to see anybody get killed out there. I was a very, very conscience individual in the safety programs in Northeast Utilities. I support the company. I support my union, but I'm speaking here for myself. I'm speaking with my expertise. And I can stand up to anybody with the last 35 years of service.

You'll see in the front -- that first line there. It says 35 years. There's a little mistake in the front line there, but that doesn't mean anything. I had 35 years of straight time and 6 years of overtime. It gives me 41 years of experience. And I got a lot of my experience being out in the field, running crews for 30 years, and nobody has ever got killed on my job.

Safety is number one. Education is number two. And making -- letting the public -- get the public more informed. And you don't need a thousand phone calls into these service

centers. When I was working at CL&P, we had four divisions in this state. We're lacking permanent help. We need more permanent help, but we need the safety program. And when somebody tells you that we -- you're already doing this, then I say we have to do a better job.

Does anybody want to ask me any questions?

REP. NARDELLO: Yes, Speaker Donovan.

HOUSE SPEAKER CHRISTOPHER DONOVAN: Hi, Nick. Nice to see you again. How are you?

NICK COSCIA: Good, very good.

HOUSE SPEAKER CHRISTOPHER DONOVAN: Yeah. I figured if you did retire in 1958, you started a long time ago, but -- but, Nick, so you talk about use of retirees. So do you know a number of -- were you called in at all during this time?

NICK COSCIA: Well, I could have went through a process. There is a process where the company has it. You can go through it. I did go through it about four years ago.

HOUSE SPEAKER CHRISTOPHER DONOVAN: Okay.

NICK COSCIA: But last year -- I mean, this January, I had open heart surgery, 5-way bypass. And I said, I'd rather work in the office and be an educator in the office. I don't want to go out there and -- but I have enough knowledge. And when I die, all this knowledge goes with me. And you can read all the books you want. You're not going to replace 35 years of experience.

HOUSE SPEAKER CHRISTOPHER DONOVAN: Do you hear of other retirees who wanted to be helpful and they -- they were not able to or --

NICK COSCIA: Well, that -- that's the situation. A lot of the retirees that are my age -- I'm going to be 74 years old -- a lot of retirees my age are either dead, or transferred, or just don't want to come back.

I will come back under a certain condition. And I'm not trying to be a wise guy. I'll come back under a certain condition that I be -- come back as an educator, not when a storm is on, prior to a storm. So I can be in the work centers and see where the weakness is without blaming the company, without blaming the unions, without blaming the public.

We need to use our own sources in this state before we go outside the state and give -- now I understand there's people that came in from out of state. Now, I tested all these buckets. I worked in Berlin. I was in construction, test and maintenance for the company. And here's my picture with 35 years.

HOUSE SPEAKER CHRISTOPHER DONOVAN: Thanks, Nick.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Coscia, I just want to clarify one thing. Are you -- you're suggesting that on a quarterly basis, what we do is we have the retirees do educational programs, based on your experience, to help people prepare for a storm that may come. Is this what I'm hearing you say?

NICK COSCIA: Right. And every storm is different. I mean, we've got ice storms. We've got snow storms. There's -- there's certain areas that we just can't get in there. In the

wintertime, if you need a snow plow, you -- this is when we need public works in the communities to understand some -- the definition of a first responder changes every storm.

I had to go in an ice storm and take four inches of ice off of the -- some of these substations, crack it off, before we could even open the switch. If you open those switches -- and this is why I say, do we need a quarterly training program to let the public understand what we're up against? Ice storms, lightning. Every storm is different. There's not two storms the same.

I was in Storm Gloria. Storm Gloria was a lot worse than this storm. And it took me eight -- I worked in Berlin. It took us eight years to get a lot of our equipment back together. The whole state was full of PCBs, pyrenol and etherol. We had to clean up this whole state. So everything is different. There's not two storms the same. And you got to get qualified people out there.

You bring people in from other states, that's fine. But, you know what? You got to train, you got to bring them on. Now you need a bird dog to go with them. Who's a bird dog? They're using -- they're using people who work in offices, and I'm not knocking that. And when they say they brought out 4,000 people, how many of them 4,000 people were qualified? That I'm very serious about this.

REP. NARDELLO: And I have just one other question. And that is, what are we doing now that you feel has changed that we might want to reevaluate versus what we did before?

NICK COSCIA: Well, first of all, that's a good question. I've been out 18 years. You're losing qualified personnel. You're losing people -- for example, let's say there was a line crew with 25 people out there in a certain area. First of all, we had regions. Every regional superintendent had their own areas, north, east, south and west. That's the first thing that I think is wrong. We have to go back to regionalization.

We have to go back to qualified people in those areas. We have to go back to -- so when there's a storm every supervisor in that area reports to one control center, so you have four people in the centers to report back. These are -- this is where time is being wasted. This is where we have to put things -- and we need our qualified electricians.

Our electricians play -- and linemen, and cable people, and gas. You need our qualified people that are roaming this state every single day to know where to send people from the outside crews.

And I have to make this -- I have to emphasize one thought. When you see line crews out there with two or three people out there, and the public criticizes, they don't understand what's going on.

My grandfather worked in this company. Excuse me. My father worked in this company, and I worked in this company. We got almost 100 years of experience in this family, in this entire company. What's my point? When you see people out there -- when the public sees people out there, and they don't understand how a lineman, or an electrician, or a cable man has to work.

You don't want a cable guy going down into a manhole and not having the thing switched out during a storm or something else, and switching the cable. You're going to blow somebody up and kill somebody.

I've seen firemen go on out there and said, Nick, I'm going down -- this is when I was working -- it's not their responsibility. And I feel sorry for a fireman, too. A fireman is out there. They're in an electrical storm. There's wires going into the house and they're blowing the water onto the house. They hit the wire, the wire comes down and falls on their head. That wire is still --

But there's one thing I learned in the power company. If it's not grounded, it's not dead. People got to remember that. If you don't see any grounds are on there, and you don't know -- now, when the storm is out, they say, oh, well, you're just going to go up there -- no, no, that's not true.

I ran crews for 30 years. If it's not grounded, it's not dead. Number one, for me, was my life, my family, and my -- my crew's life.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Mr. Coscia.

Are there --

Yes. Representative Gentile.

REP. GENTILE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Coscia, thank you for your testimony. I have a couple of questions for you.

Have you ever spoken with the company officials and made this suggestion, or has -- I'm assuming you're a member of a union. Has your union leadership ever made these suggestions to company officials? And if so, what was the response to your -- to those suggestion?

NICK COSCIA: Well, I stated earlier that I'm not here speaking for the company and I'm not here speaking for the union. But what my expertise in the company -- these suggestions have been made before while I was working in the company. And I was on the safety committee. And I know about the safety issues, and I know about the tagging procedures.

And it took me eight -- it took me 15 years to become a qualified electrician to work into a substation. You just don't make an electrician overnight. You've got to -- that's why I say, we need more technical experience for our people that are on board now so we can work with all these communities.

And we need the help of the communities to work with us. We need public works. We need the mayors. I heard a mayor that -- I hate to make this testimony right now but it really gets me upset. I heard a mayor in a certain town, says, when is CL&P going to start getting their lines back in? We had all the lines put back in. It was in Danbury. A state trooper hit the pole and the line goes back out again.

And every line that we take in and we put back out has to be synchronized. It has to be put in properly. It has to switch in and tag. They said there was 800,000 customers out. That thing started from -- excuse me --

started from down in Virginia.

The second thing that was taken out -- because I did all this on the internet. I'm not just up here just talking. The second outage was -- the first outage was in Virginia. The second outage was another transformer that was taken out up the coast. The third outage was -- and the company could correct me on this if they want -- they probably manually took out Millstone so they can take it out.

We have all the relays in this state to protect --

Excuse me, I (inaudible).

We have all the relays in this state to take the equipment out but there's some times you have to manually take the circuits out. So when the qualified -- you'll see it on my testimony there -- you go through ISO. You know, Mrs. Nardello, you and I talked about this before. You start out with ISO.

These major power outages that are happening all over this country and from Canada on down, down to here, is what bothers me, too. We're too tied out. That was biggest argument with deregulation. We talked about that, too. But my argument now is we're tied in all over this, from Canada all the way down to here. Anytime one of those high lines come down, God forbid. You know how many days you can be out? You can be out months.

The Frost Bridge substation blew them up just before I retired. They took the transformer out of Southington, put it in Frost Bridge. You've got to put these things on crane trucks. The public has got to understand

we're not playing with toys here.

Thousands and thousands of tons of equipment and oil, 10,000 gallons of oil have got to be moved around. That's why I want to educate the public, educate the community mayors. Don't play politics with this. Understand, people, that we have to get a better educating program.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Gentile? Are there other questions from members of the committee?

A VOICE: (Inaudible.)

NICK COSCIA: Oh.

REP. REED: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I just -- I'm just trying to get to the bottom line here. So you think the storm would have been handled better if more retirees had come back to help? Well you're talking about a preeducation process, number one.

NICK COSCIA: A preeducation. Right.

REP. REED: And then, if maybe more retirees had come back to help manage the teams who are brought in, who are seeing places, you know, people from Kansas who are seeing places, like, my district, Branford, for the very first time, that would have been helpful.

NICK COSCIA: Right. And the important factor here is you've got to remember, you got to understand this and get this point across. Qualified people that are on switching and tagging procedures, I understand that there's

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a possibility people came out of the state -- out of state, done their own switching and tagging in our state. I don't appreciate that. I don't like that. Because I was qualified to switch out this entire state for every substation in the state of Connecticut. I had to go through school for that with the company. The company trained us to do that. When you bring outside people in, they should be working under our switching and tagging procedures so our people out there don't get killed.

And one other thing, generators. When people are putting generators into the system, you -- they better have a qualified electrician put that into their house, number one. Stop scaring people that you need all these generators all over the place. They had these small invertors that you could plug into your car so you can take care of the elderly and the needy, so you can have a pump for their oxygen and everything. You don't have to go crazy here, now.

We -- we have qualified people. We just don't have enough left.

REP. REED: Thank you for your testimony.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Other questions from members of the committee?

Thank you, Mr. Coscia, for your testimony.

NICK COSCIA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Our next testifier will be Senator Toni Boucher.

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SENATOR BOUCHER: Good morning, distinguished Chairs, ranking members, and other members of the Labor, Public Safety, Planning, Development, Energy and Technology Committees. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony regarding the response to Tropical Storm Irene.

In many ways, Connecticut's response to Irene was strong. The line crews were hailed as the stars of the operation once they arrived and did a phenomenal job. Out towns were also praised for the skill in responding to residents' concern in a commodity distribution. Nevertheless, communication issues between town, state agencies, public utilities made the restoration process slower than might otherwise have been.

A lack of information between public utilities and towns created uncertainty for when schools would reopen, and whether alternative arrangements should be made for the sick in their homes.

Additionally, there was a public outcry when a rate increase was announced in the aftermath of the storm. This was an unfortunate, I believe, communications gap that added to the public anger, which I'm sure many of you probably heard from as well.

This storm demonstrated the need for improvement in response and restoration plans by public utilities as well as in some area -- some of our own state agencies. There are also areas of the emergency management that the Legislature might want to address. I'd like to share with you just some of the recommendations that have been offered by

first responders and ratepayers in my seven towns that were some of the most severely affected -- many of the them 100 percent for a few days -- in hopes that we can strengthen our future ability to respond to emergency situations.

You have the bulk of what I have before you in written form, so I won't go through the entire list but I'll just point out a few of the more important, and then you certainly can read on. And just understand, it is not necessarily that they're all feasible and able to be done, but I'm just providing you with what they told us so that you have it for your records.

Primarily, the public utility issues were about communication problems. The lack of communication and coordination between public utility management and their crews hampered restoration efforts. Better coordination is needed between their upper management and out-of-state crews as well. That delayed it, a bit of it even when the crews were there.

There needs to be better communication between public utilities, police and fire departments, and a plan in place to use for the use of the outside resources. There seemed to be a systematic communication failure between those individuals and also residents, primarily in the accurate information that should have been provided.

There were suggestions that preparations and plannings should be centralized, but the implementation and response should be decentralized more at the local level. I heard that from police and fire quite a bit.

They would like to have public utility

liaisons there, both an operations person and a public information person. Some of the individuals that were provided did not seem to have any training or information. They were just basically there as a place keeper.

They would like them to also have some authority in how to direct, control and command the work crews on the ground to address these issues on a priority basis once they are there in town. Also, some honest communication between the utilities and the individuals themselves so that they can make alternative arrangements should there be an actual length of time.

One of the things that seemed to occur, and I've heard this from a number, was that it seemed that there was at least a two-or-three day delay before things really kicked in gear. And that once they did kick in gear, things went very quickly and very well. It seemed that almost the entire region, our region, was put back up in power in about three to four days period. But that first lag, that two or three days, was not explainable.

There was talk about the fact that public utility crews were only half of what they were 20 years ago and some questioning about the rationale for that, and what has happened in the intervening years, as well as the lack of upgrade in technologies that should have occurred over those 20 years.

There was a thought that why couldn't we somehow have a system that when you get a Fed-Ex package or UPS package you know what every step of the way, where your package is. Why couldn't we have that same sort of communication or technology system in place

that could tell the homeowner or the towns exactly where they were in the restoration process as well.

They also mentioned, and you just had testimony by someone, that maybe we should do a better job certifying state electricians, state tree organizations, and so forth, that could be put in place in emergency situations that would add to the labor pool in a quick fashion.

There were many other issues, a little more controversial, about tree management and the cutting of trees, and also other town issues, State of Connecticut issues. We talked about the failure of the commodity distribution plan. Many of the towns were told that they could -- they would have water at their disposal. When they came to obtain the water, they had 12-hour delays. Some towns had to rent their own tractor trailer trucks to pick them up. So there was a lot of confusion at the state level with regards to commodity distribution.

There were also some great legislative issues, and you can see that in your packet. I don't want to take up too much more of your time. I'm certainly here to answer any questions that you might have regarding some of this feedback that we received by our public.

Thank you very much.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Senator Boucher.

Are there questions from members of the committee?

Seeing none, thank you for your testimony.

SENATOR BOUCHER: Thank you very much.

REP. NARDELLO: Okay. Next we'll have David Roberge.

DAVID ROBERGE: Ladies and gentlemen, good morning. My name is Dave Roberge. I'm the fire marshal and emergency management director for the Town of Old Lyme.

As a public safety professional, I'm here to provide testimony today regarding the performance of CL&P during Hurricane/Tropical Storm Irene.

As a small community down on the shoreline, we run four series of planning aspects or emergency response. One is the preparedness, the response itself, the recovery aspects, and also the mitigation for future plan -- or future removal of hurdles in future planning. Today I'd like to talk about the preparedness of CL&P in response to that storm.

While the storm was still down on the Carolina coast, the Town of Old Lyme was in preparation with their municipal organizations in their community coming up with planning aspects and how they're going to plan on responding.

Our contacts with the Connecticut Light & Power in the New London operations center informed us that the New London operations center was doing the same situation, providing planning aspects, getting crews on notification, planning for outside resources to come in. After numerous conversations with the New London group, we felt confident that CL&P, as a whole, was going to respond very adequately.

Once the storm hit on Sunday, we went into our first response of capability for the first 24 hours. The Town of Old Lyme got devastated pretty good in regards to loss of primary, loss of what they call the backbone of utility feeding into the community, and also extensively with trees down, obstructions on the roadways, and obstructions in general, in regards to all the utilities.

Once the storm passed, CL&P was very slow to get in into the field. We had good conversation with our liaisons or with our account executives within the New London group identifying what they did have available to them and what they were promising, or what they were able to deliver to the town of Old Lyme.

We did manage to get two line crews that afternoon and worked into -- through the evening. Looking at it from hindsight, it would have been nice to have about six line crews, but wishing is not everything.

During our recovery aspects of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, it seemed like Monday morning CL&P was able to get boots on the ground more effectively within the town of Old Lyme. We had very good coverage of line crews and tree crews. And the coordinated effort of the liaison that CL&P provided us was an exceptional performance.

I've heard horror stories from other communities saying that their liaison basically was placed into this position on Friday afternoon. The individual that we had had personal experience of knowing that electricity came out of the wall outlet on

Friday and by Monday was well versed in the distribution backbone and function of the operation to bring primary power into and around the town of Old Lyme.

The presence and coordination of -- with the liaison and also the field super -- supervision teams that New London operations provided us gave us an excellent opportunity to come up with planned objectives, both in the field from the line crews and what they visually felt would come up and how they proposed to restore power at the greatest speed, and also with the objectives that the town of Old Lyme had in regards to our municipality, our special needs, serving the community, and getting commerce back up and getting roads open and cleared.

By Tuesday, the functional capability of what was going on in the community was exceptional. We had very strong support on CL&P line crews and tree crews.

Wednesday there seems to be a disconnect. What we found out through our liaison was there was a change of operation. It seemed like CL&P was shifting horses in the middle of the stream, moving it from a -- an operational base at one location and then going to a base camp operation in another location of the state. So we seemed to have a loss of coordination between what was being accomplished at the beginning of the recovery aspect and what was being performed in that midweek.

It seemed like that was a 24-hour delay on our part -- or on their part to continue with supporting our community's needs. By Thursday morning they were able to be back up and they

were functioning. And whatever we lost on Wednesday, it seemed like the town of Old Lyme was able to recoup and grab a little more on Thursday.

Based upon the rest of the week, looking at it from recovery aspects, the overall operation of the field crews and the field supervision, and the account executives managing information back and forth, and also with the liaison, boots on the ground in my operation center was exceptional.

Lessons learned on all of this, while the liaisons and the municipality workers did an exceptional level in restoration, there seemed to be loss of continuity with the planning and operational end from CL&P's management. There also seemed to be a classic or a very drastic failure in regards to any kind of support or any kind of communication or planning that we might have received, or hoped to receive from AT&T.

Telephone communications are not as strictly held to a little higher standard the way CL -- or electric utilities are. Looking at this, I think that the loss of communications between hardware and our phone systems, cell phone systems, alternate communications with cable, seemed to have slipped through the cracks on this.

While CL&P was being held to a higher standard of function and operation, mutual support between AT&T and CL&P regarding poles, pole ownership, and pole placement and repair seemed to delay extensively into our restoration efforts.

So, in the future, looking at additional

planning, additional planning with the municipality, I know that there was conversation earlier this morning from other people giving testimony saying that there should be more of a coordination effort.

We look at the utility as a partner in public safety. We'd like to be able to sit down and start coordinating better with them in the future, looking at better resources, and being able to see if the utility can provide quicker resources.

I know the storm was a large scale incident. I know it came all the way up the east coast. I know that usually they draw on an isolated storm or an ice storm or a snow storm. Usually they pull from utilities closer by and they begin to work the rings of the circle out. It would have been nice to have more boots on the ground, manpower and equipment prestorm on this. Perhaps some planning on that, and then, again, looking into future communications with the utilities.

The account executive that I have personally with CL&P in New London, she and I talk almost on a weekly basis in regards to coordination and planning and efforts when it comes up to storms and small scale events. I do not have any of that coordination or communication with my electric -- with my telephone utility. AT&T seems to be a myth or a loss out there to try to get answers from or get questions to during a storm of this magnitude.

Other than that, just in closing, I'd like to put emphasis on my account executive, Donna Barbara Dunn, the liaison, Charles Goodwin, and also the line supervisors, I mean, Lee (inaudible), Perry (inaudible) and Tom Bongo.

All these people that did exceptional jobs within the Town of Old Lyme so I think they have to be recognized.

Other than that, the Town of Old Lyme was back up a hundred percent power by Sunday. We're still doing debris and management and dealing with the bureaucracies of the state, unfortunately, in regards to the handling the debris. And looking at some of the other aspects, I wasn't here to provide any comment on DEMHS' response. You know, it seems like other people have had some commodity issues, identifiers or flags that should be addressed, and I think they will be in the future.

In closing, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you and bring these concerns to your awareness.

Any questions?

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

I have one question.

DAVID ROBERGE: Certainly.

REP. NARDELLO: And that is, if you heard the gentleman before you, the suggestion was that there would be quarterly meetings with the towns to do an education process in preparation for any type of storm event, not necessarily one, you know, such as Storm Irene. How do you feel about that? Do you feel that would be helpful to you?

DAVID ROBERGE: I don't know if you put a calendar on it by a quarterly, a six month, a monthly, a weekly. As a public safety responder, we operate under now what's called as the

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National Incident Management System, or NIMS. I know that CL&P has trained on the same type of incident management programming of NIMS. I think CL&P and all the utilities should know that they have a placeholder, they have a marker, within that response structure.

They have their plans written. We have our plans written and developed. I think there should be more coordination and more, either, tabletop training, tabletopping, or exercising on a municipal level with a dedicated or a resource liaison to be able to have -- once my liaison got his boots running, he was able to pick up the speed. It functioned quite well in my community.

I know there were dialogue out there with other communities as they had -- they looked at their liaison just being a placeholder to fill the chair. I think that liaison's position is a very strong and important position to be filled, I believe, on the municipal level. I need somebody to turn to on a CL&P question or a restoration question, be able to turn to that individual and get my information out to them, allow them to go research it and come -- and bring answers back.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much.

Representative Dargan.

REP. DARGAN: Thank you. We know as first responders how important it is for training, and you've just pretty much stated that as far as tabletop and NIMS. And my suggestion was, last week, and you kind of suggested it in your remarks, that all utilities should be invited to the table.

As you're well aware, first responders practice a lot. And I felt that it's important that we incorporate the public utilities and other providers of wireless service to the table. So in the future when regions or towns or cities work together, that they are able to communicate a little bit better with each other to know what problems that we might have, you know, in future events that might come before us within the state.

I also was impressed last week that in my area UI now is going to reach out to each community that they represent to have these conversations to see a better way to communicate. And I suggested that last week to the different utility companies. And I think that will just make a better cohesiveness of communication between first responders, local elected officials within their towns, you, as the emergency management director of your community, that they're able to communicate in a better way.

DAVID ROBERGE: That type of cross training and that type of sharing of information and expertise is important at our level. The last thing you want to do is start handing out business cards and getting to know your fellow responder from the utility or from an outside agency at the point of the incident.

If you properly and effectively plan, train and execute in a controlled environment, the method of response in a real time incident would be more efficient.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Other questions from members of the committee?

Yes, we're going to have Senator Prague and then --

SENATOR PRAGUE: Good morning. I'm -- I just got here and I don't whether this was mentioned beforehand or not, but I was talking to a first responder just yesterday who said he thought there should be some kind of special plans for disabled people. That the first responders in each town should be given somebody to notify about the disabled people in their town and what kind of provisions could be made for them.

They can't go to regular shelters. They, you know, some of them are on oxygen. Some of them are bedridden. Some of them are in wheelchairs. But there should be some kind of consideration by CL&P and AT&T and the first responders in each town should be given a contact person or some plan to deal with those who are disabled.

DAVID ROBERGE: There is some information that is available out there. Speaking for the Town of Old Lyme, we're located in what's called the ten-mile emergency planning zone of the Millstone power station. And because of that, Millstone does annually target all residents within that ten mile circle to do -- to offer the capability of voluntarily registering yourself if you're -- if you feel you have what's called special needs, be it mobility, hearing, electric dependent on an O2 provider, or dialysis, or anything else that have -- if you feel you have special needs, you have the voluntary application to be able to register for that. That information is given back to each of the communities within the Millstone area. Is that statewide? No, it is not.

The Town of Old Lyme and other communities in the area also offer voluntary registration for individuals with special needs. We cycle that out through our correspondence and town mailings and try to get it out in the press as much as possible for people to come forward with.

On the utility side, AT -- or CL&P does also offer a voluntary registration for special needs. If an individual wants to report to the utility that they are oxygen dependent, or what we call a O2 or electrical dependent, they're able to get their name on a list. Unfortunately, with the creation of the individual's privacy act of health insurance or health information, CL&P is not allowed to share that information with anybody on the outside.

If we -- moving forward with this, in trying to get a voluntary registration either at the state level, they're already cycling or running a program. The Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, in regards to special needs registration, maybe taking a look at that application and seeing if it can go statewide, or taking the application that the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security already has in place and offering that out to the municipalities, either through the regional response regions or through offering it directly to each municipality, to allow them to recalibrate the program to their needs to get people to -- to preregister.

During this time of the storm is not the time where I personally and professionally want to find out about someone who has special needs

out there that I was not aware of from the beginning. So the registration and the communication, both from the municipal end, I would recommend that, you know, municipalities continue to start reaching out for these people, and on the special needs side, having these people come forward.

We cannot find them or search for them indefinitely. We have to -- there has to be a two-way communication. If someone is out there who's seeking -- wants to register themselves and get on a list, I'd be more than willing to take that information.

But during our operation, we precalled. When we were doing preplanning, we precalled our 140 preregistered people, made a phone call conversation with them, found out what their plans were. And if we did not speak to them prestorm on Saturday afternoon, prestorm we went door to door.

So depending upon what the municipality, each municipality function is -- I know that in the Town of Old Lyme, we, because of our involvement with Millstone, we practice and we train again with this extensively every year. We did a very strong outreach to our special needs population.

SENATOR PRAGUE: So good for you and for the people in your town. I hope that other towns will follow suit. And thank you very much.

DAVID ROBERGE: You're welcome.

REP. RITTER: Thank you very much.

Generally, in this if you wait long enough other people either ask your questions or

point out the -- some of the points you wanted to make, so I can confine my remarks to just thanking you. I've had the opportunity to work with you for years, particularly with the special needs populations as we drilled and drilled in one of my previous lives.

And I do want to thank you and your community as well. I know we had a lot of challenges down there and I appreciate hearing some of those, those words as we've worked hard for that coordination.

I was taken though. You talked a bit about better coordination with utilities, mentioning specifically AT&T and the landlines. And I think one of the points that's come out to me during this exercise is that we have perhaps got to take a much more aggressive role in moving with current technology and including cell phones and all of the opportunities to communicate that way that we have.

And I was particularly interested in some of the comments last Monday about ways to maybe do that using reverse 911 or some of the other existing technologies that we have. And I wondered if you had any other comments to that point.

DAVID ROBERGE: (Inaudible) of the state's Everbridge Reverse 911 System. It worked very effective -- effectively for our use. We did not buy the add-on municipality piece. We functioned off the state piece. So looking at the speed and timeliness of that, you had 169 towns all of a sudden saying, oh, let's use Everbridge. I do not believe that Everbridge's server capability was ever designed to send out enough phone messages from 169 different sources going out to the

mass population of the AT&T master list.

Did the system work? Yes, it did. Did it work delayed? Yes, it did. We ran Everbridge notifications at one o'clock, three o'clock, five o'clock and seven o'clock on Saturday giving out recommendation of voluntary evacuation, where to call, setting up call numbers. We used the system repetitively.

Because of the backlog of the design of their system, people were still getting our messages that went out at three o'clock in the afternoon. They were receiving them at nine, ten, eleven o'clock at night. So, if there was improvement to do on reverse 911 -- increase the server capability or the functionality of the design system so it can handle that massive flow of information. And secondly, make it a little more affordable for the municipalities to buy into and we could support it more locally than we would, utilize it more than we do now.

REP. RITTER: Good. Thank you. I appreciate that. And I guess I might invite you to forward any other thoughts to those points. I'm on the Energy Committee, and I think some other people here might be interested in that as well, particularly around the reality of accomplishing that.

Because a lot of my constituents came to me and talked about the frustration of getting their messages, landline messages through the reverse 91 -- you know, the day after their power came back and it wasn't too helpful to them. So appreciate that.

DAVID ROBERGE: One of the things that we recognize is without the strong tie that electrical

power has for everybody, if you lose power, you lose, eventually you lose everything.

We always focused on the high-tech version of communicating back and forth between phone lines, cell, text, Internet, web-based, websites, electronic newspapering, and trying to use that information on a daily basis. With the loss of the power grid -- and recognizing we had to go low-tech very quickly, paper flyers, getting communication out, going door to door and sharing information.

And one of the biggest advantages that people could have in the communities at large would be able to start preregistering their -- themselves, either as -- going back to the other individual's questions on special needs, coming forward and getting these people to register and alerting the municipality that here we are. And also providing multiple means of communication or avenues that we can turn to to contact you, landline phone systems, cell phone systems, cell texting capability now, Internet capability.

By Tuesday, we were looking into areas of communication through the social media networks that, two weeks ago, I would say I would never even thought of using. Only because these, these social media avenues out there are so popular with individuals, you can take your stream and the information that we had to get out by taking it from what's functioning and what's not. Well, landlines are not but texting is. And we went with the social media sites, and we went on the other direction all the way down to handing out pieces of paper at municipal -- or at commerce and commercial areas as they opened up.

REP. RITTER: Thank you very much.

DAVID ROBERGE: You're welcome.

REP. RITTER: Appreciate that.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Roberge.

DAVID ROBERGE: Thank you very much.

REP. NARDELLO: And next we have Barbara Henry.

Is Barbara Henry here? If not, we're going to move on to Paul Roy.

PAUL ROY: Thank you, Madam Chairman, and committee for allowing me to speak today. I did not provide any written testimony, but I would like to address some of the issues that affected the town of Seymour. I am the first selectman of the Town of Seymour.

When the hurricane hit, the town of Seymour was left with 80 percent of the community without power. By Wednesday, we were back up to 97 percent online. And I spoke quite frequently with our CL&P rep. And in our preparation, he, you know, advised us that the best thing that our community could do would be to make sure that the roads were cleared. So I stressed that with my public works department.

My public works department went in at ten o'clock on Saturday night, worked straight through the storm until three o'clock on Sunday afternoon and was back in at 6 a.m. on Monday morning, worked another ten hours. By the time they were done on Monday, all the roads in Seymour were cleared.

One of the important things about how my public works crew was able to do that, that they, they have a tool that can tell them if the wires that the trees and the limbs -- were entangled in and are live or not. So if they're live, they don't -- know they shouldn't touch it. We have to wait for CL&P to come and turn that power off, or if they could go ahead and do the work they needed to do. I think that was a very important piece of equipment that our public works department has.

Also, the emergency management director of my community is a volunteer, as is the fire department and the ambulance and EMTs -- did a tremendous job of coordinating everything. We do have monthly meetings with our emergency management director and our committee to make sure that things are run smoothly.

And some of the other issues, some of the other things we did that made everything run smoothly was that we do have the (inaudible) system in Seymour and we used it 11 times. Yeah. Granted, some folks weren't able to get the messages right away, but most of the folks got it and thanked us for using the system so many times. We also did use some of the social media. We got stuff out on Twitter, and people did receive that, those messages that we did send out.

So I think that the important thing, though, is that CL&P responded very well to Seymour. And I think they did it because my public works crew was able to make sure that the roads were clear so these guys can get in and do their job.

We're not the biggest community in the state by any means, but we do have 91 miles of road, but I only have 16 employees and three of them were out on compensation, so I was down to 13.

So I just have to say the I believe that because we were able to respond in the way we did, because CL&P told us what we needed to do to make our community better prepared for this storm -- went a long way.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Are there questions from members of the committee?

Yes, Senator Prague and --

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

That's very interesting that you have a tool that your town crew can use which indicates whether the wires that are down are -- is that a very expensive tool? Was that --

PAUL ROY: And I couldn't tell you exactly how much it cost, but I do know it does belong to our fire departments. And, of course, we do share between the departments like that in town. And they need it, obviously, for when they respond as well to fires. But I couldn't even tell you the cost of the item, but I know that they told us they couldn't have done what they did without having that, that tool.

SENATOR PRAGUE: That's very interesting because of all the municipalities that have come forth to testify, nobody mentioned the availability of that kind of a tool, which seems to me it is really -- it's incredibly helpful.

I know that one of the towns in my district, if there's a fire and there are wires down and they have to wait for CL&P to come, not only a fire but an accident.

PAUL ROY: Uh-huh.

SENATOR PRAGUE: It becomes a problem. So you're mentioning this tool is really good news.

PAUL ROY: Uh-huh.

SENATOR PRAGUE: And I'm certainly going to bring that back to my towns. I'll bet everybody on this hearing panel will bring it back to their towns. And even if it is expensive, towns could share it. How long have you had that tool?

PAUL ROY: I believe probably about two years. Not -- it's not, you know, very old. It's something fairly new that they've added to our department.

SENATOR PRAGUE: How about that? Well, thank you very much for that information.

PAUL ROY: You're welcome. And if I might add, when we -- power was restored to Seymour, CL&P did notify us, or they did coordinate through us what we needed done first. We, obviously, went to -- right to our senior housing. And they were back online very quickly, and then into the firehouses and the police department, and downtown area and the schools, so that -- and I know people will hear it said that they didn't know what to do with their school schedules. But we know -- we knew when our schools were going to be going back online.

And I had a good coordination with our CL&P

rep, as did our emergency management director. We were the only two folks that were allowed to talk to this person. And I think by keeping down the number of phone calls to your service rep went a long way to being able to communicate with these people.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Jutila.

REP. JUTILA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Senator Prague actually asked most of my questions already. I was also interested in this device that would allow the local officials to determine whether or not the wires were hot or not. And I can tell you that I was a volunteer firefighter for many years, but that was many years ago and we didn't have anything like that then. We always had to wait for the power company to come to secure the lines and I thought that was still the case.

And the only other question that I would have about that device would be, do you know what kind of special training is required in order to be able to use it?

PAUL ROY: Again, I couldn't tell you for sure but I do know that, you know, our fire department does have their regular drills and they actually trained our public works department folks how to use it as well. And they do -- they go through all this on their regular drills, their weekly drills.

As many of these folks said, you know, their people drill, but this is part of their training to know and how to use this tool to

determine if a wire is hot or not.

REP. JUTILA: Okay. Thanks again.

PAUL ROY: You're welcome.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much for your testimony.

PAUL ROY: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: We're -- do we have --

I'm sorry. Representative Greene had a question.

REP. GREENE: Thank you.

Thank you, Paul for coming up here. It's good to see you testifying at this hearing.

I actually -- I had one quick question. A previous testifier mentioned a program that has been implemented by Millstone, I believe it was, that actually allows individuals to register if they have specific special needs for disasters such as what we've seen in the last few weeks here.

I was wondering what your experience was with regard to trying to locate -- your experience and also the emergency service personnel in town. Did you have trouble finding out who actually needed help the most? Or, you know, was it an influx of phone calls to town hall or the emergency operations center? I mean, what was your experience with that?

PAUL ROY: Well, actually, the emergency operations center did handle the bulk of the calls. Prior to the storm, we generated the best list

that we could of disabled folks. And we did have a good listing of those in case we needed to move them. We did have an emergency shelter ready if we needed it. We actually did have to use it for a few hours because of some flooding on the Naugatuck River.

But all the calls were coming -- were directed to our emergency operations center. We had designated people just to handle those calls. And, you know, they -- then they would get off to -- whether it be the ambulance folks or the fire department or the public works who needed the -- to be informed of what that conversation was. So we -- but we did -- we were able to generate a list ahead of time of the disabled people, as folks said here, it would be a good idea.

Did we have all of them? Probably not. But we had a good number of them. And it's because of the communications through our emergency folks who, on our first code red call that went out, we asked for people to let us -- notify us of people that would be disabled. And we did get quite a good response from that so we knew where we would have to go if there was a -- that meeting.

REP. GENTILE: I guess as a quick follow up, you know, in your opinion as a, you know, a local municipal leader, do you think it would be more helpful if we started a program such as this, if we were to actually pursue this, if it was actually a regional, local, state? Who do you think would be more effective at actually running that type of a list and taking care of it?

PAUL ROY: I'd probably be happy to be a local thing, I think, because, you know, a storm

like this, I mean, you can't depend on someone from a, you know, a region to come and take care of your community. So I think it would have to be more of a local thing.

And again, I know that -- and as well as you know -- that the crew that we have in Seymour is very proactive in training and communication with the citizens in Seymour. So I think it would be pretty easy for our emergency folks to make sure that that list is maintained, you know, on a regular basis.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much.

PAUL ROY: You're welcome.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

Next we'll have Tim Griswold.

TIM GRISWOLD: Madam Chairman, good morning, members of the committees.

I'm the first selectman of the Town of Old Lyme. And the Town of Old Lyme is pleased to report that our level of satisfaction with the local resources of CL&P are good. I think one of the things that helped us out in large part is the fact, as it was alluded to earlier, that we're part of the emergency planning zone around Millstone. So we have lots of training with respect to Millstone which helps us in other regards.

I would say that one of the very important things is the liaison person from a municipal standpoint. We have our local emergency management, fire, police, et cetera, in our emergency center. But by having the CL&P liaison, that's really very important.

In our case, the gentleman was there at 7 a.m. He went out and met with the crews, came back and told us exactly what they're doing. And then we tried to communicate with the upstream, which was less successful, but got better as time went on. And then he'd go back out in the afternoon and have another update and come back and give us that information. And in that fashion, we were able to logically develop a restoration plan for electricity within the town.

The local crews, I think, as much as possible, it would be very helpful to have the continuity of the crews. If you have crews coming in and leaving, it's like any job. You lose. You don't have that continuity of information. In our case, we had a couple of outstanding crew leaders and they worked in our town for pretty much the whole storm. So they knew the problem spots, they corrected them, and then they were able to move on the next.

I will make one mention. We had a community that was really -- a section of roads that were really badly impacted down near the water. And they were restoring that power finally. And because the crew leader could not have the crew work beyond the requisite hours, he personally went to ten houses that were not going to be connected, knocked on their doors and said, we're sorry, but we'll be back tomorrow morning and get you going again. So I think it's that kind of commitment by the staff that really made people very pleased.

I think as we look to the future, it was mentioned, training. If we do a good job at

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training for nuclear disasters, which I daresay are pretty infrequent, I think we should spend more time training for natural disasters. This storm was huge. It was what? A hundred and -- 600 miles wide so it impacted the whole Atlantic coast and all of our neighboring states. So, of course, it's going to be difficult to get crews to respond as quickly as if it was a local thing. So by having training on the same level as the Millstone training, involve AT&T and the like.

One thing that was really ironic, we -- one of our primary circuits was badly impacted by trees that broke a pole. Well, the pole was an ATT pole. The CL&P crew was there ready to restring the wires, but they had to wait for ATT to come bring a pole.

Now, I daresay, we're doing pole replacement in town. There were bunches of poles all over the place. Somebody could have picked up a pole and plopped it in that hole and we would have had service a lot faster. But because it's such a difficult -- I don't know what the problems are -- but in this kind of a declared emergency, one would hope that those sort of rules could be thrown out and the pole could be erected and things could go on.

Now, the State of Connecticut does have a notification system that persons can register with and often, it is your home telephone number. As was mentioned, if you don't have power, a lot of these phones don't work. Like, the old phones were -- some of us are used to -- you used to pick it up and it worked, but now, with the electronic charging and all that, they don't.

So you can register with the State of

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Connecticut and provide them with alternate phone number, cell phones, either electronic devices, and so forth. So that at least that's another notification system. I know personally I was contacted by CL&P saying, if you're power is back, don't bother to call, that sort of thing, which is helpful. At least you feel that they know you're out there.

I might say, with respect to special needs, we also have our Meals on Wheels program. And we go around to probably 20 people in town who need help from that standpoint. So these Meals on Wheels folks are extra ambassadors. We even gave them meals ready to eat. Now, it might have been a challenge for them to take apart the package and make it work, but at least that was another way of contacting folks.

And so, I think as was mentioned, if we had a statewide program to encourage people to register -- and it should be done locally because it's not going to do any good to have a big database in Hartford and depend on that. You need to have your local people taking care of that.

But -- and it would helpful to have somebody who needs help to give you the name of somebody who could help us work with those people because if they're unable to function well, that that's an issue.

And there was certainly a great reluctance. We had four towns using the East Lyme's middle school as a shelter. And I think there were something like 83 people actually used that shelter, which is pretty, pretty low turnout for the shelter. Now, the shelter would have

food, water, showers, even you could bring your dog and cat. So that was a bonus.

But I think people are tenacious and want to stay with their homes and this storm wasn't as bad as we thought it would be. But getting people to go to a shelter where they're going to be safe, and they will have medical personnel able to help them, we have to do better at -- we did call. We called 140-some-odd people asking them -- or requesting that they should consider relocating, but really many of them did not. And some of them were dependent on their machines with batteries. And if a tree fell over the road, and the battery ran out, what would happen? So you can't force them. You can ask them.

So I think that in balance the experience with CL&P, in particular was good in Old Lyme. And I think this is a wake-up call for us so that we need to do more training with respect to the natural disaster, similar to the way we do it with the nuclear disaster.

I thank you for your time.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

Are there questions from members of the committee?

Yes, Senator Witkos.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Many people keep referring to training. And I just want to make sure I have a good understanding of what you mean by training. Somebody spoke earlier about the

qualifications and the certification. And I think that every single person that arrives in our state to do the work following a natural disaster, or in this case a storm, is qualified and is trained to do the work.

I think that the issue surrounded communication and the coordination of effort versus a training issue. And I just want to make sure. Am I correct in my thought process? Or do you think that there's actually training that needs to be done versus a coordination of effort?

TIM GRISWOLD: Well, certainly the professionals such as the ATT personnel or CL&P, they would be trained. I'm talking about presenting communities in a tabletop exercise with a situation where, as we do with the nuclear, things happen and then you have to react to them. And so we could do it through the -- we have five DEMHS regions within the State. You could work through that or do it in a more local way, but pose a situation where a natural disaster occurred and then roads are closed, electricity is down. What do you do?

This would be mainly for the local people, I would say the volunteer fire and ambulance and the elected folks. So that -- and then involve, through the armory over here, all the upstream so that we could say once a year do some sort of a training exercise that would simulate this kind of an event so that we aren't caught flat-footed where we can't get information or it will open up the flows of communication.

So I think people have the skills. It's just putting it together and having it happen properly. And when you go into a real life

situation, if you've done this two or three times in a form of a drill you will be better prepared.

SENATOR WITKOS: In our testimony package we got some testimony from somebody who participates from the Office of Consumer Counsel and how they felt that they always weigh, in a rate case, the requests from the utilities; whether they have enough manpower or boots on the ground, if you will, if they have enough money for their tree trimming cycle. And the testimony has been that they weigh that with the cost of electricity. The cost of electricity.

And we hear more often about how high the cost of electricity is in the state of Connecticut. And only now, because of we had an event, are people complaining about they didn't go fast enough. And I think there's a delicate balance to make sure that we meet the needs of the folks on a daily basis and for those limbs that may come down and knock down a wire or a transformer or a pole, accidents, that it's a standard or a time that people can respond to and fix, versus let's make sure that we have too many people on the payroll to address these one-time events that happen and we reach out to mutual aid context to get folks in here.

And how would you describe your experience with the folks that, in your communities, with the number of personnel? And I don't want to talk about the lack of coordination because I understand there was a lack of coordination. We heard that from the mayors and first selectmen last week. But in your view did you see the number of people, once they got into your communities, able to address the needs of

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the communities and getting the power back on and the other utilities?

TIM GRISWOLD: Yes. Once we had the requisite number of crews I think things went very well. I can imagine that should CL&P and others have staged crews in the state of Connecticut on Friday and Saturday and then the storm turned out to be a bust everybody would be screaming that they blew millions of dollars bringing these people in because you just don't fly them in. You have to have trucks and all the stuff that goes with it.

So I think that we have to be cognizant that there is a delicate balance. Tree trimming is another thing. I know along Route 1 in East Lyme they had trimmed trees and they're all -- they look like a poodle. You know, they're all shaped up, but if you have a big storm, if that tree is taller than the wire it's going to hit the wire.

So unless you clear back 200 feet or something to prevent trees from falling on the wires I think we have to realize this doesn't happen that often and it's going to be an inconvenience and we're going to have power outages.

And so if we prepare and leave town such as the coastal areas and so forth, in a week things will be better. I don't think we can promise everybody the juice is going to be back on in a couple of days. And Lord knows, we've had a lot of hurricanes over the years and it's just a fact of life. So we have to live with the fact if we try to promise that we'll get everything turned on quickly that's just unrealistic and the costs won't be a good trade off.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you very much and I appreciate that. You know, I think sometimes we get to the point where we really have to suck it up a little bit. You know, we can't control mother nature. We prepare for the worst. We get the folks in here to start doing the job. Maybe we have to do a little better of communication in sending out how the work orders, but it just takes time and we have to (inaudible) with that.

Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Senator Guglielmo.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thanks for coming up. Just a comment more than a question. You brought up a lot of the things that we've all discussed here the last Monday and this Monday. They're going to be hard to fix. Like you said, these storms don't come along very often. If you're prepared for the worst case and you're -- the rates would be even higher than they are now so you'd have conflict.

But the one thing I think you mentioned that could be addressed relatively easily -- and I heard it from the first selectman in my area was the coordination between AT&T and CL&P and the other utilities on the pole. I mean, you shouldn't have to wait for AT&T to come if it's an AT&T pole.

In an emergency like this that seems like one

of the things that -- and I know the other representatives of CL&P and AT&T in the audience -- and I hope that's one of the things they take to heart and iron out, because I heard stories like the one you told, where a CL&P crew came out to one of the small towns I represent, waited for AT&T. AT&T didn't -- wasn't able to get out. They then left and it was another full day before they got back on. So that's one of the ones -- one of the layups we ought to take care of.

Thank you. Thanks for coming up.

TIM GRISWOLD: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Senator Prague.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

You mentioned the liaison that you have with CL&P -- and by the way, it seems to me that what happened to Seymour would be the envy of all the towns in this state. Their power was back in two days.

And you have this liaison. Is this a person that you're in touch with all year round or was this somebody just assigned to your town for this hurricane?

TIM GRISWOLD: Senator, this person was assigned to us. I don't think he knew he would be assigned, but the fact is he lives in town, which was a bonus. And so that he had a little more proprietary interest in helping us out perhaps than if he was from afar, plus he could get there easily.

But I think that's a good point. I think we should have a liaison assigned to the towns,

maybe on an annual basis so that we knew who they are. They knew who we are. They can come and do a meet and greet. They might even participate, in our case, with the nuclear drill of some sort, but -- so that we aren't just shaking hands the day after the storm.

I think that having them up on station the day before, two days before so they can participate -- because we did work with East Lyme and Waterford and other towns in a regional sense to prepare for before the storm and if we had our respective liaisons that would have been a bigger help, and someone from AT&T because we had no representation from them. That's just the way it worked out.

SENATOR PRAGUE: I think the fact that you've mentioned that is really a plus. I agree with you that something there should be put in place so that you know who your liaison is. The liaison knows the town; perhaps could come a town meeting and meet people. And when emergencies arise they knew who to contact.

TIM GRISWOLD: It would be very helpful.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Jutila followed by
Representative Boukus.

REP. JUTILA: Thank you.

Greetings from neighboring East Lyme, Tim, and thank you for coming up and giving your testimony today.

Before we had the hearing last week I sat down

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with your neighboring officials from East Lyme, with the first selectman, the public works director and the emergency management director and they gave me a lot of information and they also made some suggestions.

And one of the suggestions was that as part of the preplanning for a major storm like this, that CL&P identify -- or whatever the public utility is in the area -- identify two crews with specific numbers of personnel for each crew, both a line crew and a tree-cutting crew because that was a big problem in the two towns that I represent, that coordination particularly.

And that they be established in advanced as part of the preplanning and they go to that area immediately, you know, when they're able to and then size up the situation and then redeploy from there depending upon where they're needed. They may need more crews in a particular town and may need less or maybe not any crews in some towns that are not hit at all.

Any thoughts on a suggestion like that from you?

TIM GRISWOLD: Yes. That would be ideal, as our emergency management director (inaudible) mentioned, having the crews know where the stations are, where the primary routes come from in the town. If they had the charts that showed how all that stuff works then they would be a lot faster out of the starting block than if they just showed up Monday morning. So if that were possible, that would be good.

I don't know what other constraints there are

for these crews ahead of time, but certainly being -- having that knowledge before the event would be very good and they could work with the emergency management director so that they could say, okay. We want to get our primaries to get our areas of commerce. Instead of saying, well, where are the areas of commerce? They would know right from the maps where the wires come and so forth.

So that anything in the way of preplanning would be good. The question is, would they be available? Would the utility be able to deploy them in such a fashion? It would be great if they could.

REP. JUTILA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Boukus.

REP. BOUKUS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good morning. Please help me. You have a pole in your neighborhood. Can you ascertain if it's an AT&T or a CL&P or can the regular person know who's pole it is?

TIM GRISWOLD: Yes. Each pole has these little metal decals that are nailed into the pole. And it says, CL&P, SNET and all that stuff. So yeah. They belong to each company.

And so under normal circumstances if a pole needs replacement because of age or whatever, it's the responsibility of that company to replace that pole, but I think what we're hoping is that if there were a bad storm maybe we even have an inventory of poles in town so that we don't have to try to get a truck in

from somewhere, wherever they come from. And they would be prestaged, if you will. And whichever company is on the spot they would make that replacement.

As I understand it the electric has to go first, cable -- I mean phones and cable after that. So if they are standing there with all this equipment trying to get our primary and they're waiting, it's very shortsighted.

REP. BOUKUS: So what happens is, is if the CL&P people get there first and they find out it's an AT&T, they just have to sit there until --

TIM GRISWOLD: Well, hopefully they'll do something else, but it could hold up the show.

REP. BOUKUS: It can hold up the show. I had a situation in nearby Bristol. The Mayor -- a building was falling into the river and he called the department of -- the DEEP and talked to the commissioner. And they made a decision right then and there.

And it seems to me that under these circumstances they should be able to be able to make a decision as to what can be done at that time, but I don't know enough about it and I'll learned as the process goes through.

TIM GRISWOLD: Senator, you said it. It should be a layup to get this part through.

REP. BOUKUS: Absolutely.

The other thing that you mentioned was the situation where your liaison was within your town and we know that's not feasible for just everyone. But I said this the other day and it caused a great deal of stress to some

people, and that's when the customer, the regular person gets on the phone and calls and ends up in the Philippines or India and you can't find Connecticut. It's very, very frustrating.

So in situations like that, we're under emergency, at least we should be able to have all calls going to someone that knows where, you know, (inaudible) happening so the frustration levels can be lowered.

But we thank you for what you do. And for friends I have who live in Old Lyme, they thank you for what you do also.

TIM GRISWOLD: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Thank you for coming today. My area has many of the same experiences your Old Lyme has. I was very jealous you got your Route 1 up and running much sooner than we did up in Madison and Guilford. I went up there to shop.

TIM GRISWOLD: Thank you.

REP. KOKORUDA: I wanted to ask you what you thought of the State's response as far as helping you during the storm, the aftermath of the storm. What we could do better and what you thought of it.

TIM GRISWOLD: I think the State did a reasonably good job. I think, though, that honestly my personal opinion is that the Town was working

within its borders and with its neighbors,
with the utilities and so forth.

We ultimately went up to Rentschler Field to get our materials and as some have said, there were some snafus with that. Ice was a huge problem. We ran out of ice really fast and we were unable to identify ice. We finally had a source, but probably longer than it would otherwise -- it should have taken.

So -- and oddly we had a lot of meals ready to eat on hand. If you'd like a few we could ship some down. But we can't -- I guess we can't bring them back, which seems to me wasteful. I should think they could go back.

But nevertheless, I think when things got going they worked pretty well, but my personal opinion is I think we were handling things ourselves and the state involvement, they had the updates and all that, but we didn't -- I don't think (inaudible).

If somebody needed to clarify something, certainly Doug the weather guru was helpful in the beginning in terms of the other (inaudible) conferences. I kind of glazed over (inaudible).

REP. KOKORUDA: You know, my area experienced the same thing with the ice and the whole Rentschler Field things. And one of our issues was small towns don't have big trucks, whatever, just to get to Rentschler.

And one of our suggestions was some regional spots that you could really pick up the water and ice which is what we needed the most up in -- well, we actually had to go to a private business and fortunately he volunteered a

couple trucks to go up.

But I just think if it was regional -- that's what we felt. It was just very hard for -- especially the condition of our towns to get to Rentschler Field. And even when we got there I don't think there was ice there. It was the water and the ready-to-eat meals, but it was the same experience. So thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: (Inaudible) for participating.

Regional, one of the questions that came up last Monday involved regional participation. We, right now have a system, quote, in place where 169 cities and towns, chief elected officials, citizens and so on are all calling all of the phone companies, cell phone companies, utility companies and so on.

We've had five homeland security regions where we've spent millions of dollars in training in all of our districts. I think one assumption we've made right along unfortunately is that the power was on. Because I've been to several of these and that, that was an assumption, that everybody could communicate. That's something we have to look at.

But I'm just wondering from an effective point of view if we had those five regions as an example where the regional call areas, if we had a grid from the utility companies, if we had, in each of those regions, that dedicated person from AT&T and from the utilities and so on and somebody to deal with citizen complaints; I just think it could be a lot

more effective as opposed to all of our individual towns trying to call individually.

Do you think something like that could work with the kind of training? We've seen training in the past.

TIM GRISWOLD: Well, certainly the DEMHS zones are already geared up for these kinds of emergencies and so logically that could work very well. I think it would be great to bring together the group and talk it through.

Because certainly the areas receive funding. I think it's about a million dollars apiece for -- and it's been deployed on different capital -- I don't think any of the towns take their individual contribution. They're all pooled and some bigger things can be done that way.

So there are meetings where our group is in Colchester. And so there the emergency management directors attend and the first selectmen and mayors are invited. So that could be a good conduit to discuss the issue and see if we could come up with things similar to the goods and services, you know. If you had your water and so forth, in a regional sense, you could go to that place.

So I think it certainly would be a good place to start and see where it takes us.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thanks.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

We are into the last hour of the hearing so I do want to just tell people that we are going to really try to stick to the three minutes of

testimony as you come up. And if everybody will keep that in mind as well so we can try very hard to stay on schedule, recognizing that we want to give everybody the opportunity to speak.

Our next speaker is James McGaughey.

JAMES MCGAUGHEY: Good morning, Representative Nardello and members of the committees. For the record my name is Jim McGaughey. I am the executive director of the Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities.

I've submitted written testimony, which I certainly won't read. It goes into a good deal more detail than the points I need to make this morning, but I just wanted to explain a little bit that our office, even though we focus on disability rights issues, we became very involved in emergency response planning following the Hurricane Katrina event in Louisiana. And pleased it came from our colleagues in that part of the country about how poorly people with disabilities had fared in that particular disaster and how important it was to get involved with emergency management planning in our particular state.

So we've worked with a lot of other disability groups here in Connecticut and a lot of individuals. And basically we think we've done a fair job of trying to influence some of the statewide planning that's gone on.

There are two consistent messages that we have promoted, the first being that community demographics have really changed over the last 30 years. We have a lot more people who are getting older and have age-acquired

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disabilities and living in their homes. There are a lot of younger people with disabilities who are living independently in various kinds of supports.

There are families raising children with significant disabilities as members of their families. A lot of these folks would have previously, 30 years ago, been in institutions. We don't have those kinds of institutions now.

And all of our emergency planning efforts have to take this demographic into consideration. The old paradigms of having a large general population and figuring out a small number of so-called special needs people just don't work anymore.

The other message that we've been promoting is to people with disabilities themselves, to families, and that is, prepare yourselves. Have a plan, lay in some supplies and don't expect that help is going to get to you real quickly in the event of some kind of a widespread disaster. I think we need to do a little refining on that message based on the experience that we saw with Tropical Storm Irene.

But for the most part I think that the good news is that for some folks that message has gotten through. And we did an informal survey over the last couple weeks in our office and we had about 30 responses from people, many of whom did indicate they did have plans and that they fared reasonably well in spite of the fact that power was out. It seems as though there the quality of experience depended largely, as it did for most people in Connecticut, on how long you were without

power in your particular community.

The warning communications initially were quite good. I got comments from the deaf community about how much they appreciated that when the Governor spoke from the emergency operations center there was a sign language interpreter on screen standing right by, that that was really important. But for a lot of people who are hard of hearing, and that includes a lot of seniors, there needs to be captioning as well as having a sign language interpreter and that happened initially as well from the emergency operation center, but from the television stations as the event unfolded and more and more remote people were reporting from remote locations, the captioning sort of fell off and that was confusing to folks. So, you know, there was good news. Families did rally together.

There are four main things I think we can learn from this event. First there's been a lot of discussion this morning about registration, about registering yourself. There is a lot of confusion about how to do that. Towns have different ways of doing it, different people to register with. Some people think that because they registered for the Everbridge CT alert, that they're also registered for the Town's version of reverse 911, if in fact, the Town has one.

There's issues about who do you call at the power company to let them know that you have special needs. There's a lot of confusion. To the extent that we're able to consolidate the process and make it simple and straightforward will be -- that will be a major improvement.

And I might add that there's a lot of issues amongst emergency managers about this because it's costly to maintain registration lists. You have to update them periodically. It's not something where it's -- it's kind of like those old tot-finder stickers that fire departments used to issue. They don't have those out anymore because there's a lot of houses that have them and there aren't any tots there anymore. So it's like how to keep that information updated is important.

Second, we need to involve human service agencies and home health agencies more in the local planning exercises. There's some examples in the written testimony that I gave of situations where particularly home health care, home health agencies had made very good plans and were taking very good care of people, but the local officials didn't know about it and the home health agencies didn't know who to call to report that they couldn't get through certain roads and so -- but it just was like two separate worlds that need to be included -- where that has happened, as in the evacuation zone around Millstone. It's worked very well. So there's something that can be improved upon.

The last two points are I think we really need to make an effort to ensure that our shelters are universally accessible. Our office has done a lot of work on promoting that concept. The Federal Emergency Management people have issued guidelines on it. The Department of Justice has sued municipalities for failing to do it. And there's a lot of good programmatic reasons why it needs to happen.

I notice that in the advertisements of shelters that were open, municipal websites

and so forth, there was only one that I'm aware of that said it was accessible. One of the reasons people are reluctant to leave is they're not sure that the shelter is going to be a good place for them. The other reason they're reluctant to leave if they don't know if they're going to be able to go back home.

We have a lot of seniors who are afraid that they're going to get put into nursing homes. You have a lot of younger people with disabilities who dedicate their lives to staying out of nursing homes. The last thing you want is a plan that that shelter is going to close in three days. And if your power is not back on in your house, you're going to go to a nursing home.

I am aware of one location where that was the plan. Fortunately power was restored in those people's neighborhood in time so they didn't have to go to nursing homes. But that's -- a universally accessible shelter is very important.

And the last point I would make is just that I think we need to rethink our assumptions about sheltering in place. Most of the scenarios that apply in Connecticut will be shelter in place scenarios for people that are expected to stay home, they're encouraged to stay home, but we're telling them they need three days worth of water and nonperishable food. That encourages people to think that the (inaudible) that their planning window is three days.

And so I think that we've seen from this experience that it's going to take a lot longer than three days. In some places we need to make more specific recommendations to

people and that will help inform their decisions as to whether they do stay home or they evacuate and go to a public shelter.

That's pretty much the summary of what's in my written testimony. And if there are any questions I'll try and answer them.

REP. NARDELLO: Can you tell just me are -- do the HIPPA rules impede you ensuring information as you should to get -- make sure everybody has the same information?

I thought that there were special exemptions to this, to these rules under certain circumstances. So can you please tell me if that's a problem for you?

JAMES McGAUGHEY: Well, it's not a problem for me, but the exemptions do apply in the event of the emergency. The information can be shared once it's been declared an emergency. The problem is that even on the voluntary registration process it's confusing to people.

They think -- the State has a couple of different 911 related registration processes, one of which just simply is for -- it's what they call enhanced 911. So if you called 911 from your house, at the 911 call center, if you had registered yourself as somebody who, say, had a mobility disability, that would -- that fact would come up on a screen and the dispatcher could tell the ambulance crew or the fire department who was responding to your call, by the way, there's somebody in that location that has a disability. That has nothing to do with CT Alert System where you actually call those. That's a separate registration.

If the Town has its own registration process, that's a third one. If the power company is saying, there's a way to register with them, that's a fourth one. A lot of times the person who's actually registering people is not the individual himself or herself. It's some social service agency or family member. So when those entities call back a year later to see if the registration is still valid, people don't know who's calling or why.

So there needs -- I think we need to solve the voluntary registration process before we get into the issue about who, you know, whether the information is shared. As long as it's kept confidential and there is actually -- there is special statutory authority for DEMHS to maintain the telephone records as confidential. That was fixed -- I think a year or two ago there was some legislation that went through on that.

So there's -- HIPPA itself is -- it can be -- you can work around it, I guess is what I'm saying.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Other questions from members of the committee?

Yes, Senator Cassano.

SENATOR CASSANO: Thank you, Jim.

There's been several references to persons with disabilities this morning, but I've been waiting for you. I've read your testimony a couple of times here, your line, prepare yourself in an emergency. I think probably about some high percentage, too high percentage of all people were not prepared.

A couple of questions -- I want to follow up on HIPPA. Listening to you and listening to local officials and so on, it's a tragedy that we haven't clearly defined what the restrictions are. If I go from visiting nurses, I'm told -- as a visiting nurse, I'm told they can't give your Joe's name who is bedridden. And so we can't go to them or they can't go to us. There's tremendous confusion here.

Communities have been doing registrations maybe once a year or twice a year, but every day somebody can move into the community that has a disability. Then we've got, even in the written testimony today, one on sleep apnea. We had a call on sleep apnea. Somebody else who had recent surgery, just got out of the hospital.

How do they fit into this definition that we're talking about of people who need special services?

JAMES McGAUGHEY: Well, I think that the general principle is that the planning should anticipate that there are going to be people like that. So that you make sure that all aspects of your operations are informed by those, those needs being rather typical in the community.

But in terms of knowing about a specific individual who might need assistance, particularly if they're trying to, quote, shelter in place and it's been a bad storm and somebody needs to go out and check on them, if there's no telephone communication they can't really call and say they're in trouble.

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I think that you're going to have to run that on a town-by-town basis and you're going to have to -- I like the idea of the initial, sort of I think you -- the term was red-alert call that went out prior to the storm, advised people that if they had a special needs then they should call in and let that be known.

I live in Glastonbury. One of -- another person I know who lives in Glastonbury who has a daughter who has very complex medical needs, medical support needs, called the day before the storm -- called two days before the storm hit, called the police department of Glastonbury, spoke to the police chief. The police chief was very glad to hear about this.

They live in a fairly remote area. They made arrangements for -- if any of the power equipment that they needed, that they use the battery equipped power equipment -- needed to be recharged. The people knew that there was a fire station close by. They could bring the equipment there and recharge the batteries. That was set up at that point in time.

If -- and in fact, if telephone lines went down, which they did, the police had checked with neighbors to make sure that somebody was going to be able to do a little sort of pony express run to an ambulance, to call an ambulance. So they had set up a plan specific to that individual because they knew about that individual ahead of time.

And I think that that's the kind of planning we need to encourage individuals to engage in and we need to encourage towns to engage in.

SENATOR CASSANO: (Inaudible) not reaching those individuals, a lot of them.

JAMES McGAUGHEY: A lot. And in fact, well, a lot of the responsibility falls on individuals. It falls on each of us to prepare. And part of preparing may be to let people know that you need help or you might need help. And I don't have any problem pushing, you know, promoting that message with folks with disabilities.

What they want to know is that that information is going to be treated as confidential. It's not going to be used in some way that's, you know, not appropriate and that what your response to them will be will be useful and won't be something where they're going to wind up in a medical facility somewhere, unless they're sick, unless there's a reason for that -- just by virtue of the fact that they have a disability.

So I think that's the kind of trade off, that if folks could be assured of that I think they'd be willing to register. That's (inaudible) clear path on how to do it, simple instructions. And I think it would be beneficial for all parties.

SENATOR CASSANO: Just a couple quick ones. Glastonbury, Bob DiBella testified last week. He had two requests for people with disabilities that after three days needed to be moved, which they didn't have the ability to do at the time. Is that unusual? I mean, how do we set up for something like that?

JAMES McGAUGHEY: I think there's, once again, two aspects to that. Individuals have to do planning. I think we've been encouraging people to think in terms of a three-day window that they have to take care of themselves.

It's turning out that that's not realistic thinking.

And I think if you have, you know, we were lucky. This was -- this storm hit during warm weather. We didn't have to contend with heating in your home. It was good weather for cleanup and restoration. You know, what if it was the middle of winter and there was ice all over everything?

So I think that part of the message we've got to get through to people is, yeah. They're telling you to get three days worth of water and not perishable food, but you really have to do think about long-term. Where are you going to be safe? Are you going to be safe stay -- and the longer the duration of the event the more likely it is people are going to have to move to someplace where there is power and there is heat. And so that we need to explain that better than we have been explaining.

Next I think in terms of having capacity. If we have included those human service agencies and the home health agencies in the tabletop exercises we will know what resources they have available. There are lift-equipped vans around and, you know, you can borrow them. You can sometimes press people into service who are willing to assist with things of that nature for transportation purposes.

So it's like the towns need to see the disability community and the disability agencies as assets, as resources they can tap into, not just as, you know, things that will take care of themselves.

But you know, that's --

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. Oxygen after the third day. I think companies did a good job of letting people know ahead of time and got extra, but they couldn't reach them. Cell phones were out. Their phone lines were out. Is there any place that you know of that's actually had a bank, a reserve bank of oxygen for these kinds of supplies? Because this was an issue.

JAMES McGAUGHEY: It was an issue. In fact one of the responders to our pole was a supplier of medical equipment and oxygen in particular. And they did, as you said, supply extra cylinders of oxygen prior to the storm hitting. But they had no way of knowing whether somebody -- power was restored are not.

They started to make a bunch of telephone calls to local officials and the power company and they couldn't find out any additional information. The reason that's important is that more and more people are using these in-home oxygen concentrators now, these oxygen generators as a source for refilling their own tanks.

They did ultimately work with the fire departments in those, in that, in their region of the state. They also supply oxygen tanks to fire departments. That if you hear if anybody, let us know. We'll bring them oxygen, but there was no coordinated organized effort around that. Many of the home health agencies did monitor the oxygen needs of the people they take care of and they were aware of and they did make phone calls on behalf of those individuals.

I think the home health agencies did a pretty good job in taking care of folks.

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. And the last one you point out in providing shelter, that the -- there shouldn't be separate types of shelters. And I understand it goes to the concern of the nursing homes. This again, in Glastonbury -- because I spent a lot of time in that center during the storm -- there were calls. Again, people wanted to be transported that didn't have the ability to be transported.

And there was concern and has been traditionally in shelters that they can't handle people with severe disabilities. Has there ever -- is there anywhere a model for example where a portable hospital might be the backup or something like that? Where you'd get a little more care than the volunteers who are spending their time trying to run something in the high school gym.

JAMES McGAUGHEY: Well, I would refer you to a couple of things. There was a document that was -- that came out this past year from FEMA that describes the types of planning that has to go into public shelters from their perspective. It's a guidance document.

The health department did develop a concept, which I don't think was never formally promoted for -- they called them, functional needs shelters. That is to say that they -- the term special needs, nobody likes that anymore because it's really kind of too vague for anybody to really understand. Functional needs being those needs that have to do with your ability to function independently.

So they did come up with a model -- and I

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participated in a committee that developed that in a number of meetings -- to at least explicate that concept. And part of their thinking was that there are medical cert teams, teams of volunteers that will respond in emergency situations and they're trained. And they work -- they trained as teams and perhaps could staff something like that.

It turns out a lot what's needed, if there's prolonged sheltering, prolonged congregant sheltering, a lot of what is needed is medication replacement. People run out of their pills or they don't bring them with them or something like that. And then there's this whole sort of paper chase trying to trace back to, where are the prescriptions? Who is your doctor? And so forth, and setting up, like, a little pharmacy within the shelter.

In those areas of the country where there have been those kinds of disasters where people have stayed in shelters for three, four weeks, that's been something that that's a bridge they have to cross after about three or four days actually. And so there's a lot of liability associated with that and that might have been one of the things that was of concern to the people who they didn't see how they could set that up.

But yeah. There are resources that could be pooled together. Once again, there's those human service agencies, those home health care agencies, they have -- in the event that people have to come to a congregant shelter because that's the only place that it's warm, those are resources that would be available to assist with those kinds of things.

The universally accessible shelter that our

office had worked with DEMHS to kind of develop that concept and promote it, we've determined that it did not take very much extra space to accommodate a person with a disability, even if they brought a service animal or they had a power wheelchair. And there are somewhat larger cots available that make it easier to transfer in and out of wheelchairs or people often bring their own equipment with them, their own personal care assistant.

So those things can be worked out. Key to it is to plan it out ahead of time. And for each community, you know, who's out there and what their needs are.

SENATOR CASSANO: All right. Thank you. I hope you'll be able to work with us in the future (inaudible). Appreciate it.

JAMES McGAUGHEY: I've learned a lot by working with the DEMHS people on this. It was not an area of endeavor I knew anything about going into it, but I've learned a lot just by participating. So --

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Frank Reed.

FRANK REED: Good morning. My name is Frank Reed and I'm the chair of the State of Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities. The council strives to promote the full inclusion of people of all ages in working on systems change advocacy and capacity building.

Since hurricanes Katrina and Rita the staff at the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities, along with two state agencies

and advocates for disabilities, developed a curriculum and training about emergency preparedness for people with disabilities. Presentations are targeted to first responders, emergency planners, community rescue teams to explore ways to respond to people with disabilities in any disasters.

These precautions highlighted the importance of having all towns maintain their own registries of people with special needs and to plan for the necessary supports that may be required to safely evacuate and/or relocate people with disabilities during an emergency.

We know that there are some statewide registries, but some people are afraid to sign up due to concerns about their safety and the confidentiality of the information, however they may be more willing to sign up for their own town's registry, but was Connecticut ready to meet the needs of people with disabilities during and after Tropical Storm Irene? We think not.

Responders did not call their residents with disabilities to see what assistance they may need during the power outage. Perhaps they were in need of having portable generators brought to their homes. Many people with disabilities rely on assistive technology, for example, stair glides, power wheelchairs and supports, ventilators, communication devices and so forth. They are often battery-powered and it is necessary to recharge these items in order to maintain independence and to provide needed health care treatments.

During these extensive power outages after Tropical Storm Irene many people with disabilities had to sacrifice their comfort

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placing themselves at risk -- safety and independence. So why weren't the CL&P and the first responders more responsive to people with disabilities?

The Federal Emergency Management Administration has worked diligently to promote the goal of having all shelters fully accessible, functional and inclusive for all citizens including people with disabilities. Yet the council heard and confirmed information about a shelter that actually turned away citizens from the community who are people with disabilities.

We have learned that the Red Cross volunteers received little training in working with and accommodating people with disabilities at shelters. This is a critical concern to the council. All citizens in a community need to be assured that they can access a shelter during an emergency.

In my case prior to the storm I received information from CL&P stating that my family and I might be out electricity for a week. I prepared for the storm in the best possible way so we could remain at my house, however my backup battery stair glide ran low, which made me unable to have access and independence from my home. And due to my polio and the severity of my pain I must change my positions and lie down on my bed a few times a day.

I had to spend most of my time on the first floor of my home, which meant I was in severe pain during the storm and for the following weeks I still am. I was at risk of having to go to my daughter's inaccessible house because of being unable to access my stair glide. I would have been in further pain by relocating

to my daughter's home.

Throughout the storm and power outages I was not able to get any of my questions answered from CL&P as to when my power would be restored. However, in fact, I would call CL&P and I would get a recorded message giving me various options and then to say at the end, would it be okay if we called you (inaudible) more than five o'clock in the morning to tell you the phone was -- the power was restored, which never happened.

I will leave you with one more example that demonstrates the dangers and hardships that people with disabilities experienced during Storm Irene. There is a young boy with developmental disabilities who depends on assistive devices which enables him to breathe, swallow, communicate and have mobility. His mother had to take many trips to the firehouse to recharge her son's assistive technologies so he would remain alive. So why didn't the CL&P be more responsive to people with disabilities?

In conclusion, the council hopes that the lessons learned from Tropical Storm Irene can improve the way we assist people with disabilities during an emergency and this would include attention to maintaining local registries to identify people who may need special assistance during power outages and other emergencies. Ensuring that CL&P accesses and attends to those registries -- where planning resources to respond to extensive power outages and ensuring that first responders of all communities by turning to the registry in preparing their response and ensuring that all shelters are adequately prepared to accommodate people with

disabilities.

The council would be glad to assist in the planning and the implementation of these recommendations.

And thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Are there questions from members of the committee?

Senator Fasano.

SENATOR FASANO: I'm over here. That's okay. I agree, the issue about the list, but where do you see the State's obligation? I mean, in your testimony you talked about UI, CL&P and you talked about first responders.

I guess the question is, DSS, do you think they have a role to help our emergency management system in the State of Connecticut to help and assist? Or do you believe it should be the responsibility of the utility companies alone.

FRANK REED: I think it should be a joint effort. Absolutely. I think the community at the base level would be the most effective way and to have an outreach program to encourage people to register. People, for some reason, people with disabilities often don't want to accept charity. They're embarrassed. They feel that they are a burden on the community as it is.

And so it's somewhat of a training session that we need to encourage that. Especially I think Irene, well, it wakes up -- it woke up a

lot of people with disabilities and make them realize that it's to their own advantage to take advantage of these registries. So assuming that the council would promote --

SENATOR FASANO: And do you -- with respect to the constituency that you sort of represent, did -- at any point, did the State, through the Department of Social Services, reach out to any of these folks with these types of disabilities to give them any help or any aid that you may be aware of?

FRANK REED: I can't answer that because I really don't know every case, but I can just tell you one story which was significant to me. There was a gentleman who has -- a double leg amputee and he needed batteries to recharge to operate his artificial limbs. And there was no way for him to charge those legs.

And so what happened was a citizen who happened to be in the business of providing power cells donated to him during the storm the battery to enable him to use his legs during the peak of the storm for free. So that people came out and helped, which I thought was, you know, a great story.

SENATOR FASANO: I think that is a good story as well. I guess one of the things that we should be thinking about -- I know this is sort of focusing on budget topics, but as you probably read about more on public utility issue -- I think the State itself, and through our Legislature, bears responsibility that we have in place a system to help those who need the most help who are relying upon these type of devices.

I'm not sure that -- although UI and CL&P

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should help us in that regard, I think the ultimate responsibility to ensuring that these folks get the battery packs and the charge ups or are moved appropriately so that they don't have to worry about it, should be the State responsibility and maybe not a public utility responsibility.

And that's the reason why I asked if you had known of any occasions in which DSS in any of the regional offices have been proactive in saying, hey, you know, we know so-and-so has issues that they may need help. And I just wanted to know if you heard whether or not they reacted. And if they didn't I think we need to look into that as well and be cognizant of that fact.

FRANK REED: I really can't say because I don't have first-hand knowledge, but I do know that one child in our neighborhood in which I live was evacuated from the home because he had paraplegia. I do not know what agency responded to him, but I don't want to cast aspersions on something without having the facts, you know.

But it was a very scary experience. Someone with a disability like myself that has to walk in the dark, you know, it's really risky to try to go into a shelter where you don't know if you could transfer from your bed. You don't know. I walked into (inaudible) in the rain. I don't know if my cane tip is wet. It's all small issues that are of concern to me. You know, I put myself at risk every time I leave this chair. So it's a fearful -- it's dealing with the fear as well, you know.

SENATOR FASANO: Thank you very much for answering the questions.

Madam Chair, thank you very much.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much for your testimony.

Next is Bruce Chimento.

BRUCE CHIMENTO: Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committees. Last week -- oh, first of all I'm Bruce Chimento. I'm the director of public works and town engineer in the beautiful town of Killingly, Connecticut up in the wonderful Northeast quite corner, which was not that quite during Storm Irene.

Last week I sent a letter to Mr. Jeffrey Butler, the chief operating officer of CL&P just to let him know how we fared and some plans that we may do in the future. However I'd like to say that his -- the initial idea of a liaison was very good.

The liaison to me during the storm, a Mr. Ed Davis was very outstanding. He was in communication with us not only on a daily basis, but maybe six, seven, eight times a day and he actually was with us out on our streets trying to get them cleared. Our main point here was to clear our streets, make it safe for the people to get in and out, especially for emergency vehicles.

At the first onset of the storm I had 60 roads that were closed out of 141. We, the first day of the storm, we did not see anyone at that time. One of my contacts with CL&P had called me on Monday and invited me to the operating center that was there in town. It's the operating center for the Northeast -- was in Danielson, Connecticut, which by the way,

is part of Killingly. And I was introduced to Mr. Ed Davis and Mr. Peter Casserella and Mr. Jim Pagannini. Jim and Pete were in the operating center on a daily basis and they were contacting me daily. Ed was with us out in the field.

I'll give you some idea. The storm ended Sunday afternoon. We had trees down all over the place. My crews were in Saturday night and Sunday. We cleared what we could because our rule is not to touch any of the wires that are in the trees or any trees that are in the wires.

We received our first line crew on Tuesday afternoon at one o'clock and we worked until nine o'clock that night until we couldn't work any further. And they were -- promised to be there first thing Monday -- or Wednesday morning. Wednesday came and went and we got our first crew again around noontime. And I think that the liaison people were working with us. They knew what our problems were. We give them a list of roads we needed cleared and we would meet them at any location they wanted to a town including the op center.

One of the things that happened was that they could not get their assets out to the field. If an asset was ready for us at seven o'clock in the morning we did not receive it until one o'clock in the afternoon, two o'clock in the afternoon.

One of the other things is that you needed to have some sort of continuity in this type of operation. If we could have gotten a line crew in a tree crew -- and they did send both of them out to us -- Monday, our roads would have been cleared by Wednesday. I mean, all

safety vehicles could have been on there. Not necessarily all of the power on, but the roads would have been cleared and that was our primary objective at that point. As it was, we didn't have roads cleared until Friday.

There were times, for instance, we had a transmission line that was down on one of our roads. We had their crews out there. My crews were out there. We had to wait for clearance to ground the wire. That took three hours of people standing around waiting for somebody in headquarters to tell them to do that. We did it.

An hour's worth of work, we had the road open and cleared. It took another two hours to get the okay to unground wire that we'd already grounded. That's not acceptable to me. You need to have someone in the field, someone locally that can make decisions, make emergency decisions on what you can do and what you can't do.

Now I lived in the eastern part of the state -- actually I lived in East Lyme and I saw the devastation that really hit the eastern part of the state which was quite extensive. The trees that were down in our area and in a quiet corner, were quite numerous. And sometimes we had people trapped in their houses because trees were down on both sides of their road and they couldn't get out. We couldn't get to them because the wires were down.

We finally -- when the crews got there they were wonderful. We worked with crews from Ohio, from Michigan, from Missouri, from Tennessee. We didn't -- never had a crew from Connecticut Light & Power, but that didn't

matter to us as long as we got the job done.
The problem was getting them out there.

The distribution of their assets was not good.
Their liaison with us was excellent. I've
talked with people daily, hourly all the way
through Labor Day weekend. All right.

I would make a copy of this letter to you for
written testimony that tells the story of what
I just told you. There are other details that
I was talking about, but that's it.

If there's any questions on what happened I'd
be glad to answer them.

REP. NARDELLO: Senator Prague.

SENATOR PRAGUE: I know time is running short. I
have just one brief question. There was a
gentleman here from Seymour who mentioned the
fact that they have a tool in Seymour. Did
you hear that?

BRUCE CHIMENTO: Yes. I was here for that. I
don't know what it is, but we've looked into
various tools. However our rule is this, if
there's a tree in the wires we don't touch it
unless a CL&P crew is with us.

SENATOR PRAGUE: I know, but if you had a tool that
could tell you whether that wire was a live
wire or not a live wire, would that make a
difference?

BRUCE CHIMENTO: Somebody would tell me -- have to
tell me that that's absolutely correct, that
that would happen. I can't take that chance.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Well, it might pay you to talk to
the gentleman from Seymour to see what they do

with their -- and what it does and where they got it.

Anyhow, thank you for coming today to testify.

I also lived in Eastern Connecticut and you're right. It was not fun.

BRUCE CHIMENTO: I know. All right. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

Our next speaker is Joe Mingo.

JOE MINGO: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. I'm a registered tree warden in the state of Connecticut and a tree warden in the town of East Lyme. I'm a member of the conservation and wetlands commission in East Lyme, past member of the invasive plant working group, UConn. I'm going to give you a little different perspective of what you've been listening to.

Sometimes it's said that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This is a DVD called, Hurricane, put out by the Homeland Security in the State of Connecticut. Anybody who tells you that the State hasn't been prewarned of what happened needs to read this DVD. It will give you the history of the '38 hurricane, the '55 hurricane, the lessons learned in Katrina and where the State fell down in its duties.

In the town of East Lyme I've personally photographed over a hundred trees that were laying on wires. Now whose fault is this? Part of the problem is the increase in CO2 in the air. A bigger problem is the invasive species that are growing in the trees. You

add the vines to the weight of a sapling and they came down on top of the wires.

If you take a tree that's 80 feet tall and that tree is 40 feet off the road and it falls down, you still have 40 feet of tree that will go right across the road. So it's an example -- is CL&P going to be responsible for cutting the tree down in the middle of somebody's yard? Which happened in, believe it or not, on the Chesterfield Road which is a state road.

The tree that took that road out was in the center of somebody's lawn and it was big enough to go right across Chesterfield Road. And I have a picture of it. I took pictures of all of these trees as part of my duty for FEMA so we can make a report and get some reimbursement here.

We have to do something to mitigate the invasive species that are growing in the trees and some of them are native species. You have grapes. You have Asian bittersweet. You have multi floral rose. When you drive home tonight, look down. You'll see all of the vines in the trees because they're starting to turn color. You'll see a bunch of yellow leaves.

I have pictures of saplings that are laying on top of power lines only because they were laden with these invasive species. Something is going to have to be done and the State should have opened up their eyes when they had three deaths on the Merritt Parkway for trees falling down. Somewhere along the line we missed the point of what it is that we're supposed to do to maintain that beautiful green canopy that we have over our roads.

Three minutes up already? I get -- that's about all I can say.

We in the town of East Lyme have instigated -- along with Homeland security, they did a survey. We surveyed the roads in town to come up with a debris removal estimate. This is part of the i-Tree program. They sent a couple of young men down and we walked the roads. We have a tree survey we started in East Lyme.

Many of our trees on the right of way are on Google right now so we can pull up a street and see all the trees that are on the state right-of-way that would affect the power lines. Unfortunately money, money issues -- and it's put on the back burner of things that we should do.

The tree warden association has been pushing for a tree-trimming program. A tree warden is responsible for all the trees on town properties, on the town right of ways. Maybe the Legislature should throw this on the state right-of-ways because the state right-of-ways are laden with situations that are going to cause a problem.

I'm going to close real quick and not take any more of your time. If we have a good northeaster this year or a heavy wet snow, because of the weakened conditions of many of the trees it's going to be (inaudible) all over again. You're going to start seeing the same thing happen, although maybe not the magnitude. And I really want to know what's going to happen when we have a real hurricane. This was not a real hurricane. This was just a little northeaster.

So the point is the money is going to have to free up. We're going to have to find money somewheres. Maybe we need a WPA program. Maybe we need to get the prisoners out there. Something has to be done to properly -- and I'm not saying that we mass cut down trees. That's not necessary. We need to trim them. We need to get the vines out of them. And that's just -- a lot of that's mechanical and I'm not an advocate for using herbicides to take care of this, because it kills everything, but something we seriously have to look at.

Because it's nice to listen to all these people and all the things that have happened, but had we a program in place in the town of East Lyme, 50 percent of the trees that went down never would have went down. And I was in areas where I watched crews work for a whole day to clear trees because it's a progression of, you start at the top and you work to the bottom.

When you have four trees or five huge trees go down in one area, not because of the wind -- we had many, many tornadoes. I have pictures of places where trees are in every direction and I'm going to give you a good example if you want to see it. Go down to DEP headquarters on the Connecticut River and look at the corner as you turn right in front of the river and look to the left. And you'll see a whole area that is totally completely wiped out of trees. We had several of those in East Lyme.

These are -- I call them a mini tornado. Wind shear, there's names for them, but it's just a fact of life in a storm that these things are

going to happen. But we need to mitigate this problem because it's going to get worse. We're a heavily forested state. Years ago everything was agriculture. Today there's probably more forest in Connecticut than there was 50 years ago and the trees are getting huge because we're not cutting them down for lumber.

So with closing, I thank you for the opportunity to speak to you.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Mingo, for the committees' help, could you submit to us your recommendations that you would recommend both for municipalities and on a statewide basis that might serve to do some of the prevention that you talked about that we can consider?

JOE MINGO: The example that I would give you is to just take a ride yourself and look and see what you see. Look at the vines that are in the trees. They're in the saplings. We need to eliminate these and it's going to -- and that's a manual process. We need to learn to trim trees, to remove -- cable them if necessary and remove the trees that are dangerous. And there are a lot of them around.

I've got them posted all over the town. The Town doesn't have any money to cut them down. You know, you have somebody go out, it's a thousand bucks to cut down a big tree. And we don't have the facilities, the crew in town. You know, that's a highly specialized procedure to take a huge tree down. It's not something that most public works departments, number one, doesn't have the equipment to do it nor the expertise.

So it's going to take some money from the State. And I heard Governor Malloy comment about the fact that this is an issue that needs to be dealt with. I think he's going to have to or should bring in the tree wardens, who most of us -- not all of us -- we're highly trained in what the procedures are to notice the trees that have a flaw that need to be taken care of.

This is what was done years ago and all this went away. So now we're stuck with a very gray, mature tree canopy, very mature older trees that are going to die. Everything dies in this world -- even I'm going to die someday. I don't know when.

But you can look at a tree and it looks extremely healthy. I'll show you a picture of one that I could crawl inside of it and go from one end to the other as big as I am, because there was nothing left inside of it. And these are all over the place. So these are the things that we have to look at.

When we did our tree survey we took a hammer, a wooden mallet and we would tap. You could tell if a tree is hollow. It's like a drum. We didn't go to the point of taking a core to see how much of the tree was gone, but these are the things that towns have to do. I think the State should free up and give the towns the right to go on the state right-of-ways to do the same thing. I'm not advocating that the towns remove the trees on state right-of-ways, but at least give the tree warden the authority to go on the state roads and identify the trees that are going to be a problem. That's some legislation that could be very easily put in place.

And from that point, I mean, I can't give you any more advice than that. It's a problem that needs to be dealt with and I want to know what's going to happen when -- in a category 4 hurricane, 75 percent of the trees in the state of Connecticut are coming down. That's what this, this hurricane thing will tell you.

So you need to read this and it's put out by Homeland Security in the State of Connecticut. It's a very interesting document. It will open up your eyes.

Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Just briefly, thank you for your testimony -- talked about the state and town property and as a tree warden and having to have a better maintenance program. What about private property? What, as tree wardens, what do you see needs to be done as far as -- because most of our trees are on private property.

JOE MINGO: I have, just as a matter of fact, handed a letter to the first selectman to get a ruling from the town attorney. When a tree falls down -- and I'm not a lawyer -- my understanding is it's an act of God. When that individual is notified that that tree is a hazard it now becomes a liability, a legal liability. So the only thing the tree warden can do is to send a letter and notify him that you are identifying a tree that you might want to consider, you know, taking steps to keep it from falling into the road. That's about all

we can do.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much, Mr. Mingo.

We have three -- thank you. We have three other people scheduled to speak and I would like to continue and conclude if possible since we only have three other speakers so we will go a little bit past our allotted time.

Representative Gail Lavielle.

REP. LAVIELLE: Good morning. Very good to see you all here.

I was one of the number of legislators who did write a letter asking for a review process. So I'm very pleased to see this happening and I'm sure that it will lead to some concrete suggestions for improvement.

I represent the 143rd District, which includes most of Wilton and part of Norwalk. I'm going to focus on Wilton because Wilton is in that part of the southwest of Connecticut that has lots of trees and hills and no light at night and most people (inaudible) accept it. So we were particularly affected by the aftermath of the storm.

And approximately 81 percent of all Wilton households lost power at one time as a result of Irene and that also meant loss of water and there was of course loss of telephone and cable service.

Our time frame was the storm ended on Sunday, August 28th, and the last resident without power had power restored late on the evening

of Monday, September 5th. I will -- I have submitted written testimony so I will not go through all of it in detail. I'll try to give you the broad lines here so I don't take too much time.

The -- there was a clear break in the way things appeared to be being taken care of, and I think the way they were taken care of, that came out about the morning of the Thursday following the storm. That would have been September 1st. During those first four days I had incessant calls and e-mails from constituents who were trying to get information. During that time work crews were very sparse on the roads. Residents were not able to reach a live representative on CL&P customer service lines.

And when they did they found it very difficult to get any concrete information about what was happening. They also got inconsistent information and some of the comments they had from customer service representatives weren't particularly reassuring or pleasant, shall we say.

For the first few days Wilton's emergency operations center, which was all set up and ready to go, was also unable to get concrete answers to give to people because they weren't getting them from CL&P. I have to say that our liaisons with CL&P were excellent and when they had information they were absolutely willing to give it to us. They were very responsive, but during those first few days they didn't have much information.

By around the morning of that Thursday, September 1st, the situation had dramatically improved. Suddenly there were lots of crews

visible on the roads, many of them from out of state. Large numbers of residents at once were beginning to have power restored and CL&P began to be able to explain what their method was. This is how we're going to go about it. This is who's first. We're going to go to larger circuits first. We're not going to do individual houses. Here's why, et cetera.

And they also begin to issue statements on which streets and which areas of town were going to be dealt with that day. So it was much easier to communicate things to people. Also folks who had asked for updates and estimates on power restoration online were beginning to get them at that point. So things dramatically improved at that stage.

Even when that had happened there were some issues that we were seeing and I had a number of examples, but again, I'll just give you the broad lines. When those online estimates began to come out everyone was getting systematically 11:30 p.m. next Tuesday night. And I think that was meant to be a worst-case scenario, but most people interpreted it as the time when they would get power. And then those people began to get their power on Friday and Friday afternoon and Saturday. So nothing told them it was a worst-case scenario.

Residents of peripheral areas of Wilton were told at certain times either by CL&P or by the Wilton Emergency Center that they might be connected to circuits in other towns. And it took some time to iron that out and it was important because people didn't know if they could get help from Wilton or whether they had to get it from somewhere else.

You've heard a lot from the problems that disabled and ill and elderly people had so I won't go into that.

I had a couple of constituents who were electricians write to me to say that they had been contacted to go through a training to be able to deal with certain restoration problems, but they got the e-mail to do that on Friday, five or six days after the storm had ended. Also there were a number of businesses who were constituents who were unable to operate for several days and lost clients or income.

So in hindsight it seemed that during those first few days there was a different situation that didn't allow for progress to be made as quickly as it was later after the Thursday. Also it appeared that CL&P wasn't equipped during that time or prepared to set town-specific priorities for several days after the storm.

The biggest problem seemed to be communication gaps between the management of CL&P and the -- their local operations team and the town operations center. And there were also some problems that I think were beyond CL&P's control during those first few days that it might have been perhaps more helpful for people had they been acknowledged.

Very generally, overall the most frequent comment I had from residents was not, I want my power back, I want it now, I'm uncomfortable. I think they understood that it was going to take time and that CL&P and everyone else was doing the best they could. But they did feel they wanted more information about what was actually happening.

Why are we last in line? Why have they not got to our neighborhood? Or what is the order? How is this being done? That would have been reassuring. And that was really -- a number of people said, folks are too impatient. They want everything now. That wasn't the feeling I had. They simply wanted an explanation of the whys and the wherefores and that there was a method.

I've included some help, recommendations for helpful actions in the written testimony. Again, I won't go over those here to avoid taking time.

I would just -- I would make a final remark that the call for a rate hike that came out during the aftermath of the storm was unfortunate and my constituents didn't react to that very well. And I think that the questions that came out in last week's hearing from a number of people about why we're the second highest electricity cost in the country -- customer service can't be better? And those are appropriate questions.

I would hope also that this review will provide some answers to all the questions we've continued to hear about tree-trimming policies, overtime pay shift assignments, subcontracting policies and overall customer communications.

The -- again, I will say that the folks I had to work with at CL&P were wonderful, very responsive. The ground crews were very responsive and really lovely to the people they were serving. All of our teams in Wilton did a wonderful job, but there were some communication gaps here that I think when they

are fixed will go a long way towards improving customer perceptions.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

Next we have Richard Sank.

RICHARD SANK: Thank you. I appreciate you allowing me to testify.

My name is Richard Sank. I'm a ratepayer. I'm also the business manager IBW Local 457 in Meriden, Connecticut. And we represent a lot of workers from CL&P that were involved in the storm and also a lot of people who weren't utilized in this storm whose vacations were canceled and they weren't utilized.

I'd like to get down to it. There's a lot of things that have been mentioned here today and my feeling of the matter is that CL&P did a poor job. And to the gentleman, I believe, rep number (inaudible) 104, this isn't our first time we're dealing with us. We brought this up through an investigation through the DPUC from the, what I call, the gold coast storm in March of 2010. This isn't our first go around with poor response. This isn't the first storm. And let's correct something here. This wasn't a hurricane. This was a tropical storm. Okay.

Number one, I'd like to address -- and I'd like the committee to address, please, why on Sunday when the winds diminished it took hours to get crews in. We finally got crews in around 3 p.m. and they sent them home at eleven o'clock at night. That makes no sense.

They came in for eight hours and were sent home.

Number two, and I'm also a lineman, so I know what's going on. There were tree crews out there that were clearing trees with wires entangled, which you heard earlier, with no grounds. They need grounds. A wire is not dead unless it's grounded. We as linemen cannot go in and handle wires without it being properly dealt with and being safe. So how can these tree crews be allowed to do this?

What happened to the safety aspect of how we operate? They didn't have rubber gloves. We're not allowed to move wires on the ground unless we've got a tested stick. I don't understand what happened to the safety aspect.

Number three I mentioned in a news conference about two weeks ago. It was told to me that a plane was chartered from Canada and brought crews in from Canada. They got them here. They couldn't utilize them because they didn't have a rubber glove, which is our procedure. They only do hot stay. They didn't know that. Another case of mismanagement by CL&P. So I don't know how long it took, but it took a period of time where you had crews here and you couldn't utilize them and CL&P was scrambling to get them tools to work with.

Number four, and this was told to me by a ratepayer not connected with the union, just a normal individual who called me and told me he witnessed crews out in his neighborhood. And he says, oh, thank God. They're here to restore my power. Fantastic. They were out there and he questioned them and he says, you guys here to, you know, put my power up?

No.

Well, what are you doing?

We're doing regular maintenance. We're doing regular maintenance that CL&P hasn't done.

I says -- he says, I don't understand this. He made a call to CL&P. Within a half-hour there were crews there to restore his power because he threatened CL&P that he would go to the news media with that. Within a half hour he had somebody there. This was what was told to me. And it also was told me that he'd be willing to testify if need be.

Someone had mentioned about this tool, this tool, this potential tester, but you have to be qualified to use it. You just don't get a potential tester and run around and test lines if you don't know what you're doing. Okay.

What if you make a mistake? What if you're not trained? What if you deem the line dead and it's not grounded and then somebody touches it and you have a back feed from a customer who just bought a generator at Home Depot that fires the line up? Now that person is dead. Don't walk around and don't advocate people getting potential testers to run around and they don't know what they're doing. It's the wrong way to go.

I also wanted to mention I believe the woman before me had mentioned about electricians and they were brought in not until four days, five days and were trained. We had electricians at a Local 35 in Hartford. None of them were utilized. None of them. They're qualified, trained, certified E1 and E2 electricians right here in the state of Connecticut -- not

utilized.

That's all I have to say. I appreciate you hearing me today. Please ask the hard questions and don't let this turn out like the Jacobs Consultancy report that came out last year.

Thank you. Any questions?

REP. NARDELLO: Before you leave I do actually have a request of you. Okay. While you've identified some of the problems and I think they're very real, what I would like you to do for the committee is identify from your perspective what the solutions to those problems would be.

How do we take care of the things that you just, the one, two, three, four, five; your recommendations. So if you could do that for the committee that would be extremely helpful since we want to get all perspectives on the matters.

RICHARD SANK: In reference to number one, let the crews work. Is that how you wanted me to go about this?

I'm sorry.

REP. NARDELLO: But what I'm going to ask you to do is actually submit it to us in writing.

RICHARD SANK: Oh, that's no problem.

REP. NARDELLO: Okay. Because that would be helpful to us as we do deliberations after that as opposed to today.

RICHARD SANK: I appreciate that.

REP. NARDELLO: That would be helpful to us.

Are there questions from members of the committee? Thank you very much for your testimony.

Next we have Bill Henderson.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you, Representative Nardello.

My father once told me, two things you don't do is kick a skunk and give a talk before lunch. So if I could add my comments to Mr. Weidlich who's my vice president at one o'clock I would appreciate it -- and give you the time back.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you. We will see you at one o'clock. That's wonderful.

Although I -- we actually aren't going to break for lunch, but at least (inaudible) go ahead. Thank you.

Our next and final speaker is Jean Desmet.

JEAN DESMET: Thank you, Representative Nardello, for having this meeting and for everybody for attending.

I'm going to speak from a few different points of view. I'm an electrician. I'm a former first selectman and I'm also a citizen here.

I saw critical failures from all points of view during this storm. And to me it's not about this storm and this incident, it's about CL&P and changes that have been made at CL&P over the last few years.

First of all I'd like to point out some very life-threatening things that happened in our town in Windham. One individual lost power. The power was restored. All of the sudden he heard funny noises in the house. The refrigerator was making strange sounds. Other lights bursting, bulbs. Something is very wrong.

He's, you know, not an electrician, but he goes down to the panel and he goes to open the panel cover and he gets thrown back. Clearly he has 240 volts running through the house. As somebody else just pointed out, there's no ground.

He calls CL&P and they said, go down to the panel and turn off your main breaker. And he explained, I can't open the door to the panel because it's hot. They said well, we'll get to you as soon as we can. Three days later they shut off the power. In the meantime he did call an electrician who came over and had gloves and turned off his main breaker. Three days later.

Another -- I got calls from people, many people who'd say their power -- the lines are on the ground. What's going to happen when they turn the power back on? And I as an electrician said, there is no way that CL&P will not -- will energize your circuit until they've checked all those lines. There's just no way this company would ever do that. I know them and I trust them. I was wrong in that case and I was wrong in other cases that I was called about.

In other towns we've heard about people who had the roads closed for weeks because of the

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trees in the power lines. We had roads closed for weeks with trees in power lines and power lines on the ground and kids playing in them all over the hill section of Willimantic. Right. This is not good.

As somebody else pointed out, the line might be dead then, but anyone can turn on a generator at any time and energize those lines. So this was a critical failure. I blame a lot of this on some of the less maintenance they been doing this over the years. They've taken \$5 million to give to their CEO and taken it out of their tree trimming, as far as I can see.

I called when I was first selectman about a tree and a branch in the wires and the wires were drooping and dangerously down. CL&P responded, we don't do anything unless the power is out. We don't do any routine trimming and we don't respond to these calls. This was long before the storm.

In another incident someone called me recently and said, CL&P needs to do some maintenance on our transformer near our business and we asked them to do it on off hours and they said, no. We don't have to do it on off-hours. And I called the CL&P rep and I said, come on. Of course they have to shut -- they can't just shut down a business in the daytime. Here it is, terms of conditions and services, the company will do it during normal business hours, period. CL&P is not doing maintenance -- not doing any overtime maintenance.

So there's also some serious communication problems that came up during this and you've heard a lot about them. One of the ones I

heard thirdhand through the grapevine, people, first selectman were getting e-mails from CL&P. They would send them out to their constituents. Those who have computers would respond and they would respond by e-mail and go back to CL&P. Nothing would change. The next day an e-mail would come back out. All the wrong information again. Send them back. Comes back out the third day. This went on for a week.

And then I was told, oh, we don't read e-mails at CL&P. We only take phone calls. We get 10,000 e-mails. We can't read them all.

So this is a really bad communication breakdown that they've got going on. They've obviously cut staff. They don't have time to read e-mails. They're not getting any information. So what changed with CL&P's priorities and what changed as we deregulated CL&P? And we know that that was a big problem.

They are now answerable to their stockholders and they are not answerable to the public anymore. They used to have service as their number one priority and they no longer do that and they're cutting their maintenance and they're cutting safety issues.

I would really love to see this group recommend reregulating CL&P for at least the distribution end of it. If you did the whole thing and got the whole -- both ends going again we'd save a lot of money for businesses on your electric bills as well, but if we can at least get the distribution end of it reregulated, it's a very good likelihood that we'd get good response and better quality communications.

But we also have to look in terms of a bigger picture. We should be putting lines underground. This is technology and infrastructure that's 75, 80 years old. Hasn't changed much. No money has been put in to really modernizing our electric system distribution. So we should be looking at distributed generation and going underground and reregulating the distribution and CL&P.

Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

I just have to make a couple of comments.

Are there any questions from any of the committee?

Senator Prague, briefly.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I just want to ask you something, Jean, as an electrician. The gentleman from Seymour who mentioned that tool that they use to determine if a wire is live or not and their guys can go out and cut the trees. Do you have any experience with that?

JEAN DESMET: Not that specific tool, but I understand that. And as a member, as an electrician member of Local 35 I will concur. We were available. We have 500 members out of work. We could have checked your lines for you and cut them. But that line, that the problem is that at any point in time somebody can turn on that electricity.

And unless you're really in communications with CL&P directly and that lineman who's

about to turn on the circuit somewhere three blocks away that you don't know about, you can't know that that line is going to be dead one second from now. Somebody could turn on a generator in their house and not turn off their main breaker because they don't know to do that, that line is hot. So one minute it's dead, the next second it's hot. We have to have trained people go in and cut the line and then they're dead.

SENATOR PRAGUE: So that tool is not foolproof.

JEAN DESMET: It's fine for that exact second.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Okay. Thanks, Jean.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you for your testimony.

We have come to the end of the public portion of our hearing. I do want to state for the record, though, because I do need to make sure that the audience understands this. The transmission and distribution system remains regulated of the utility companies here in the state of Connecticut. That's the reason why we're here today. If we didn't have that we wouldn't have any mechanism by which to have this hearing and to do the analysis that we're doing today.

The other thing that I wanted to state before we closed the public portion is this, you know this is about identifying the problems, which we've done and we want people to be able to come here and tell us what are the problems they experienced, but we also need recommendations on what the solutions are.

I sit here as chair, and yet I still have a great deal to learn. And I certainly don't

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know all the intimate details that town officials deal with in all their emergency management, and that an electrician deals with in terms of turning on the power. There are other individuals with expertise in those areas.

So I ask him, I plead with them actually to -- at the conclusion of this, to present to us in writing based on what was talked about today and possibly something that wasn't talked about today and last Monday, what their recommendations are for how we manage the system better and how we have better outcomes in the next storm. We'll never solve every single problem. Every storm is going to present some, but at least we can learn from mistakes that we've made and not repeat them.

So I thank everybody for their patience this morning and I apologize for running a half hour over, but I didn't want to make people have to come back at 4:30.

So based on that we're going to move into the next segment of today's hearing and that is going to be the presentations from the labor people.

So our first person -- our first presenter on that part of the segment is Frank Cirillo.

Is Frank here?

And what I'm going to do in this, I'm going to ask each of the individuals to make their presentations and then I will open it up to questions and answers from the members of the committee.

FRANK CIRILLO: Good afternoon, Representative.

One thing that I found quite amazing during this particular tropical storm and some other storms that we had in the state of Connecticut is we've been doing this type of work for over a hundred years.

My local has been in Waterbury, Connecticut since 1937. I believe I might be wrong on that date, but I think HELCO was born in 1881 and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers was 1891.

All of the sudden we need committees on storms and storm restoration. We've been doing this type of work for a very long time and nobody seems to be going out in the field and asking somebody that's been out there since 1968, 1970, gee, what have you done all these years?

One thing that has been done since approximately 2009 is they have stopped the hours of work of the individuals in the field. It started, I would say, in February of 2010 when our crews from Connecticut went to New Hampshire. And I received a phone call from my counterpart in New Hampshire; wanted to know why we were having a job slowdown, a job action. And I didn't know what he was talking about other than the company was restricting our people from working.

We used to work 18 hours, 19 hours, 5 hours off, 4 hours off, 6 hours off. We used to work all the time. The company came out and made it very clear that there was a fatality in 1985 that limits us from working more hours because fatigue was a factor in there.

Fatigue may have been a factor. I'm a little embarrassed that the company had to bring that

up because we had -- our records indicate approximately 37 fatalities since the late fifties and only one from storms. So using that type of theory one would have to say that on a nice sunny day we shouldn't be working. It's like the old driving school training. The most accidents happen five miles from your home. On a regular day most of what we work on is energized. During storms most of what we work on is de-energized.

Oddly enough in, I believe it was the late nineties, the federal government and the State came down with hours of work rules for commercial drivers license holders and they limited us to a 16 and 8 hour schedule.

And in 2000, then an individual named David Forrest, he was the Connecticut Light & Power Company director of operate and restore in May of 2000. He gave testimony criticizing those hours of work. Northeast Utility systems, United Illuminating, AT&T they fought vigorously to get their workers to work beyond 16 hours. Some of the people touched on this.

In this testimony he states, even with the determined concerted effort to make emergency repairs in cooperation with other emergency response workers there have been several fatalities associated with NU equipment.

For example, two firefighters in two separate situations both acted on their own before NU could respond and make the area near a fire safe. They were electrocuted. In another case a police officer was electrocuted when he walked on energized live wire while waiting for an NU line crew. And yet in another case a homeowner attempted to render aid at a vehicle accident, was electrocuted.

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They could not get to the vehicle without Northeast Utilities systems line crews. They won that, to get our people to work extended hours.

Now in 2007 we gave to the Energy and Technology Committee -- and I believe Representative Nardello, you were there -- we sent a letter to each member of the committee outlining some of our staffing levels. At the time we had reported in one letter, for example in Waterbury in 1986 we had 38 line mechanics. In 2006, we had 31. Now I believe that number is lower in the Waterbury district, Newtown, Norwalk, et cetera. You people received that on February 6th.

On February 13th we testified before this committee and gave some more numbers. In 1975 we had 430 line mechanics in just our local and that's west of the Connecticut River. And we had back then -- let's see -- during hurricane Gloria we had 850,892 customers. Today we serve 1.2 million customers. At that time, February 13, 2007, our local had approximately 190 line mechanics, a reduction of 239. This information was given to you on February 13, 2007.

In regards to safety and workers working I can only read from 2000 testimony of Mr. Forrest. Electric and natural gas utility service workers are closely supervised. Our supervisors do not assign work to employees who are either fatigued or have exceeded their capacity to perform job safety. Supervisors also encourage employees to ask to be relieved from work, including driving whenever necessary. In a nutshell, when our people are tired they'll go home. If they're exhausted they'll say, I want to go home. They'll cut

their hours short.

The company, I heard during the storm, many different numbers. And at one point they said they had 6,000 workers, 4,000 workers, 7,000 workers. If you just added two more additional hours to that workday, you just double that and that's the amount of work hours that could have been done.

We've had crews that had reported approximately an hour or two hours worth of work and they could have restored 500 people, 600 people. They were sent home. The next day they weren't even sent to that same job. We had a situation in Greenwich where the crews came in and were sent home after seven or eight hours. There was an article in the Greenwich Times about that. They could have restored about 500 people. Although it is true, you could work two or three hours and only restore five customers. It varies.

Another thing that is a little bit annoying to myself is every storm is different. The only thing different about every storm are the weather conditions. You have ice. You have rain. You have cold. You have snow, but trees come down. Wires come down and somebody has to reconstruct the pole and put the wires back up. That work has not changed in about a hundred years. You still need a line mechanic or a phone man to go up and restore their facilities. The only thing that's different is the working conditions as far as the weather. The work remains the same.

As far as working with crews only 16 hours, it's kind of funny after the negotiations in New Hampshire -- now you've got to remember that Northeast Utilities has Connecticut Light

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& Power Company, Yankee Gas Company. It has Western Mass Electric and it has Public Service New Hampshire. Those companies all fall under the Northeast Utilities umbrella.

My counterpart in New Hampshire sent us all an e-mail and make it clear multiple times that when they asked the company if the reasons for their change of work schedule was for safety reasons, they were told more than twice that it was purely an economic decision. So I don't know what's different in Connecticut and what's different in New Hampshire. They said over a hundred years and all of the sudden in 2009 people are concerned about our hours of work. It didn't make much sense.

One of the things I heard today was people talking about stepping on wires and being out there in the storms. I was notified this morning from one of my assistants in New Milford that they came upon, yesterday, energized primary wire that was still on the ground, on the ground and energized in an area in New Milford -- that they just put back last night from the storm that just recently passed.

Something else that transpired down in the Oxford area which was extremely disturbing to us, a gas supervisor called into the electric side of the company and said that he had a wire burning through the ground and needed assistance to get that wire turned off and they didn't respond. It did eat through approximately three feet and went into a plastic gas main; reports of 20 to 30-foot flames shooting out of the ground. The gas workers responded and the gas workers told me they never saw a CL&P crew.

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Now we're all part of the Northeast Utilities systems. They worked through the night and said they didn't see any CL&P crews there. Whether or not those wires were energized or not, I don't know. There are dozens, dozens of horror stories out there like that.

Again, I've got to be redundant. We've just been doing this slightly over a hundred years and I find it very hard to believe that people would not let the employees work longer. And that includes contractors and out-of-state crews that came into the state. They could have worked many more hours.

And as far as our manpower is concerned, I heard people say, well, gee, why hire people if you don't need them? I'm not trying to be a fool and say that you should go out and hire 6,000 utility workers in the state of Connecticut. That would be absurd, but we are down in our numbers.

In the testimony of Mr. Forrest he declared that in 1995 to 1999 Northeast Utilities systems dealt with 272 storms. If you recall this June of this year, a storm hit the Brookfield area, Middlebury, Woodbury, Southbury areas. In March of 2010 it devastated Greenwich, Norwalk areas. We are constantly dealing with storms.

If a storm comes through New York and starts working its way through Connecticut and it starts in Falls Village, goes through Canaan, goes into (inaudible) goes down into Winston Holbrook, Barkhamsted, works its way into Simsbury -- we only have five line mechanics in Falls Village. We only have about 23 in Torrington. These people need out-of-district help and out-of-state help. More line workers

in these areas would be helpful.

Anybody that's been around long enough knows that we've got a problems with our underground systems. Our cable departments are also understaffed. Not looking for 6,000 employees, just looking for more employees that could help restore, go out immediately.

During Hurricane Gloria the crews were on the property as the storm was taking place and immediately after they went to work. This storm they were not. They were home. They were placed on call and they were home. Some people went home at 11 and some people went home earlier. And yes, some people did work throughout the night on some of those problems.

That's all I have, but I would like to turn the mike over to Mr. John Fernandez.

JOHN FERNANDEZ: Thank you. John Fernandez, Local 457. We represent the eastern half of the state, if you will, with CL&P, but also with the City of Norwich Public Utilities and the Town of Wallingford Public Utilities.

Now you asked for suggestions or ways to look at this. Those two municipalities didn't suffer the long outage times that the rest of the CL&P properties did, generally speaking. So I think if you were to somehow look at the numbers that they have for the areas of coverage that they have and exponentially spread that across CL&P's territory, it might give you a better feel for what a legitimate number of employees would be to maintain coverage in a reasonable fashion.

Granted that this was a storm of, you know,

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large proportion, but again, as it was said earlier, it wasn't a hurricane and the systems that are out there now are not set to cover a hurricane. So I think while, you know, asking for that large number of people to handle these larger events is unreasonable, certainly maintain the workforce larger than what we currently have -- should be dealt with.

This is the body that can make that decision and I think it's something we seriously need to consider, because again, there's other companies out that that didn't suffer these long outage times and there's a reason for that and I think you really should take a deep and hard look at that. Thank you.

FRANK CIRILLO: Representative Nardello, I have a couple of things that I just want to bring up and I'll do it very quickly.

REP. NARDELLO: Yes, if you would, Mr. Cirillo, in the interests of time because we have others that will speak. And we want to be able to ask you a couple questions.

FRANK CIRILLO: Can I -- I'll just read this. It will be very brief. First off, our workers are not required to take eight hours off. Sometimes they are required to take more than eight hours off. If they worked through a meal hour and they had an hour's worth of meals, they're required to take nine hours off, maybe nine and a half hours off. So they weren't working 16 and 8. They were working longer.

One thing that's kind of funny -- this is from Connecticut Now dot com. It's from the Hartford Courant archives. This goes back to August 17, 2003. Then Jim LaChance was in

charge of our operations center. And it was a Friday afternoon he was finishing his 37th -- 31st consecutive hour on the job dispatching electric crews around Connecticut coordinating with neighboring states making sure hospitals, police stations had power.

LaChance's sleeves were rolled up. His eyes were wide and alert. His words were focused. He wasn't watching the clock. He won't say it in so many words, but he loves this stuff. These are in quotes now. We like what we do, LaChance said. Sick as it may be, we're too dumb to go home. That was 2003. 2009, everybody is concerned about our safety. I guess they smartened up or they just don't want to pay us.

To another remark I understand that the distribution side of the house is regulated. When I started at Connecticut Light & Power Company, I was told when the turbines spin we're making money. When the meter spins we're making money. That's not necessarily the case. I'm not an expert on deregulation. This committee should be, but how much are the losses for Connecticut Light & Power Company if that meter isn't spinning, if you're not paying them for usage? What's the incentives for the phone company if you're going to Vonage for your phone service.

So it's a little disheartening here. I don't know the answers to that. I'm sure you fine people do.

REP. NARDELLO: And I have a question and then a request. We've had previous testimony on Monday that the number of linemen has actually increased over the last ten years. Can you comment on that? Because that was the

(inaudible). And I don't remember directly -- was in the number, higher 300s up to 400, so there's an actual -- been an increase in the number of linemen.

So is there -- I guess what I want to ask you is, there's no difference in definition of who you define as a lineman versus who the company defines as a lineman.

FRANK CIRILLO: No. Not at all. To answer your question, as I stated in our testimony on February 13, 2007, in 1975 we had 430 line mechanics in IBW Local 420. That was just our local. The company never refuted this testimony.

In 1986 we gave you '86 numbers. They had come up with a group of individuals called system projects, where they hired line workers to do just big jobs. They weren't dedicated to the service centers. These people weren't supposed to work any overtime. They were dedicated to big jobs.

I don't know. I would have to look at our per capita and I will give you our exact numbers, because we have to pay our per capita to our international, and this information we get from the company.

It wouldn't surprise me if in certain areas we did have more line mechanics, but when I was a young helper I never made journeyman. When I was a young helper in Newtown -- it was Bethel at the time -- there was 39, 40 of us. There's only about 24 people there today, so these other workers are not in these districts where the storms hit.

They could be working -- they have -- the

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western project group is in Waterbury. They may be working down in Stamford and the storm hits up in Torrington. So they have a lot of travel to go. But our numbers are nowhere near where they were in 1975.

I don't believe they're near where they were during Hurricane Gloria. I believe Mr. Hybsch had said that his figures came from 1996. Mine were from '86 and '75. And also Mr. Hybsch just got to Connecticut.

When he was up in New Hampshire during that first storm when our men were told not to work, their crews were working 17 and 7. I don't know where the change of heart came in when he got to Connecticut. I believe we have 422 statewide, is what my president just gave me.

REP. NARDELLO: (Inaudible) ask you for two things that you can't give me today, but I would like them at a later date.

FRANK CIRILLO: Oh, you'll have them tomorrow.

REP. NARDELLO: Okay. The first is a timeline of the number of line workers. And wherever you want to start it, you just go ahead and give me, you know, intervals, what the number of line workers are. Because again, my understanding is there's actually more in the last ten years. And I'd just like to see from your perspective if your numbers match the other numbers that we were given.

The second is again, you're here identifying problems. Okay. I would like you to identify very concretely and specifically what you think the solutions are. In other words, if it's the ability to work an extra two hours a

day. It's whatever it is from your perspective, because again, we're getting different people's perspectives here at the hearing as to how you would solve these problems and make it easier or more efficient to provide service back to the customers of CL&P.

FRANK CIRILLO: Not a problem, but I must state again regardless of how many linemen we have on the property today, our customer base has grown by -- from 850,892 customers to 1.2 million customers.

And one thing that's a constant on our properties and when people talk about, gee, what would you do with extra people? My partner has been at the property since 1971. We've had contractors on our property for years and a lot of these contractors, not all of them, but they don't live here in Connecticut. And I hear a lot of politicians talking about jobs. These are good jobs for the people right here in Connecticut. When they earn that money it stays right here in Connecticut.

If we were working and there were no contractors on our property I couldn't sit here and make a fool of myself and say, well, we have to hire more people. We have an abundance of contractors.

They've been out there for the last 40 years and beyond that. So there's plenty of work in the state of Connecticut for Connecticut residents. Not Massachusetts or New York residents, Connecticut residents. And it would be nice to see something in Connecticut like Massachusetts has in their deregulation bill. As my counterpart said, minimum

staffing levels put into the deregulation bill. Minimum staffing levels that they cannot go below. It would be well appreciated.

But I will get you that information, Representative Nardello.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Cirillo, we do include whatever information, if you so choose. If that be the number of customers and the relevance to the numbers and the number of line miles that you have, that that may have changed as well. And I expect you to give us all of the information that's pertinent to the decision-making and again, any suggestions that you wish to make. Because there will be a period of deliberation and consideration after these hearings. And so if you don't give that to us we won't have your input and we need to have your input.

FRANK CIRILLO: I'll have that for you within two days.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you very much.

Are there questions from members of the committee? Okay.

We have Representative Adinolfi followed by Senator Prague.

REP. ADINOLFI: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Just a question. I had an interesting incident during the -- after the tropical storm. I think they declassified it as a hurricane. I live in a development of 124 homes and we're underground. My house was the last house in the first section before they even continued the road to the main -- the

next -- to the other intersection.

During the storm, the next day -- was a crew there in a yellow truck and I've seen them looking around. So I walked out and I says, you know, on my corner right here there's a three-foot diameter -- a four-foot diameter track and everything is underneath there. This is where they usually come whenever something like this happens.

And their words to me -- and this shocked me -- they said, they won't let us work until after eleven o'clock tonight. We'll see you in two days.

So I just let it go. I said, maybe that's the way it works. Well, that evening from my home, after me down, there was electricity that came in from Mountain Road -- if you're familiar with Cheshire. My side is fed in from Higgins Road. So I said, okay. This is the way it works. Maybe there's something wrong. So I drove around and I found out all Higgins had electricity. All Oak Avenue had electricity. All Mountain Road had electricity and only half the development.

So I finally got through to somebody at CL&P or NU. I called up the number and then finally after a couple of calls I spoke to a person. And he looked at the map and he said you know something? You're right. There's no reason why you don't have electricity and they put in a couple of hours. The truck was there. They lifted up the track. Fifteen minutes, they were out of there and we all had electricity.

And I don't understand why the people were complaining. It seemed to me that people were

more worried about getting overtime and getting whatever they get, time and a half, double time, whatever it is on the weekends, than actually repairing the thing. They could have repaired that thing right then and there and they didn't.

FRANK CIRILLO: Well, to respond to that I don't know the circumstances. I do know that the underground systems are fed through overhead and if something trips on the underground part that may have been a delay.

I think people have to understand something clearly. We work in these communities. We live in these communities. These are our mothers, our fathers, our cousins, our aunts, the people we do business with that we restore power to.

Yes, like anybody else, like any of the executives in Northeast Utilities systems, if you look at some of the pay increases, everybody is in it for the money. Everybody works for money clearly, but our members take orders. They do what they're told. If they don't do what they're told, believe me, I handle a lot of grievances, they will be disciplined. They don't take anything upon themselves.

If somebody told those guys to leave, they left. That's how it works. They don't take matters into their own hands. They're told what to do. They are GPSed. People know where they are. If they tell somebody, go to this location, cut it, make it dead, make it safe and leave, that's exactly what they're going to do. Even if they know they can restore power there they're going to do what they're told. We don't run the company. We

just try to do our best to enforce our collective bargaining agreements that we negotiate with the company.

REP. ADINOLFI: Well, they didn't leave. They hung around the development. I saw the truck driving back and forth. Now, in all fairness it was a yellow truck, but I don't know whether it was -- it had no markings on it, so it might have been an out-of-town people or something like that. I don't know, but it was the typical yellow truck.

FRANK CIRILLO: Well, our vehicles are clearly marked with the Northeast Utilities logo on them --

REP. ADINOLFI: I'm just trying to, you know, to clarify it for you. It's not to give any, you know, discontent.

FRANK CIRILLO: But to be honest with you, I don't want to run from this question by any stretch of the imagination. Our collective bargaining agreements are designed for overtime rates as a penalty. That language has not changed since our contracts back in fifties.

If you're going to take people away from their families for days and have them work extended hours they should be compensated for those hours. No different than anybody else in this room.

And if you just take a look at the Northeast Utilities' shareholders' books and see what the senior officers of the company have made since deregulation, I think you'd be a little bit shocked and surprised at what you would see. And our members are no different than anybody else out there.

And when our snowplow drivers plow they get paid premium rates. When our firefighters, nurses have to extend their hours for emergency situations they are paid and money is clearly a motivator. But the other motivator is they are dedicated because it's themselves they're restoring, their family members.

REP. ADINOLFI: Well, it was clear to me in the conversation in the tones that they returned my questions when they answered me was that they were more worried about getting more overtime than fixing the problem. Now it might be just a select few, but that's definitely what happened.

FRANK CIRILLO: If it was any of my members and you can get me their names I would personally talk to them.

REP. ADINOLFI: You could probably check through the records and see who was there that day.

REP. NARDELLO: Excuse me, gentlemen. Gentlemen, I'm just going to ask, because in the interest of time, these are conversations you can have outside of this room. And I do have two other presenters and I've asked my members to please wait until we have all three presentations since we have another member of the other electric utility union from UI. So they're going to be similar types of questions.

So if we can just have the three presentations and we'll have the questions afterwards in the interests of time.

Okay. So I'm going to ask Moses Rams to come up, please.

Good morning -- or I should say good afternoon.

MOSES RAMS: I am the president of Local 470, Utility Workers of America. With me is my executive vice president, Beverly Gibson.

Good afternoon to all our distinguished reps and senators.

My testimony will be brief; I know that we're really struggling with time. We began to prepare for the storm no less than a week before it arrived. When it arrived -- I know that you've heard different testimonies about how bad or how bad it wasn't. I worked the storm; it was bad. We worked long hours in the field -- line workers -- no less than 16 hours a day. And we did for anywhere from eight to 10 days and we did it safely which is the most important thing that I need to say today. We were able to work all those hours and all those days and we didn't have a lost time accident -- no one was hurt.

The process of doing line work is a complicated process and you just can't go there and five minutes you're done. You can't wave a tester and say, oh, this is dead, let's work on it. It's not that simple unfortunately.

This notion, also, that I'm understanding that, as a union, we won't work with other people who are nonunion -- I want to dispel that belief right now. We work side by side with our supervisors, our managers, our engineers in the field, planning jobs, patrolling our circuits and we don't have any issue with that. We would never put any

interest of the union ahead of the residents of the State of Connecticut.

I'm trying to keep it really brief. I'm hoping I covered and as quickly as possible.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Mr. Rams.

I'm going to ask the same request of you that I asked of Mr. Cirillo and that is to give me the numbers of line workers that you have from your union and whether or not --

MOSES RAMS: 100 line workers.

REP. NARDELLO: In terms of -- has that number increased or decreased over time?

MOSES RAMS: Over the last 10 years that number has increased.

REP. NARDELLO: It has increased. Okay. And could you also then submit to me the number of actual miles of line that you have and the number of customers so that we can get -- get a clear perspective on that?

MOSES RAMS: Absolutely.

REP. NARDELLO: Okay.

Are there questions of members -- oh no, I'm sorry. I'm going to take questions afterwards.

So Mr. Rams, if you'll just stay with us and we're going to go to Communications Workers of America --

MOSES RAMS: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: -- and that is David Weidlich.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Good afternoon distinguished state representatives and members of the state senate, Representative Nardello.

My name is William F. Henderson III; I'm honored to hold the position of president of the Communication Workers of America, Local 1298. I local currently represents the AT&T workers in Connecticut, as well as the AT&T Wireless workers in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and technicians in Vermont and New Hampshire. I have 41 years of service at AT&T/SBC/SNET and the last position I held was a power technician.

With me today is David Weidlich, my vice president of the plant department responsible for the eastern part of the state who is also here today to assist me in answering questions that you have at the end of the conclusion of the testimony.

I realize that our time is limited. So today I have prepared an in-depth report on my comments drilling down deeper into the facts and figures which I intend to substantiate the issues that I will touch on in my report.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today -- speak before you today on the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene that had such a devastating effect on our state and citizens. And for this is the first time that labor, to my knowledge, has been invited to speak on this matter unfortunately. I say "unfortunately" because we have been the canary in the coal mine predicting this for years that this would happen and maybe even a worse scenario if we really did have a

hurricane as previously brought up had been forecast. For a week Irene was forecast to come ashore.

We have been to the legislature, the DPUC and any other body that would listen to our -- our report of laying off over 1600 telephone workers over the last nine years that would have a devastating effect on service. Routine maintenance has been sacrificed to a degree of almost nonexistence. We have robbed from Peter to pay Paul, and Peter has just checked into a homeless center.

Senator Prague was correct in raising the question why did the rotten pole fall down in her town and take two other poles with it. And why did it take AT&T more than 18 hours to get a line truck out there to start work on replacing those poles when the power company was there 20 minutes after it was reported. These are the facts. More than 50 linemen and over a hundred installers have lost their jobs at AT&T. AT&T used to identify rotten poles on a systematic scheduled maintenance plan and replace them before their life expectancy exceeded. We had poles with red x's scheduled for replacement for more than five years in the field and a lot of those poles came down during this storm.

The other part of this equation is that AT&T is using in some cases substandard, ill-equipped, poor trained and out-of-state contractors for a major part of their line workforce while our members sit at home when these out of hours incidents take place. Contractors were called in on Sunday for storm restoration while the construction people at our locations sat home until Monday. You might ask why. And the answer is because they

can. No one but no one is holding their feet to the fire. It seems to be cheaper to pay a fine than do the job right. Tell that to the half a million residents of Connecticut who lost power because of these rotten poles that fell down and should have been replaced causing their freezers to defrost because they were out of power for more than a week.

We have a process in Connecticut that not only failed to perform under pressure because of the loss of jobs but because we have now severed the cord of local knowledge in our state. Repair and dispatch centers are not longer in our state. We have allowed them to be moved to Texas, Illinois, Michigan and, yes, as Representative Betty Boukus pointed out she got sent to the Philippines to take care of her problem. Those repair and dispatch calls used to be handled in Meriden who -- who knew where Columbia was and not a place in South America.

Communications with government agencies may have worked beautifully but don't tell that to the customers that I talk to. They waited literally hours on the phone to talk to real people in Connecticut because of their MedicAlert system was down or a senior citizen that relied on the premise that the phones would work even when they lost commercial power and had no idea what bode next.

I can honestly say that AT&T came up short with its customer contact throughout this Tropical Storm Irene. And there has to be a better job done in educating the public and identifying critical services. Many customers' trouble tickets were automatically scrubbed when commercial power in their area was restored and forced them to call in a

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second and third time to get a trouble ticket generated because the lines to their homes were down along with their power. On the other hand it was reported that as many as five technicians were dispatched to the same location because of a problem of an automatic -- automated dispatch system. This inefficient dispatching caused further delays in deploying generators to multiple terminal locations compounded by the fact that the vehicles were equipped with generators but they didn't have the proper cords and made them useless. The generators that were shipped in from King of Persia, Pennsylvania, arrived on Monday and were not compatible with the towing trucks and they caused delays in deployment. We knew about this storm a week prior.

As the spokesman for AT&T, John Emra, stated last Monday, misplaced nostalgia -- no, just good service communications that are dependable, reliable and have backup systems in place so that when we do have a real hurricane, commerce won't stop in our state. Our government has to step up to the plate and learn from this experience. Our leaders have to put together a task force that won't dance around the troubles that just -- and not just come up identifying the problems and pointing fingers but come up with an honest assessment and put -- and place corrective action that will lead to real solutions.

I'm not asking my elected representatives to do that alone. It's a lot of work that has to be done. The telecommunication workers of the CWA 1298 stand ready to assist you in any way we can. We understand there are new technologies but these are not new principles. We will work -- we will take this journey

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together and as any journey starts with its first step, we are here today to start that process.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak to you this evening. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Mr. Weidlich. Do you have a comment?

DAVID WEIDLICH: Just one thing to add on. What we heard about the response time for the emergency broken poles that's not unique to the storm and it's a constant battle and we get calls from our brothers at the IBW about the delay in AT&T responding to those broken poles. As late as this past Wednesday night into Thursday, one of the linemen reported to me that CL&P was out there for seven or eight hours waiting and we came at seven o'clock in the morning. So there's something else that can be, you know, worked on as we work through this whole process but we have to get that process cleared up. It's -- it's -- it's, you know, towns are paying overtime for police officers in excess of what they probably need to. I know that's probably all reimbursable but it's extra money that's being spent that shouldn't be. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

I'm going to ask Mr. Cirillo and Mr. Rams all to come to the front so that we can have questions from members of the committee.

A VOICE: Who goes first?

REP. NARDELLO: Well, I'm going to recognize Senator Witkos for -- because I don't know

where the questions are going to be -- depends on who they want to ask the question of but Senator Witkos will be recognized for his question.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thank you, Madam Chairman -- Chairwoman.

I guess I want to make a comment first. You know, these -- although I heard a comment that, unfortunately, you're not invited to come to hearings. Every hearing that we have in this building is a public hearing that you're always more than welcome to come and sign up and testify in matters before you or send written testimony in so it becomes part of the record. So I wanted to make that clarification that we always like to hear from everybody if there's a matter of interest, depending on the topic matter as it pertains to you.

I think our role, as legislators and as a policy, is to make sure that -- not to tell you how to do your job but to make sure that if there's a problem that it's being addressed by the companies or the utilities themselves. I don't think we're in a position to be experts at all to say you should have this, you should have that. I think that's best left with the individual utility companies. And I also believe that -- and I'll throw this out to the folks of UI and to CL&P -- we spoke about the managers. Are not most of the managers come from -- from the line level working their way up through to become managers? That's my first question if somebody wants to answer to that.

FRANK CIRILLO: Can I answer -- in response to your question.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: In the testimony -- in this booklet here we -- our testimony goes back to 2002 where we've identified these problems to the Legislature to the DPUC the Office of Policy Management and nothing was done until now we have the storm and everybody is wondering what happened. So I appreciate the opportunity to speak, but I would like to have -- to be part of a solution working on the problem, identifying those problems so we can come up and take on these problems.

AT&T has -- it seems to be cheaper for AT&T to pay the fine for not replacing these poles than it does to replace the poles. We saw these poles come down. And also not just telephone wires -- power lines are also connected.

So my feeling is we have to -- we have to take action. We have to recognize what the problem is. And if we don't take action, as our representatives, we're not doing our job. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Cirillo.

FRANK CIRILLO: To answer your question, some but not all have come up through the ranks. A lot of our supervisors are now have maybe four or five years with the company and they are made supervisors. It used to be a natural progression. You would have somebody with 25 years as a chief, then he would be the next supervisor.

They don't do that anymore. There are a lot of good people in Connecticut Light & Power Company -- a lot of good supervisors that have been here a long time but not all of them. I

can give you a small example. We were discussing some street light problems with the Street Light Committee with the company and the person in charge with the street lights, as we talk here, you know, you say can you give me a little bit of your background. This person's background was the banking industry, court recorder in the Department of Corrections. That's what runs the streetlights in Connecticut.

We have to find ourselves sometimes starting at ground zero trying to explain our position and most of our people have been around the company anywhere from 15 to 30 years that attend our meetings. But, yeah, I'm not here to knock Connecticut Light & Power Company but there are a lot of new supervisors and there are supervisors who did not come up through the CL&P ranks. Our CEO is from Baltimore. Our old CEO is from Michigan. Our new president is from California. Our old president was from New York --

SENATOR WITKOS: What I'm talking about --

FRANK CIRILLO: -- It's not here.

SENATOR WITKOS: -- I don't want to talk about the boardroom level people. I'm talking about the people on the streets because --

FRANK CIRILLO: -- They're very -- not -- not all -- some -- most.

SENATOR WITKOS: -- Excuse me just a moment, sir. The folks that were here to testify last week said that they had no problem with the linesmen when they actually got to their towns and their communities to fix the problems. The problem was the supervisors at that level

in dispersing the crews to go to the different and authorizing the work to be done, not the folks way up in the hierarchy --

FRANK CIRILLO: Most of them are from CL&P born and raised here, most of them -- there are some that are not and some don't have a lot of experience in the field. They don't go to the senior people anymore to make supervisors. That's our assessment.

SENATOR WITKOS: Okay.

Maybe you can answer this one as well. We talked about the linesmen would be willing to work more hours but they're prohibited from doing that. And I have an article from 2010 that was right after the last incident we had in the state. And Rich Sank, who was I guess at the time a union official representing the CL&P linemen, said that -- and this is a quote, "The director from the company was to work 16 hours on the clock and get eight hours rest. That is in line with our collective bargaining agreement. They're not violating anything." So does your current collective bargaining agreement reflect those comments or has it changed at this time?

FRANK CIRILLO: No, our collective bargaining agreements hasn't -- haven't changed in about 60 years. To Jeff Butler's credit, one of the company's spokesman made a comment in the Waterbury paper that said that it was our collective bargaining agreements that restricted us from working. I called the paper; they did a retraction and to Mr. Butler's credit he wrote them a letter and retracted that also. If they want to work us 48 hours, there's nothing that says they can't. If they want to work us only nine,

they could do that. They're in charge not us.

SENATOR WITKOS: And this would be for the telecommunication workers and CL&P. Is there anything -- we talk about how folks they're arriving at a scene they find out that it's either a HELCO pole, CL&P or a AT&T pole. Is there anything within our collective bargaining that would prohibit you from replacing that pole and having an interchange between the two companies why they just can't work out the cost of doing that?

And if you have the people there already why that can't be done? Or if there's a say a where AT&T has their poles located is closer than calling in a Northeast Utility pole we can get it done faster and get the thing fixed. Why can't we just shuffle the paperwork around and get the actual work done? Is there something that prohibits that from taking place?

WILLIAM HENDERSON: I'll let Frank talk about it first and then I can -- I'll pick up the back.

FRANK CIRILLO: We've -- we got some problems with the AT&T contractors and Connecticut Light & Power Company management knows it. They've had meetings with us and they've had meetings with AT&T. They're dangerous, and they're not very efficient and it takes them a long time to get them to come out. Sometimes -- I believe it's Texas they have to call to get them to respond. At that point, I believe the rule is -- and I could be wrong so I stand corrected here -- if we're out there for more than two hours, we will then set the pole, restore power and charge the telephone company. I believe that's the rule but senior management would have to answer that better

than I could.

Bill.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Yeah, thank you, Frank.

The -- if you look at the last two pages in this book you'll see a contractor that was hired by AT&T, US Utilities out of Ohio and they came out to do the -- to do a job on replacing a pole. The pole not only fell on the truck with the transformer on it but it fell into the street endangered the public.

AT&T's cheaper is better attitude -- they have landscaping people that are out there changing poles that they are not equipped, they do not have the right equipment, they're not trained to do the job correctly while they have people sitting at home that are trained and do know the job and are not being called in. Not this may sound crazy -- and it is but -- it's inefficient. It's not in the public's best interest and it's not done in a timely manner.

You know this is why Senator Prague had to wait 18 hours to get somebody there. We had people still sitting home that day that they could have called out to take care of that problem. Now we have to recognize -- and there's other pictures here -- that where the contractor that did the job cut the bottom of the butt of the pole off because he didn't want to dig the pole deeper. Well, that pole came down and it came down in the middle of the street during the storm. We can't have -- looking at it from the top it looked fine but you don't know how deep that pole is set.

So what I'm saying is that we have to have standards in this state and they have to be

high standards and they're standards that we're going to hold people's feet to the fire and make sure that they stand up for what they do and the work -- quality of work that they're performing. You know, this is the -- this is our state. We have to take responsibility for this.

And like I said before I'll be glad to work with any committee at any time in looking at these solutions because we have a lot of problems not just this problem when it comes to utilities. And we're facing a bigger disaster and I hate to say that coming up. If we had -- if this storm hit in the wintertime, it would have been disaster.

SENATOR WITKOS: I've had the opportunity to be at different scenes where a pole has to be replaced and there is generally a supervisor there that from whoever owns the point at some point. Who -- does somebody sign off on the job once it's completed and all the paperwork is brought in?

WILLIAM HENDERSON: That's a good point. I don't know when you were there but AT&T used to have straw bosses and the straw boss would be in charge of the job. He's a working foreman, if you will, you know, that can pick up tools and work. AT&T had found it best in their working scenario to get rid of all those people. So there are no straw bosses now on the job, and I think this is a big problem. And I look at that as a management issue, as well as ours. We don't -- they're not part of our bargaining unit but if we're going to talk about the problems let's talk about all the problems. Thank you.

SENATOR WITKOS: Thanks. I see they're on our list

coming up later on today so I'll pose that question to them. Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Senator Prague.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

I wanted to ask the gentleman who is representing the -- the electrical workers -- Cirillo, was it?

FRANK CIRILLO: Yes.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Mr. Cirillo. Do the public utility companies, like Norwich Public Utilities and Groton Public Utilities, do they have more yearlong line mechanics and linemen out there working on their lines? Is the ratio of workers to customers higher in those companies?

FRANK CIRILLO: I can't answer that intelligently but my counterpart who has municipalities, who also works with Connecticut Light & Power Company, he's right there. He could answer that question for you immediately.

A VOICE: Yes.

FRANK CIRILLO: The answer is yes.

SENATOR PRAGUE: So that's why maybe they were able to get their customers back online a lot sooner than CL&P. People who had one of the municipal electric companies, like Boswell Light & Power and Norwich Public Utilities, they got their power back within a couple of days. You know I think that's something the Energy Committee will probably take a look at

is the staffing ratio of workers maintaining the lines to customers. I mean what else would keep those lines safe and protect the customers than having them analyzed, having them checked, having workers out there making sure the lines are okay. I think that's what you're suggesting?

FRANK CIRILLO: Part of what I am suggesting but we're -- we're not very good at our regular maintenance -- our Connecticut Light & Power Company.

SENATOR PRAGUE: And if you had more people out there --

FRANK CIRILLO: -- they would be doing the maintenance work. We get a lot of complaints from the field and a lot of our members express those concerns to the company at safety meetings that we have usually twice a year that. The maintenance isn't getting done. We had those problems with our underground that resulted in a fatality downtown Waterbury.

SENATOR PRAGUE: My other question -- I mean now that AT&T is a Texas-based company. It seems to me when we had SNET, instead of AT&T, our service was a lot better. I mean --

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Without question, without question. That is an understatement to say the least. The -- and -- look I was in the emergency dispatch center, you know, for AT&T. I was glad they let me to be there; I watched what was going on. Those people work very hard. However, the person they brought in to run the dispatch center came in from Ohio or Cleveland; he drove all night to get there. He worked his -- you know, he worked very hard

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to do the job. But as I said before, he wasn't familiar with the state, he wasn't familiar with the critical issues or the critical service points that we have to maintain.

Our Congressman Courtney called me on the phone when I happened to be there and he talked about a town in his area that was -- that lost not only the cell phone but lost their land lines. They had no communications and how -- what a big problem that was. And I said, you know, Congressman, I said, I'm standing right next to the man that's in charge, I handed him my phone to Wiley but not everybody knew how to go about it, how to get their service restored. They did get that service restored within 24 hours to AT&T's credit. But the lines of communication you have to know our state geographically as well as the service that we provide. And I don't think they understand from Texas what this problems are here. Thank you.

SENATOR PRAGUE: And especially if their call centers are God know where. It seems to me it would be critically important to have your call centers in the -- if you're going to service Connecticut, you should have a call center in Connecticut.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: That's right. You're absolutely right, Representative Prague.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Well the Energy Committee has a lot of work to do because we don't want to suffer through this kind of a situation again. And, you know, I'm hoping that CL&P and AT&T will be cooperative and be willing to make positive changes so that the people who are paying the rates that they charge will get

better service.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: AT&T made \$13 billion last year.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Not bad.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Okay. Not bad. Record profits. And my feeling is they've got to start putting more money into their plant department back into the infrastructure.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Yeah, I agree.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Representative Miller.

REP. MILLER: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

We've probably got a couple hundred retirees in the state of Connecticut --

A VOICE: -- more than that.

REP. MILLER: -- who have a vast knowledge of how the utilities work. What would preclude UI and AT&T and CL&P from hiring these guys on an emergency basis -- at least fill in at the -- the areas where there's a center where they have to respond to people who call up? Is that a problem with the unions?

WILLIAM HENDERSON: No, not at all. In fact, you know, we've laid off, like I said, 1600 people. You know, to bring these people back into -- you know, but the licensing that's required and the, you know, the liability of now they've been out of the workforce -- all

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these things come into play. Because that's what I said. I said exactly the same thing. Get these people back here, get these 50 linemen, get these hundred installers back that you just fired -- or laid off and get them back into the job market.

We took, people and -- and you know, we were looking -- they were looking for resources because they realized they were so short handed. We had people that they rather than get laid off through in the -- as service reps -- they took people out the service reps and sent them out to the field. But, like I said, you're robbing from Peter to pay Paul and there's just nobody to take from.

REP. MILLER: But the fact is that I'm not asking these guys --

WILLIAM HENDERSON: -- no.

REP. MILLER: -- to go up on a pole and do the work that they used to do. They could --

WILLIAM HENDERSON: -- they could do storm assessment.

REP. MILLER: These guys are probably --

WILLIAM HENDERSON: -- yes.

REP. MILLER: -- 50, 60 years old or older.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: -- there's a lot of work.

REP. MILLER: At least --

WILLIAM HENDERSON: -- there's a lot that could be done.

REP. MILLER: -- at least they can sit into the different centers with their expertise and give advice to people.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: There's no plan. There's no plan. And I'm being very honest when I say that. And I think that's what we have to work on a plan.

REP. MILLER: Great.

FRANK CIRILLO: Representative Miller, I do believe in this storm that Connecticut Light & Power Company did bring back some recently retired people. I know of one for sure. But one of the problems was they ran out of vehicles for their own people. They had their own people driving their own vehicles delivering material in their own vehicles. So they didn't -- I don't believe they were prepared, my opinion.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: We knew a week before it was coming so I don't know why we weren't. You know, that's the amazing part of it.

REP. MILLER: Thank you very much.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Before I call on the next person, just for the record 50 to 60, Representative Miller, is not old. We have to say that for the record because then most of the people here are old.

Representative --

FRANK CIRILLO: As I can attest to that. I'm still working here.

REP. NARDELLO: Representative Becker. Not working

down there?

A VOICE: It's on here.

REP. BECKER: There we go. First of all,
Mr. Henderson, thank you very much for your
testimony today.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you.

REP. BECKER: Just curious do you know what
percentage of poles are owned by AT&T versus
NU in our state?

WILLIAM HENDERSON: I've got an information request
into AT&T.

When did we put it in, Dave? Yeah.

DAVID WEIDLICH: The answer to the question is we
don't know exactly. That's something that
we've heard numbers but we don't have any
exact data on that.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: We've been very careful. All
the information I've given you has been
documented and backed up and I've got at least
four sources. I don't want to shoot from the
hip and guess, but I would say that AT&T has
the majority of the poles since they have at
least 50 percent of CL&P's and many of UI's so
that would take the majority of the poles in
the -- in the system. But I will get -- and
how many of those poles are out of date, how
old are those poles is another question that
we should be asking. You know the lifespan of
a pole, I'm told, is 30 years. Are the poles
over 30 years? I think they are.

You know the pictures that you have here
showing these poles that -- this pole that is

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sitting on stilts -- that's been sitting like that for a year. That didn't happen with the storm, that's been rotted away for a year and it's still sitting there out in the field like that. That's a disaster waiting to happen. I'm surprised it didn't come down with the last storm.

REP. BECKER: One quick follow-up question --

WILLIAM HENDERSON: -- sure.

REP. BECKER: -- and that is you've spoken about AT&T's maintenance, do you have any information on the power companies maintenance and their poles and how they compare?

FRANK CIRILLO: I can't speak intelligently on that. I do know that we have a lot of poles that are out there that have been replaced but never changed over. And from time to time people will bring up at safety meetings that they've had poles in the ground that have the x's on them that should be changed that aren't. But I can't speak intelligently on how bad the problem might be.

REP. BECKER: Okay, thank you. I know the executives will be back later this afternoon and we can try them.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: My vice president drove in today and he counted the x's coming from East Hartford --

DAVID WEIDLICH: -- from just a short trip from Rocky Hills to Wethersfield there was about five of them that needed to be replaced.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Five of them sitting there now and the -- that's in the course of 10, 15

miles.

DAVID WEIDLICH: -- not even four miles.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Maybe four miles. So we're in terrible shape. You know we're lucky that more didn't come down. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Henderson, I do have two questions for you. You made the statement that some AT&T, one of your communication workers were at home and other people were called in.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Correct.

REP. NARDELLO: What would be the situation whereby they wouldn't call the Connecticut CWA worker and have someone else come in? Could you explain to me how that occurs?

WILLIAM HENDERSON: I think you ask AT&T that. I, you know, I'm amazed. I'm absolutely -- go ahead.

DAVID WEIDLICH: -- no, there's just some history there on why that would happen. And the reason why that happens is because, in 2008, there was a decision made to outsource through contract labor a lot of emergency pole restorations. And because that process is in effect that's the process that was followed on that Sunday and we didn't come in until on Monday --

WILLIAM HENDERSON: -- Monday.

DAVID WEIDLICH: And that's, you know, aside from us bringing up everywhere we can to try to get it addressed, we also have -- that's get into our collective bargaining agreement and our

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grievance and arbitration process and that's something that is being dealt with in that arena. But the process used to include the power company working with a straw boss at Connecticut and if there was a problem in our response time they knew who to call, when to call and how to get somebody out there. That system is no longer in place and that's what one of the root causes that I have to answer your question. Okay?

REP. NARDELLO: And the second question I have is one of the things that happened in this storm is we had several areas that had a failure of land lines and I actually asked this of the company as well. I was under the impression that land lines were relatively safe in terms of the -- the reason you have a land line is so that during the storm you don't have to worry about the battery charger and all of that. You can pick up your phone if you have an emergency. Can you tell me from your perspective -- because I asked from their perspective -- why some land lines went down? Are there changes or what's happening in that area?

WILLIAM HENDERSON: One of the problems that we see is that we become -- as the gentleman spoke before me about our heavy reliance on commercial power where we've always, you know, provided power from the central office to the home and so that's why your phone worked and that's why in some cases in an apartment house or all these housing, you know, one apartment worked and one didn't because they weren't on a remote cabinet, if you will, or into a void situation because of the bundling that goes on.

We also have remote cabinets that are

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providing a central location at a remote position where these land lines come in. And when they lose power you're also going to lose power. So it's not a direct line, as they say, a home run right from the office to the house. It goes to a remote terminal and from the remote terminal it goes to the subscriber.

But the issue is still the same that, you know, these remote terminals can have generators. You know we've had, you know, it was pointed out to me that in -- I think this is what the company has to answer -- that they brought these generators in on Sunday and they were deployed on Monday from two locations.

People waited three hours in their trucks to pick up a generator which was ridiculous especially when we knew the storm was coming a week in advance. But -- but these sites should have emergency power. They should have a generator that can kick on or that somebody can put on to keep those systems up. And you know it's not, you know, what are we talking about here. I mean we're talking about a generator that -- that's in the field; it can be in a cabinet. We've got them on all of our trucks. You know why can't we put one with remote terminals? Usually you have five or six remote terminals.

What was one of the problems was when they went to a remote location and where all these remote terminals are, which one do you turn up? You've got a generator and you've got one plug and you've got five cabinets. So usually it was to my understanding that they turned up the U-verse. Why? Because it generates money that's why.

So -- I mean I -- I guess I'm the guy that's

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going -- I'm not going to be -- get a Christmas card from AT&T this year, but I'm going to tell you exactly what the facts are and where we stand and what we have to do. I mean we cannot allow this to happen to the greater proportion to a disaster situation in the wintertime or with a real hurricane that we have to deal with in this state.

REP. NARDELLO: And we are now -- Okay, Representative Rebimbas. I'm going to -- this will be the last question. We are coming to the end of the time allotted for this and we are running behind schedule. So if you'll -- I'll give you the opportunity to ask the last question.

REP. REBIMBAS: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon and thank you everyone for your testimony here today. As I was listening to your testimony I'm trying to think of what are possible recommendations and resolutions for a lot of the experiences that obviously we had throughout the state of Connecticut. I just need the clarification on one point. Probably more specifically to the testimony that was provided by Mr. Cirillo.

My understanding from your testimony -- and I thought it was clear -- is that there was workers willing and able to work past the 16 hours but were unable to but then I think in your response to Senator Witkos' question I got a little confused there because then my understanding was maybe there was nothing stopping it. If you could just confirm to me because I think one of the things from your testimony that rung in my mind is maybe we shouldn't have regulated something that -- as you put it -- with a hundred years of

expertise. I think the people in the best position for these workers are the representatives of the workers. With that said, if you could just clarify for me, in fact, was the limitation on hours is that something that you are limited on or not limited on?

FRANK CIRILLO: It's real easy. The majority of our workers, especially our young workers, they want to work. They'll work all that they can. Our collective bargaining agreements do not restrict us from working but our collective bargaining agreements are not the management of the company. In every collective bargaining agreement comes the management rights clause and that is setting the work schedules. The company tied their hands and said, no, you're not working beyond. Go home. But they would have stayed. So it sounds conflicting. There's no rule or regulation other than the function of management that made those workers go home. They would have stayed; the majority of them would have stayed and they would have worked.

REP. REBIMBAS: I thank you very much for that clarification because I think that was important as we move forward and kind of looking into that exactly what was the understanding of management and why did they make the decision that they made. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: We have now come to the end of this portion but before you leave, gentlemen, I would want to say to you and repeat. I know the statement was made that, you know, we haven't -- you're feeling that sometimes we haven't listened to you or included you in some of these discussions. Well, you're here today. Okay. And what I'm asking you to do

and I've now said it pretty clearly and it needs to be done when you leave here today -- some of you may have done for your testimonies -- but be very clear about identifying what the problems are, from your perspective, what the solutions are, from your perspective.

I'm not going to guarantee you that we're going to be able to do every one of your solutions and maybe it's something that's going to happen over time or maybe there are other, you know, we have to talk to the regulatory agencies and other things that may impede things, but the fact of the matter is that the purpose of the hearing is to make those considerations. So I would ask you to do that, if you would, and do that, you know, in the next few days and be, like I said, very clear about. And also include all of your contact information so in case we have questions, we can call you.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you very much.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: We'll go back and work on it now and give it to you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

And we're going to move on to the next portion of the afternoon. And at this point what we're going to do is we're going to ask the chairman of the Public Utility Regulatory Authority, Kevin DelGobbo to come up and give his presentation of the perspective from the Public Utility Regulatory Authority. Thank you.

KEVIN DelGOBBO: Good afternoon. Thank you. I

like sitting up there better.

Chairwoman Nardello, senators and representatives, thank you very much for the opportunity to make a presentation today.

My name is Kevin DelGobbo. I am the chairman of the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority. I'm here today to speak on the issues we're all very familiar with those are the issues resulting in what we experienced in the storm and the impact on the citizens of the state. The -- as you are well aware of the -- the PURA, the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority, is -- is a result of a restructuring that had taken place this last -- this last session, as a result of Public Act 11-80. We are the former DPUC.

In some conversations with Chairwoman Nardello, she had brought up some particular points that she thought that -- that everyone might want me to address initially but, of course, I'm here to answer any question that I can for you today.

So the first is the review that we would be doing as a regulatory body. The public utilities control authority is undertaking a review of the performance of all of Connecticut's public utilities that means not just the electric utilities but all of those within our jurisdiction so that includes the two EDCs, the telcos -- that's AT&T and Verizon -- that includes the local gas distribution companies and that includes the investor-owned water utilities.

Now there's a lot that that does not include, for example, wireless providers; that does not include other water systems that are either

municipally owned; that doesn't include the CMEEC utilities that are under -- that are not under our jurisdiction. So this review is, in effect, standard regulatory practice following major storm events and derives from the Authority's statutory cognizance pursuant to Section 16-11 of the Connecticut General Statutes and that is to ensure that the state's public utilities meet their obligations to provide safe and adequate service to ratepayers.

The bulleted points you'll see in the testimony is that we're going to review -- and this is just a limited list -- is a number of items, the emergency planning that's involved by utilities, the preparation for the specific storm, the restoration of service, the plans for mutual assistance and supplemental staff and communications with customers and public officials. Just to drill in a little more of what those items mean and you have to appreciate that this is not just a few sheets of paper; this is a rather forensic audit, if you will, of all of these issues that it has undertaken.

Emergency planning includes reviewing the adequacy of the emergency planning documents, review of the emergency planning during the routine storms and the training and preparedness of the organization in planning for emergencies. Preparedness includes a review of the adequacy of all overall resources, the procedures for obtaining assistance from various local and out-of-state entities, the companies' procedures for obtaining weather forecast information, the collection of data regarding outages during an event and plans for the communication to customers, local officials and State agencies

and the public.

Restoration performance -- that one word is a big issue in and of itself and that's almost at some point as though we're looking at an hour by hour analysis going through from the time of the weather forecast a week earlier through the full restoration. And that includes the activation of the emergency procedures themselves; the effectiveness of managing and deploying resources, a key issue when we talk about the scale of the -- of the crews that came in there -- how were they managed and deployed; the effectiveness of the procedures for obtaining assistance from outside entities; the effectiveness of data collection process for determining the extent of outages -- in other words, you know, their ability to assess so that they could be effectively deployed; the effectiveness of the reporting relationships and internal communications; effectiveness of communications with customers, local officials, State and public agencies, mutual assistance -- that was a major issue obviously in this storm and we'll be looking significantly on how that was -- how that worked, how that didn't work; post storm activities including evaluating what the company does post storm to learn from the experiences.

There are a number of items I'll talk about later; applying best practices -- not just looking at this utility but looking across the country to apply best practices in how they undertake all of this; and whether any other aspects of management of the storm response that are not covered in these areas.

What I included next for the committee to

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review is a number of the decisions and investigations, if you will, reviews that the department has undergone. This is just in the last decade. And rather than reading all of that what really the takeaway here is that this is an ongoing engagement as a regulatory that it has with those that it regulates. There's no absolute beginning and no absolute end. It's an ongoing process where, as a regulator, you're trying to identify issues as they arise. Sometimes they are recommendations, sometimes they're orders, sometimes they are fines as a result of practices.

What you see here is then the evolution in Connecticut, at least with regards to electric distribution companies, of how issues as they have arisen, have been addressed, what kind of analysis was applied, what kind of recommendations have come as a result and, frankly, as we look at this storm from a regulator's perspective to look and see to what extent those had effect, what extent they were carried out and that will have a significant impact on the kind of determination that we make.

The key, again here, is whether you are a utility, a municipal emergency manager director, a legislature, a homeowner this storm brings to us all, you know, what did we do, what did we need to do better. You know I look at -- I lost all my groceries in my refrigerator, like many other people, and took showers down at the Y in the morning and you know I say what should I have done better other than expecting the power to be restored quicker to prepare for this storm myself. That's an issue of engagement all along the continuum that we have as citizens.

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A key issue that's come about, of course, is what is the rate treatment going to be for the expenses of this storm? I know that came about is some of the press reports. And so I wanted to provide you with some data before we talk about what even in theory might go into rates what already is in rates. And so I point out in CL&P's last rate proceeding which was Docket 09-12-05 -- and I point out the docket numbers because of reference point for you all because you can go back and look at a lot of this material as you're deliberating -- CL&P was allowed \$9.6 million in rates for purposes of storm expenses. What does that mean? It means that we already paid, in rates, some amount of money to account or to accommodate storm expense.

For events that are greater than \$5 million, they're allowed to access what's known as a Storm Reserve Accrual Account. The account allows for \$3 million also already in rates that are added each year and that sort of adds up from year to year and is accessed only at the point in time, in CL&P's case, that the storm damage exceeds \$5 million. In addition Connecticut Light & Power maintains insurance for these storm-related expenses for the NU System Transmission and Distribution Line policy. It provides a \$15 million limit per occurrence and an annual aggregate with a \$10 million deductible. So obviously we're going to be looking, in our proceeding, how and to what extent those provisions are applicable.

In UI's last rate proceeding which was 08-07-04, their accounting for storm expenses differs a little bit from Connecticut Light & Power's in that regular storm damage expenses -- at least in my review I wasn't on that case

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it was prior to my being there -- appears to be spread across various O&M accounts. But for expenses that exceed \$600,000, UI would have historically been able to also access a Storm Reserve Accrual, much like CL&P. However, in their last rate case their president, Jim Torgerson, had revised to zero what had been originally a \$600,000 per year Storm Reserve -- Storm Reserve Accrual request. My reading of the record is that it was one of the attempts of the issues in that case to reduce the impacts -- the apparent impacts of that time -- on rates in that case.

Instead expenses greater than \$600,000 in rate years 2009 and 2010 are considered a regulatory asset that are adjudicated in the next rate proceeding. What does that mean? That means that they get to kind of put this off to the side for accounting purposes. There might be these additional expenses, but they're not debated or dealt with until the next rate proceeding whenever that is and there's no guarantee of return or an allowance of that -- no guarantee they won't get it, no guarantee that they will. That's looked at in that specific case.

Our reviews -- it's like this -- are part of the important record that's developed because one of the reasons why you would or would not allow these extraordinary expenses would be to say, well, did they act prudently in their management of the storm and that's one of the basis in which a regulator would determine whether to allow those expenses in the next rate case.

UI does not maintain the same storm related expense insurance policy that CL&P carries. There's very good reasons. Some preliminary

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data indicates that it would have not met a cost benefit test of value to ratepayer for UI to have secured such coverage. In other words, when you look at their footprint in the scale of what it would cost it would have been significantly larger than the benefit in any storm event such as this. But we will obviously be looking at that in our review.

In general, what I lay out for the members here is a little bit of a -- I'll call it -- a light legal analysis of how rate making works for the benefit of the members here because I know this question comes up, I know the question is going to come from your constituents and probably already has. The general principle is, under law, any public utility is allowed to come in for a rate increase at any time; they're allowed to come in. The -- but there is no guarantee in terms of how this or any other issue is treated for rate making purposes. And so as a general rule here what -- when we establish rates for public utilities is we start off at a point of time, we'll say this year and we look at the next two years. We try and make a reasonable understanding of what revenues are needed to operate that company for those next two years.

Once those rates are set, you don't get to come back in the middle of it, necessarily, and say, well, my expenses were a lot different so I want different money. They can come back but, as a general rate making principle, you don't go back for one issue and basically you have to operate within the budget you have. And the exception to that is if occurrences arise that could fundamentally damage the financial viability of the utility in their scale or because they are going to be ongoing or it puts them in a position of not

meeting their public service obligation, they could come back and ask for either an interim or full rate case to determine that.

Another issue that Chairwoman Nardello, of course, has been under discussion here, has to do with tree trimming and capital expenditures. Connecticut Light & Power was allowed \$21.5 million for tree trimming expenses in its 2010 rate case proceeding. In that case, the Authority actually authorized an amount that was 6.7 percent higher than what CL&P requested in an attempt to further reduce the tree trimming cycle below five years. I kind of highlight that because it is, believe it or not, a rather extraordinary thing for a regulator to give more money in a specific area that was asked for. You either maybe give them what they ask for or less. I was lead on that case and it was one of those issues the record and all the parties, including the OCC and the Attorney General and others identified this as a critical issue and thought it was appropriate in this case to increase the -- or be more aggressive on the tree trimming cycle.

And it's my understanding subject to our vetting of this in our review that CL&P has actually gone further than that in their tree trimming at least in terms of how they're -- what they're expending to it, what the effectiveness of it we'll be looking at. Historically the authorized expenses have increased from about \$14.5 million prior to CL&P's 2007 rate case to, as I mentioned, 19.5 prior to the 2010 case and 21.5 today.

We also approved the proposed capital expenditure program. Now that's fundamentally those things that are needed for distribution

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reliability and operations. We approved that in its entirety from what was requested in that case which was \$310 million, \$331 million and \$314 in the period from 2010 to 2012.

UI, for their tree trimming, was allowed \$3.1 million in 2009, \$3.2 million in 2010 for tree trimming as a result of their last rate case. That had represented an increase from the previous cycle, the previous rate case. They -- UI -- this is going to be an interesting issue for you all potentially and certainly us to explore -- their metric for the tree trimming program is a little different than Connecticut Light & Power's. Their performance -- they have what's known as a performance-based program which is scheduled trimming every four years for the three phase sections of line. That's sort of the major trunk of the distribution system. And every eight years for single phase sections. However, the schedule is reduced for any section of single phase line that experiences two or more tree out contact outages in a 36-month period. In that case, the Authority approved their capital expenditure -- program. Their numbers were \$142 million and \$178 million for the two rate years in that case, which were 2009 and 2010.

When you look at that historically back in 2004, as I was looking at that case, the number was \$53 million. So it's a substantial increase in the allowance for those programs. And of course, one of the things that we monitor constantly and will certainly be in this review is allowed revenues versus deployed expenditures of utilities for both tree trimming and capital expenditures.

And then finally subject to audit and

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verification during our review current data indicates that CL&P had 385 employees assigned to the category -- you're probably generally using the term line workers and troubleshooters. They had 385 employees assigned to that category in 2001 and 422 in 2011. In 2000, UI had 77 employees assigned to that category and 99 in 2011.

One thing that has sort of come about that was obvious to me -- I'm hearing a lot of different numbers here. In fact I had an issue -- I'm sitting -- I'll tell you my tale. I'm sitting Friday night having dinner at a place Representative Nardello knows by myself. I'm reading one of the cases and I'm saying, well, this number doesn't match what I have for data. One constructive issue for all of us might be is to have a sort of common reference point. When we use the term generically "line worker," it's been used in a couple of different ways.

A line worker is sometimes is just those people who are certified. You know, I think they're -- I'm trying to remember the exact term of art in contract. We can ask the utilities but you might have line mechanics and troubleshooters, which are sort of the a -- it takes a long process to get certified to that skill set. And then you have -- and so those people are sometimes considered line workers, but there is a larger subset of electricians and splicers, for example, that sometimes are and sometimes are not lumped into that category of line worker.

What I've been able to thus far look at is that the general question is are the -- are the employees dedicated to this general function, whether you call it just a narrow

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subset or the broader one, what has that looked like over the last decade? And that's something we have to -- I have to validate. So I say this guardedly at least for the data I have now, under either measure, they have appeared at least not to have gone down. They do appear to have gone up slightly.

One of the issues that did come up in a proceeding we had a few years ago as part of a request from the E&T committee was to look at the demographics of the number of line workers, certified line workers, who, you know, were ready to retire and that exposes you because it takes you so long to get these people certified. It could expose the public for not having enough of that category so there was actually additional revenues provided to make sure that they could hire people to get through that training cycle. And when I look at the graphs, it looks like they worked through those cycles. In other words, there was no huge drop off. That meant that as people were retiring they were having people in cycled who were certified at that level.

I'll end it there and, obviously, be available for any questions that the members might have. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Kevin. I have two quick questions and then I'll open it up to members of the committee.

One of the things that I noticed in the tree trimming budget was there seemed to be a very significant increase in the cost of tree trimming. I don't know if you had noticed that as well because while these numbers are going up that we're spending --

KEVIN DelGOBBO: Yes.

REP. NARDELLO: -- the question I think I would ask is, How many miles of tree trimming are we doing for that amount of money? If it's costing us much more, I have to question whether we're actually making gains? And I'm hoping you can answer that question for me.

KEVIN DelGOBBO: It is a question that we're going to further analyze but the -- there's both been efficiencies and there's been additional costs. The additional cost I think you're looking at or might be -- might be identifying is as you deploy these in municipalities -- municipalities they put, you know, understandably different restrictions on, you know, if you're going to do tree trimming, then need to have a private duty personnel there to provide for the safety in a certain zone of work. And I'd say as a general rule it appears that that's been a much more aggressive effort on the part of a lot of municipalities where they're saying, Wait a minute, we want to provide this safety element and, therefore, you have to pay private duty. And you may not be able to use flaggers. Contractors want you to use the personnel in the municipality. So is that a part of it?

I say that -- but, again, I say that guardedly because in my role I can't make any conclusion yet but it's worth -- you know, like a lot of things you've heard, I need to kind -- I've heard a lot of interesting things between today and last Monday than I've got to kind of just -- there are strings I've got to pull on to, you know, evaluate when it's had that kind of an impact on the cost of tree trimming. Certainly, the numbers have gone up big. How

much tree trimming per mile has happened is really the point you're getting to, I believe, and that's the one we're going to have to get to.

REP. NARDELLO: And I was hoping if you have that information you could provide it to the committee so that we can get a sense of are we making headway here or are we just sort of treading water.

The second question that I had, the number of linemen that people have stated -- and as you said there have been some differences -- but I guess for me sitting in this chair those numbers to me have to be given in context more meaning. What I would like to know is how does that compare with -- and let's in fairness to other New England states we want to keep to the same general area who has the same general climate? Do we have those numbers in terms of comparison to the other states where we rank? And if you don't have it today could you provide it to the committee?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: I don't have it today. I'll say that to understand what is, quote, the right number. And in this case, you know, for CL&P and UI, we're talking about distribution system of 20,000 miles of distribution line in the state of Connecticut. So from my perspective, as a regulator, how does that get tested? What's the right number? If you look at it a couple of ways, one is is the company employing best practices across the country -- utilized across the country in evaluating, you know, a number you come up with. And you may have heard about that, you know that's the work plan. What are they -- what are they looking at for the next year in terms the

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capital plan that they have going on, what has been some historical data that they would have in terms of what it takes to maintain the system, and so you begin to test it that way.

Then you look at it and look at, for example one of the reports we provide to the General Assembly every -- every year, is reliability information, one of many metrics that we look at. And that is how many -- how frequent are outages and how long did they last? And for obvious reasons, there would be a correlation if that number started to go out of whack, then you would sit there and say, well, clearly that's one data point to say you don't have enough people to support the system. And as the 2010 report to the General Assembly showed the data -- not me making a judgment -- just the data shows that over the last decade that the liability -- reliability by those measures, things like frequency and duration, have not decreased. They have increased slightly. Now is that a -- is that a good thing or bad thing?

And then, finally, as a regulator, I can't just say, you know what, I want you to double your numbers, you know. There has to be something in the record that vets and says, well, you know what not only do you need more but you need this much more. In part, you could all well understand because you would be screaming at me if I -- if they have an impact on rates. Where did you come up with this number? And so that's the kind of thing that actually is debated within a rate case by all the various parties to say, you know, is the number they have reasonable and is there data to suggest they arrived at it at a reasonable basis and that the system itself is operating. Events, like this, obviously bring that into

question to say, well, do we need to think about other data points.

But the final thing I would mention is -- is actually just the issue of unlike a program that the state might -- the legislature might have a policy and it will fund a program and it will develop a policy and say there you go and the executive branch operates it. The role of a regulator is -- obviously the State of Connecticut does not own the utilities, we do not manage or operate the utilities, and so the responsibility is on the utilities in observing their public service responsibilities to do that effectively and prudently. And so it is, believe it or not, less power than you would think for a regulator to just sort of pick a number from somewhere and say that's the right number, in the number of line workers that they might need for any section of line.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Kevin.

Questions from members of the committee?

Yes. We have Representative Johnson and then Senator Prague.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thank you --

KEVIN DelGOBBO: -- I'm sorry.

REP. JOHNSON: Hi. Thank you for your testimony and I have a couple of questions with respect to how we might or should regulate response -- responses and, in particular, priority. In our -- my district, we had two situations that I found to be disturbing. One was the fact

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that there was almost four to five days where access by the volunteer fire department were unable to leave easily in an emergent situation. They couldn't get out of the area so I'm wondering --

I think it had to do with the -- the utility poles and not coordinating the CL&P poles or the AT&T poles and having so much in the way of debris from trees having fallen that it was hard for town crews and all -- all the different utilities to come together to clear the area. So if there had been an emergency it would have been a very difficult thing for us to get the kind of response that we normally get. So I'm wondering if there --

And then in a second emergency situation, we had our paid fire department also have a problem with down wires on top of the truck and trying to get a response from CL&P. They could not find out any information or get a response in a timely way and, ultimately, the wires kind of found their way off the truck. And nobody was hurt but, certainly, there's a huge potential for having a catastrophe in that circumstance, particularly I think. So my question on that is is there -- is there a prioritization that -- that should occur when we have emergency professionals trying to get a response from CL&P?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: Yes. My understanding in reviewing the emergency planning and how those functions happen following a storm, of course, you have the assessment and in initial prioritization are, of course, to critical health and public safety areas. The question becomes -- and I'm not running away from it because just in my world I can make no conclusion whether or not that was done good

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or not so good in this storm -- but it's an obvious thing and, you know, as I was at the EOC throughout the storm and just the data we all got. We're talking about an incredible scale, not just of the damage but of -- think about, you know, a management structure that normally has to, we'll say, manage 200 work crews and now has got like 2,000.

How do you make sure that that choreography works well? Well, one, you look at the planning to that. Part of what you need to look at is -- was the planning worth anything? Meaning did that work out in the field and what needs to be changed. And where did things go well and where did not -- where did things not go well to deploy into a priority that you just mentioned.

You know I've heard the stories about, you know, somebody waiting around for a long time and marrying those two kinds of crews up. That's clearly something we need to look at. And you know we're talking about -- it sounds like being at war, you know. When you have an event of this scale and bringing all the parts and pieces together is an incredible type of thing to expect but, certainly, we do expect that it happens as best as possible.

The -- the best I can tell you is that I've heard a number of incidents, like you're talking about, and that's got to be something we look at in terms of how this storm was managed not just by the electric utility but by all of them.

REP. JOHNSON: And -- and just to follow up. With the respect to the -- there seemed to be AT&T and CL&P poles and one or the other depending on who owned the pole had to be there in

conjunction with the townspeople to try and address any of the, you know, downed wired and that sort of thing. I'm wondering is there a way that we can that might be a way to coordinate those things so you don't have to have just AT&T for AT&T pole and CL&P for the CL&P pole? Is there a way where they can actually have -- something that they can do to, you know, to try and --

KEVIN DelGOBBO: -- yes.

REP. JOHNSON: -- work together?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: Get them to play nice. You know, there actually is a -- has been an ongoing proceeding. It started from the -- from the last CL&P rate case with regards to the management and coordination between pole -- pole issues that has not been resolved yet. There is the narrow issue of the regulatory one that I'm involved in, but like a lot of things you're talking about there's a lot bigger issues here. And so part of the challenge and Mr. Henderson, who spoke earlier, is correct in terms of how things -- to put it nicely -- how things have so dramatically changed in the last decade in terms of what we understand to be what telecommunications face and what has historically been the SNET or AT&T, you know, telco copper wire line, you know, wire line service is -- has changed dramatically. We know it, you know it.

Reality on the ground is a significant percentage of our customers, of our constituents in your case, or ratepayers in terms of my (inaudible) are served by services that are not part of the regulated space. Whether it's the voice over IP, whether it's

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the wireless. How many of your constituents have neither a wire line or even a voice over IP? They depend on wireless. Neither of those are regulated and -- but are yet so much a part of our society. And all these issues intertwine. So one of the (inaudible) things for you to explore, as a legislature, will be, you know, for areas that are so critical to our economy and public safety, how do we appropriately engage all these parties?

We've heard about the communications task force that took place during the storm. I -- we co-chaired that along with Mark Raymond of the CIO for the State of Connecticut. It was an interesting exercise for me let me put it that way. Two takeaways: One, is all of those providers when we finally got them all around were fantastic at finally working together but getting that to happen and realizing how vulnerable we are to areas that we do not regulate was -- was a challenge. But you balance that. You sit there and we all -- we've got a job session coming up. We want to encourage more jobs in the state and we want to encourage the best technology to be deployed to the state. Well, I followed this, as you know, for a long time. And the business model around which that deploys is not -- in the issue you're talking about not the traditional telco -- that's a business model of, you know, these companies that we don't regulate and yet are so -- they're going to make investment choices in Connecticut based upon what they perceive to be the regulatory climate.

And it's, you know, I just ask you to balance when you're thinking about that. On the one hand, we can and must demand a certain kind of service, but we don't want to do it in a way

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-- I wouldn't think -- this is for you to think about -- in a way that prohibits the kind of investment and deployment in Connecticut in the first place to provide the services and that's the balance that you'll see. Once the E&T Committee, I think, chews into this session they're going to -- that's the debate that I think they're going to confront.

REP. JOHNSON: Well, I'd like to just follow quickly if you have a vision for that I'd like to see it. But I'm thinking mostly of the priority of emergency circumstances and how we can best address that, and I'm not sure that anybody would dispute the fact that emergent situations should be addressed as quickly as possible. And these circumstances that I talk to you about they were not and so I think that, you know, we need to figure out what the priorities are and I think health and safety, like you said, are. And we need to, I think, look at that. So thanks so much for your testimony.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Senator Prague.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Nice to see you, Kevin.

KEVIN DelGOBBO: You too, Senator.

SENATOR PRAGUE: I have a question about the rate that the ratepayers are going to have to pay or have paid, and I'm concerned about the fact that in the press it said that the cost of the

storm was, like, \$75 million and I'm -- it's on everybody's mind --

KEVIN DelGOBBO: Uh-huh.

SENATOR PRAGUE: -- the concern about the ratepayers not being saddled with that kind of expense. In your testimony it says that CL&P was allowed a 9.6 million in rates for purposes of storm expenses in, I guess, that's 2009?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: -- well, for each year. For each of their rate years.

SENATOR PRAGUE: -- for 09-10-05 what is that?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: That's -- that's the docket and what that means is sort of -- sort of every year, every rate year.

SENATOR PRAGUE: So every year they're getting \$9.6 million in storm expenses?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: Correct, already in rates.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Besides that, they have an insurance policy that provides a 15 million limit per occurrence and annual aggregate with a \$10 million deductible. I mean with all these -- and then there is a storm reserve accrual account. Everybody's worried, Kevin, about the cost of this storm and that it not be dumped on the ratepayers. And will it be the responsibility of your group, your regulators, to determine who is going to pay this \$75 million figure that's out there?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: If the utilities make a request, then it is PURA's, the three directors, it would be their -- our collective determination

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of whether or not to allow it in rates or how much of it to allow in rates and if it is in the rates, over what period of time it could be collected. I think I heard Jeff Butler, the president of CL&P, state at the last hearing that he didn't anticipate coming in immediately for some such treatment. But as I mentioned, under Section 16-19 of the Statutes, they, in theory, could come forward at any time.

I certainly get your point, Senator. It's interesting I read an article -- I follow these things nationally --

SENATOR PRAGUE: Sure.

KEVIN DeLGOBBO: -- and this was a storm that's, you know, all up and down the East Coast. You'll find it interesting that in the Baltimore Sun on September 21st had a story. You could almost have replaced Baltimore Gas & Electric with the words CL&P. It was a company in their case 1.2 million customers -- very similar number of customers out, very similar number of time line of restoration. And what were the issues that were being debated in that article? People very concerned about restoration, people very concerned about communication and very -- the number one issue they were talking about is what am I going pay for in rates. So this is an issue that's, I imagine, my colleagues all up and down the East Coast are going to have to grapple with in the coming months.

As I mentioned to you, though, earlier, the key point there is a: There's already money in rates that we pay all as ratepayers to help pay for these expenses. So it's not like that whatever that whole number is and there's no

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guaranteed treatment one way or another whether or not they get it or when they get it. And certainly, the past practice of, like in the UI rate case a number of years ago, to the extent that they were allowed some expenses, they were spread out over a number of years so that it would not be an impact, immediate impact, on ratepayers.

SENATOR PRAGUE: In your testimony, UI is only allowed -- I mean it's minimum compared to CL&P -- \$600,000. CL&P gets millions and millions and millions already. So that will be a big job for you regulators to determine. I'm sure you'll do it wisely.

KEVIN DelGOBBO: I'll try my best, ma'am.

SENATOR PRAGUE: After your determination, does that come back to us?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: No, it doesn't, Senator. It's -- it's a regulatory role is by practice not just in Connecticut but, historically, going back a little over a hundred years, is the government has the right, so to speak, to assert itself into these privately owned businesses but it does so with limitations under constitutional principles.

And so, basically, the role that a regulator in that issue would be we're required to give them sufficient money to run their company, provided they are doing so in a prudent manner and provided we get the balance in some level, just and reasonable, as you've heard or Representative Nardello knows in terms of the impact to ratepayers what that might be. That's what we're always trying to balance. But I -- but the point there is that I don't get to say unilaterally, you know, up front,

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no, you don't get a nickel; just as I don't get to unilaterally say you get it all. It clearly has to be tested to determine whether what's or what they would get or not.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Just one more question. I know our Chairman is sort of giving me the eye here but --

KEVIN DelGOBBO: She was giving me the eye before, too.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Do you take into consideration in your decision what their bottom line is? The amount of profit that they have made in the previous year?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: In rate cases, generally, yeah that's an issue.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Okay.

KEVIN DelGOBBO: I would point out actually -- and I'm reminded of this often by Wall Street fellows -- Connecticut utilities across the board are allowed the lowest return on equity -- meaning profit margin, of utilities nationally as a general, I mean, there's higher or lower. But we often, from a Wall Street perspective, get dinged, so to speak, as a regulatory body because the allowed ROEs in Connecticut, on average, are the lowest in the country.

SENATOR PRAGUE: Thank you very much, Kevin. Good to see you.

KEVIN DelGOBBO: You, too. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Representative Reed.

REP. REED: Thank you, Madam Chair.

I'm just interested in your response. Last week, CL&P, which is our provider, so I'll use them as an example essentially said, Given the situation, we did well. And I'm wondering if you were satisfied with that characterization of their performance and if you found that particularly helpful.

KEVIN DelGOBBO: From what my perspective whether they did well or not will be based on, with all due respect to any comments by any party one way or the other, will be based on the record that we see. And you heard of a number of instances of, you know, you've heard of instances, you know, of crews standing out there and not being, you know, deployed and whether, you know -- those are the kinds of things we need to look at. That will determine whether or not they did well or not. I say that as a regulator. As a -- I have to observe so that it's not -- as a human being just understanding and having -- literally since I was a little kid being involved from strange family reasons with watching emergency services across the range of things -- this was an incredible type of event. No matter what utility, no matter what emergency services department your town had to manage and to work through.

I think whether or not we find good or bad, as we will find both in all these, there is a good story to -- for us to understand in that. Look at the scale of the restoration and look, you know, there was one fatality, unfortunately, in terms of the public, no serious injury of all the utility workers. Safety is a huge issue. We don't want to have these people out there (inaudible) deployed.

There's -- there's some good news to appreciate and understand the scale of what had to happen.

From a regulator's perspective -- in a way I have to kind of put that aside and say just the facts, ma'am, just the facts. What happened step by step and then I'll be able to make an evaluation of was it good or bad or both.

REP. REED: And one other quick question, I just sort of related to it. And so when you were giving us the numbers a few minutes ago about how many employees they have targeted to line repair and troubleshooting compared to what they -- a few years ago compared to what they have now.

Are you at all frustrated with your ability to kind of really understand or not understand but to have any kind of influence over quality control because it feels that the through line through all of the testimony has been that, yeah, maybe they have the assets but they weren't well managed or well deployed? And then the gentleman today sort of pointing out that a lot of prestorm maintenance issues had been neglected for years. You know, as a regulator, what is your role and be able -- in being able to improve that picture?

KEVIN DelGOBBO: Well, as you look at some of the data I provided in my testimony it's an ongoing engagement. It's communication both formal and sometimes even on the phone calls. I mean we get -- it comes to us in a lot of different ways, the reports they have to file with us. We get, as you're all aware, something on the order of 50,000 consumer calls a year on different issues. A lot of

them might relate to maintenance reliability issues on the system. We engage on that. We have -- I'm trying to think. There's so many permutations of it in terms of, you know, changing out the kind of technology that they use for the maintenance. The -- you know -- how they're deploying what you were really getting to is a big, big issue that just on the ground I had to observe. And that's going to be a significant issue that I, personally, as a regulator, will be looking at. You know how they put all these parts and pieces together to be effective or not. I wouldn't call it frustration, but it's a big job.

You know you've got a big job here and somebody said to me, like, oh, you don't have enough going on at the regulatory agency these days, do you? Well, we have a lot as you know and this is a huge responsibility for us to be undertaking.

REP. REED: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Are there further questions?

Thank you, Kevin, for your testimony.

Oh, I'm sorry. Representative Hoydick.

REP. HOYDICK: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Director -- I almost called you commissioner, excuse me. In light of your staff reductions, how do you expect to and what's the timing for this report?

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KEVIN DelGOBBO: The timing will -- will depend, frankly, on what we uncover. What's happening now is sort of the discovery phase. We issued I'd say, before it's over, there will be hundreds of interrogatory and data requests and some of those have multiple subsets. And so as we get through the discovery, we decide, you know, what parts and pieces need to be explored further. You know it took, in the 2010 report, that took about seven months from beginning to end to do that detail report. There's a link to it in my testimony. You might want to look at that because that I think would raise some good questions from members of the committee to be thinking about as you're -- as you're talking here today. It was, I think, a very thorough and detailed analysis. It's going to provide a lot of good or bad news. It's going to provide a lot of baseline data that isn't 20 years old. It's very current for us to be using in this inquiry.

As far as the resources to deploy to it -- it's a priority for us so this has to be priority for how we deploy what resources we have. Will it mean that, you know, other issues are not at the top of the pile? Yeah, it does -- it has that. I can't deny that but this is one of the key priorities. This and, frankly, the 76-plus items that are the result of Public Act 11-80 that are action items that we've identified that we have to undertake as a result of that legislation that -- we're not going to be sitting around wondering what's next.

REP. NARDELLO: Any other questions?

In that case thank you, Kevin.

Next we're going to have Richard Sobolewski from the Office of Consumer Counsel.

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: Good afternoon. Chairwoman Nardello, senators, representatives, thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I'm Rich Sobolewski, and I'm the supervisor of technical analysis for the Office of Consumer Counsel. I've been at that office for 25 years and I've participated in pretty much every major rate case proceeding from all the major utilities in the state -- electric, gas, water companies over that time period. So I've participated in a lot of the reviews of a lot of the expense items that Chairman DelGobbo spoke about in the rate proceedings. And I've also participated in a lot of the storm reviews similar to the proceeding that's going to be going forward before the PURA.

Our office is very sympathetic and understands the frustration of a lot of the customers, the local officials and state officials about being without utility services, especially electricity. You know we understand how really our society is so dependent upon electric service in these days and even in instances when you have your electricity, we're so dependent on electricity that it impacts your cell phones and your cable and even your -- your own telephone it could be. If you have cable telephone -- cable telephone you still may not have service. So given what we had in this past storm, there was quite an overloading not only on our electricity system and all the outages also it seemed to impact our wireless service, our cellular service and even our internet service. Everything really came to slow dramatically given what happened throughout the state.

We were asked by Representative Nardello to address a few issues so I'd like to briefly go over some of those. In regards to line workers, I think you've heard today that the number of line workers over the past decade have increased a little bit and the companies have been spending the monies that they have been allotted in proceedings before the DPUC to actually keep those line people online. For the last five years, we think they've done a pretty good job in keeping the amount of staffing up to the levels allowed in rates. So we don't see any issue right here before us where they've skimped on the amount of expense they've been allowed in those areas.

In reviewing the amount of line workers and the various different titles we've heard about today there's quite a range of, you know, who's a helper and the various topics behind just who is a line worker. So I think there's five or six different categories there. When I looked at the reports in preparation for today, it seemed there was CL&P has about 8 to 900 in those four or five categories. And I think UI somewhere around 200 total in those categories.

When we look in a rate proceeding at exactly what level of personnel should be in those areas, the companies make their proposal and, you know, the DPUC, now PURA, and our office and the other participants look at that complement of workers. And it's not just about, you know, storm restoration. Storm restoration is probably one of the smallest things that we -- we provide those employees for.

I mean, they also have to be called on to do

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normal maintenance and repair work, service installations and change-outs as well as supporting the huge capital expenditure budgets that are allowed. And those are really the driving force we have to look at the amount of employees are if they have a regular amount of work to proceed on a daily basis. To keep a large surplus of employees and trucks and what have you for people that aren't really online and doing work on a daily basis in anticipation of a future storm would be very cost prohibitive, especially in today's current economic conditions.

When we go through a rate proceeding, it's really a delicate balance of, you know, what's needed for -- on a routine basis and what -- what our customers can afford. And it's thought about very importantly from our office, as well as the DPUC. With a few peaks and valleys we think, you know, they've done a good job in maintaining their -- the number of employees that they've had in those areas.

In regards to tree trimming I think Commissioner DelGobbo did a good job explaining how we've had a large increase in tree trimming from about \$13 million in 2003 to over \$22 million on an annual basis at this point. Also on top of that for CL&P, I know that they're also allowed about \$5 million annually for what's called enhanced tree trimming, which is tree trimming outside the normal 12-by-12 box. A lot of times they go out and remove some of the vines and some of the other items that were talked about, other vegetation, that some of the -- I heard the unions talk about how there's some new and some of the tree wardens talking about some of the new vegetation that's in the trees and how it impacts, you know, trees falling. Some of

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that has been allowed for CL&P, and I know that I think that's one of the things that was mentioned at last week's hearing about possibly going after some more of that type of tree trimming expense. That's something outside of the box, something for picking up trees that were diseased and they looked to be hazardous outside the normal tree trimming area.

The tree trimming cycle has bounced around a little bit in the past 15 years. I know in the late nineties we were around four years; and in 2006, we were up to 6.4 years but I think with the increase of expenses they've put it down to five years or less the normal tree cycle. It's not just about a trim cycle. I think quite often we just get too obsessed with thinking about the number of years we are going to be trimming trees. I think one of the things that Commissioner DelGobbo spoke of -- and I know we look at when we were making recommendations to the DPUC on a proposed balance is to look at what the length of outages are and to pick what areas need to be trimmed -- trimmed more often. In certain areas of the state there are trees that grow more rapidly than just, you know, a four or five year cycle. So sometimes you have to go back and trim some of those more often. So we've always encouraged the companies to go back and look in those areas and prioritize what's to be done not just throw more money but possibly to better prioritize what work you're going to be doing.

Lastly, I'd like to commend the PURA for opening Docket number 11-09-08 to look into the investigation of -- of the storm. In the past these investigations have been held on numerous instances after major storms and

they've -- they've proven to be very helpful in addressing strengths and weaknesses for storm restoration, to see how money is spent and how it's prioritized. Our office will be active in that, and we look forward to working with the other state agencies, government officials and the utility companies on improving storm restoration process and activities in the future.

Thank you very much.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Rich. I have one question for you. Since you've been there for the 25 years from your perspective, can you identify anything that's changed over time considerably that contributed to some of the problems that we had in this particular storm or they -- are they unique to the storm?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: Well, I think this wasn't necessarily a problem of the storm, but I think one of the things where you heard the unions discussing how we've dropped the employees levels from 1975 to '85, and it seems now we've had some increase, but I think one of the things the utilities have done a better job at is being more efficient and not necessarily having so many employees in each particular town but having them in a region and then sending out employees and doing assessments before they send their employees out. So I think they've been able to reduce the employee levels that -- in that manner and basically do it more efficiently and more cost effective.

I know there was a discussion today about, you know, the shifts. I think all the 18 -- the 16 hours on and eight hours off, I think what we've heard both last week and today -- I

think both UI and CL&P both have that same policy, as well as CMEEC. I think CMEEC, basically, has the same -- from the gentleman that spoke last week -- I think they have the same work schedules, as well. So I think given the amount of work that was done, I think there were -- there were relatively little injuries and know that's from the amount of customers restored, I think, and given the number of generators that are out there. I think we've heard some of the horror stories about people having their own generators and sometimes power getting back into the grid. I think it was pretty miraculous that the lack of injury there were. So I think those are some things that were better.

I think trees have gotten bigger. They're older. They're falling farther. I think with the storm surge we had, there were a number of problems this time that we haven't experienced in the past.

REP. NARDELLO: Thanks, Rich.

Senator Fonfara.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Good afternoon, Rich. I'm sorry I didn't hear the bulk of your testimony I was in a meeting but can you tell me what has been the position of your office with respect to the electric utilities proposals in terms of tree cutting in the past?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: We have looked at the amount of tree trimming very diligently in cases. The company has requested, especially CL&P, has requested some very large increases over

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the past decade. Our office has advocated some reduction to those amounts. We've recommended a better prioritization to look at the problem circuits, to look at the areas where you have growth of different species of trees and to increase the amounts of cuts in those areas rather than just saying we are going to increase the cycles everywhere.

SENATOR FONFARA: Given what most -- including the Governor has said, is that and I think the testimony in the last -- last week was that from many people is that the big problem here is trees, almost unanimous, that that is the cause of the number of outages and the length of the outages. And to the extent that your office and you just testified that you have -- you have opposed, at least with CL&P, how about UI? Have you -- have you opposed the size of their tree trimming program, as well, or at least their proposed tree trimming program?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think their tree trimming has been reviewed, but I think it's been -- it's a smaller budget comparison not just in dollars, of course, it is because they're a smaller company, but they have a little different plan on how they tree trim. So I think we have -- we've pushed back a little bit less with them. We've agreed to increase it for CL&P just so that my testimony is clear. It's just not to the magnitude that they've requested --

SENATOR FONFARA: Do you have -- do you have reason to reconsider that position now given this -- the impact of this storm?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think we need to do more tree trimming, and it may be --

-- more so than you would have recommended at the time?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: Well, I think it's -- I think we need to do more tree trimming possibly outside of the normal tree trimming area, and I think that's where you've seen -- at least, I know, CL&P has asked for more money and discussed that last week and I think we probably can be in agreement with that that that's an area that because you have trees that are falling 30 and 40 feet in a major storm to look at some of these aging trees. I think that's something that's a very valid concern and something that should be addressed.

SENATOR FONFARA: Because I think that the, you know, the difficulty here, and I don't believe the public has a -- has a fair grasp on, is that in these hearings, you're advocating to try to reduce costs to ratepayers which is why one of the reasons why you're there and what the public would want. But if the impact -- an impact of that effort is to have prolonged outages, greater number of outages in a storm and we have a ways to go here as I've said -- said in the last hearing that the real work begins after this hearing not in front of the cameras and the microphones where everybody gets a chance to say what they want to say but the real work begins after this in terms of bringing the utilities together with the municipalities and -- and really trying to figure out how we can be better prepared for the next storm.

But, in addition, it happens now in PURA in those rate proceedings when the chief advocate for -- if the chief advocate for ratepayers,

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for the consumer, is arguing for less in the way of tree trimming than what the companies may be asking for and that may be a fair position to take but if it results in -- I think the public today would say if you took a poll most in the public would say we need to do more, we need to do better, we need to spend more in that area. Now they may say let the companies take it out of their profit but more tree trimming has to be done and -- and more effective tree trimming.

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think that's exactly what our office would say that needs to be done effectively that you're tying it to improvements and reliability. And I think partly with this storm, I don't think -- unless they were trimming outside the normal trim area -- I don't really know how much of an impact that really would have had in this case. I think because so many of the trees that fallen were bigger trees outside of the normal trim. And I think one of the reasons in the past why we did some opposition to the level that was expended -- or requested was in past years the companies may not have been spending what they were previously allowed. So I mean I think if we give them the money, we are going to make they are going to be spending it on those, especially something like tree trimming.

SENATOR FONFARA: And just so the record is clear, are you suggesting they used that money for other things?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: Well, I know back one of the reasons that the trim cycle did decrease was because the companies weren't necessarily spending the money they were allowed in, say, seven, eight, ten years ago.

SENATOR FONFARA: But were they spending it on other things other --

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: -- yes, on other things other than tree trimming.

SENATOR FONFARA: So you're -- when the -- when the department -- or now PURA authorizes spending it's not required that it be spent in this particular area?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: Generally speaking, unless there's a specific order that you must spend on a particular item, everything in -- pretty much expensewise gets thrown into the pot and it's the company's job -- the companies' jobs to manage the pot.

SENATOR FONFARA: So if PURA were to require in future proceedings that money earmarked for tree trimming must be spent solely on tree trimming that could be the case?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think that that could be the case and would be a very prudent thing to do.

SENATOR FONFARA: Secondly, with respect to the role of the Consumer Counsel in -- can you tell us what you believe the office's role is, should be in the problem that we're evaluating here, the impact of the storm and how we can be better prepared going forward? What do you see is the appropriate role for your agency?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think we will do some of the same type of work that PURA themselves does. We will get involved, we will send out our own discovery to the companies. We'll have in-house staff; we have a wide range of talent within the agency, we have people that, you

know, that are -- we have an engineer; we have someone that's finance, accounting; we have policymakers and attorneys and consumer reps so we can -- we can do some looking at and comparing what's happening in other jurisdictions and look at what's happened here and what the responses have been to the municipalities and various groups and make sure there's a -- see where the weaknesses were in responding to some of these emergency situations that you've heard raised here at these hearings. So I think we will do some of the same types of analysis and make our recommendations on items that could be improved.

SENATOR FONFARA: Who would you make those recommendations to?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: We would make them to the department and to the companies.

SENATOR FONFARA: And how about the legislature?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: We can do that as well, if you're interested.

SENATOR FONFARA: We are.

And one of the things we heard last week was -- probably resonates with me more than just about anything else is besides tree trimming was the fact that municipalities felt that they -- many of them -- that the communication was not what they wished it could be; that a number of roads remained closed for longer than they felt they should be because right now the utility controls the road until the power line is restored or some other steps were taken. Is that an appropriate area for your -- for your office to participate in

finding solutions for?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think we can look at where the problems -- problem areas were and make recommendations on possible investments that need to be made in infrastructure or for even communication equipment, databases, websites. I think that would have more information available possibly to the municipalities and to the utility that they can share. I know some utilities have a more active website where you can see basically circuitry to see where, you know, who has an outage and who doesn't have an outage.

I know that some of the difficulty this time with communicating between all the people in the field could have been possibly because of radio system problems because of the massive outages, as well as, you know, cell phone service being under duress. But I think those are areas where contacts with municipal leaders and some of the point people they've talked about that are out, I think that's all helpful, but I think there is areas beyond that that could be actively strengthened and I think we would be willing to address some of that.

SENATOR FONFARA: I think it's important that the lead agency or office that advocates -- and by the way, the Chair and I in our positions on the Energy Committee advocate strongly for the -- that your office be continued in the reorganization effort, not a position taken by everyone. I think you know.

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I know and I appreciate that.

SENATOR FONFARA: And so I think it's important that whatever comes forward in terms of

outcomes with respect to this process and in particular if that somehow results in an impact on electric rates in this state that your office is actively involved in that. It has to be a credible process. The people of this state are owed that.

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I agree. I think our office takes positions sometimes that -- we will agree to rate increases for the right reason. So if it's going to cost more money to provide better service and that's something that you're interested in and ratepayers are interested in then I think that's something that -- that we should support.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Questions from other members of the committee?

Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just to follow a little -- up a little bit on the tree trimming. One of the things that I did in my community is I had hearings to discuss some of the issues that we faced and one thing that was raised was that during the Hurricane of '38, we lost so many trees that the storm response in the fifties wasn't -- wasn't quite as drastic, let's say, or the need for having people there wasn't quite as much. And now we have trees that have been growing for 30 or 40 years, and I think we need to take a look at what the history has been because we have more people and more trees and the trees are bigger. So I think it

might be -- might be some kind of analysis that should be done. And I'm wondering if you have started on that analysis. It sounds like you've done a little bit of that, but are you ready to take that a little bit further?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think that's something we could do, either in this proceeding or in the future rate proceedings. We could hire consultant help to -- a national expert or regional expert to go out and do some of that type of analysis. I think you're exactly right. Our office was involved -- I think in the late eighties, early nineties when after Hurricane Gloria we went through this whole, you know, certain changes were made to the tree trimming policy and through the whole discussion about, you know, where do we go from here. And I think that same -- same type of analysis needs to be done now 25 years later.

It's -- there's more and more trees and more and more people living, you know, further away -- further away from cities. I think you have more and more type of, you know, potential for outages and lengthy outages to occur just because of the location where people are. I think that's something we need to look at and the age of the trees and what have you.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Any other questions from members of the committee?

I have one follow-up question, Rich. Just sort of occurred to me during the

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conversation. So you here for Hurricane Gloria. There was a lot of comment about the communications with the towns and, of course, 25 years ago we didn't have cell phones. So can you tell me were there complaints about communication with the towns after Hurricane Gloria and, if so, how were they resolved?

RICHARD SOBOLEWSKI: I think so much more of the outages were really -- were so much more reliance on the utilities I think. I think it switched more and more over to where -- because of the amount -- especially this storm, I think there was much more tree damage related where a lot of towns have to go out and do a lot of the tree removal and cutting up the trees. I can just think of my neighbor across the street was the only one who lost power in Newington so it was on his own particular line.

So rather than wait for the town to come he decided to do it on his own. So I think he basically said, well, the town won't be here for a week if I leave wait for the town maybe I won't get power for a week so he went on his own did more of it. I think that's one of the things the amount of communication and reliance on each party has become so much more dependent and I think that's one of the reasons why there was so much more in communication problems.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you because that is something that I've been questioning also. We hear more and more of that. Thank you. Thank you, Rich, for your testimony.

Going to move on to our next. And we are going to have Joel Gordes and he is going to speak to us on energy security.

JOEL GORDES: Thank you, Madam Chairman,
Mr. Chairman, committee members, staff and
invited guests.

I'm going to start off with a bad joke. It's
been late. There's been a lot of people.
It's been great listening to this. Best show
in town. There's the story that when
Alexander Graham Bell came back to today he
looked around he said, My gosh, everything's
different. Well, Edison followed him, came
back to today and said, My gosh, everything is
the same. And to tell you the truth I say
it's a bad joke because it's not true.

If you look back, historically, you would find
that what Edison did was work with what today
we call microgrids. Number one, it was direct
current. Number two, it could only go for a
few city blocks in New York maybe a mile, mile
and a half at the most. And they were close
-- the generators were small and close to the
location where the power would be used. Now
that was great in some ways but part of the
problem was that, basically, it was very high
cost to do it that way. The generators were
small. They had no economy of scale,
therefore, their efficiency was low. And if
you put it into today's dollars -- get this --
a kilowatt hour would be costing you
approximately \$6 and some change -- \$6 per
kilowatt hour.

What they said they wanted to do -- the
engineers advised the owners who said we know
we can get economies of scale and if we build
larger generators, the efficiency will go up
and the price will come down. But to do that
the financial people would not give them the
money unless they had captive ratepayers. And

so the producers of equipment, the people who owned the generation, the bankers and even the politicians said let's make them into monopolies. Everybody thinks that it's because of the wires that made it -- made it a natural monopoly. It wasn't. It was getting the electricity at a low enough cost to be able for more people to be served because with the monopoly came the obligation to serve all comers.

That's how we got the grid that we have now. It's important to understand that because what this did is sort of mandated that we build larger generators, which were more remote from the place of use, and then use transmission lines to connect the large generators to the distribution system. Now most of our problems, to be totally honest about it, have been with the distribution system. But it was the transmission, the centralized grid -- what we did was we centralized the grid -- that set the architecture for the power being distant from the place of use.

It had wonderful effects. It made our lives easier. It gave us freedoms we never had before, and it actually increased the industrial might of the country, the growth of goods and services and, of course, it gave greater profits to our utility friends. But it did build in these hidden vulnerabilities due to that architecture.

Let me point out one thing that the National Academy said in 2002 after the 9/11 Report. And they say a direct way to address vulnerable transmission bottlenecks and make the grid more robust is to build additional transmission capacity, but there are indications that redundancy has a dark side.

The likelihood of hidden failures in any large-scale system increases as the number of components increases.

In other words, if you're in a centralized system where everything else is sort of connected to everything else, adding one more piece to it increases that complexity and can lead to certain types of unintended consequences. Witness San Diego about two weeks ago where about 4 million people ended up in the dark for changing out a capacitor. And we have to think about those implications.

So what are the security threats and, you know, what everybody else is calling, you know, assurance here or utilities referred to it as reliability, availability, maintainability, sufficiency, reliability -- whatever term we want to use. I put it under the whole term "security" because it covers it all. And there's many -- many forms of security everything from like what happened during the Arab oil embargo of 1973. That scared everybody. We didn't do terribly much about it in some ways.

There's the physical security of the assets of the grid via transmission, the control systems and whatever. But there are some hidden ones you may not be aware of and that's where the future threats are, and that's why you have to think not just in terms of today but of that future.

All of our generations step-up transformers, almost without exclusion, are built in foreign countries. If somebody were to go around and start doing certain things to generation step-up transformers -- and I'm not sure how easy or hard that is through different means

-- it could take a sizeable amount of time. Some people say 18 months to get certain replacements. Yes, we have sharing arrangements with other utilities, but if it took place on a larger scale, it could be a difficult time.

Some of you've heard of cyber threats. The Stuxnet worm that helped to go ahead and take the Iranian nuclear program and throw it off kilter that can be used in reverse against our electric grid. They can take down your grid by hacking, what's called an electromagnetic pulse, which means we would basically be back to the Stone Age because anything with a semiconductor that was set up with a grid, could just be wiped out. That's all of our control systems. Our automobiles would probably not work. That can happen through natural things, such as what we call coronal mass ejections, large solar flares. And there was one in 1989 that incapacitated part of the Canadian grid and had effects all the way as far south as New Jersey. And basically, it's just a solar flare going off and putting out this pulse that can incapacitate us.

This is not science fiction. This you can look this up. In fact, Dr. Robert Hermann, who's with the Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering, was on the congressional committee looking at electromagnetic pulse. I'm sure he would make a great source.

Then there's combined or blended attacks of all those things above. And then other threats -- and I passed out a precipitation map showing the precipitation increase over the last 30 years. This becomes relevant, and that's of the maximum amount because we don't know what type of a threat we're going to be

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facing and it could be an ice storm, such as we had not that long ago -- well, we had one in 1973. We had one in 1998 in Northern New England, and we have the trees.

SENATOR FONFARA: So this is a hearing on Hurricane Irene.

JOEL GORDES: That's -- yes, sir.

SENATOR FONFARA: Are you in the right room?

JOEL GORDES: I am in the right room. Sometimes I may not be in the right -- the right thing -- what I'm saying is --

SENATOR FONFARA: I'm seeing if everybody's awake here.

JOEL GORDES: Let me connect the dots. Part of the thing is connecting the dots and that was one of the things that the 9/11 Commission pointed out. Is sometimes -- sometimes we are guilty of taking certain actions that may actually make things worse. I brought with me today a book by Professor Dennis Moletti. He is the director emeritus of the Natural Hazard Center and for many years has been on the road talking about disasters. The name of the book is "Disaster by Design." Because what he's saying is sometimes when we treat the results of one disaster, what we're doing is just looking at it in a nonholistic way in isolation. And he said we have to do a better job so that we're not setting ourselves up for our first one.

The example he gives -- I happen to bring an example just to tie it. He talked about when there was flooding in certain areas. Let's take the -- where the Mississippi and the

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Missouri Rivers are. Of course, the natural thing to do would be to build levees. Right? That makes sense.

But this sent a message, and the message that it sent is, hey, everything's safe now. So go ahead. People came in. They increased building in the area. They increased population in the area. And as a result when incidents, like in 1993 and we had the Midwest floods or the more recent floods, what it did -- and look at New Orleans, people had this false sense of security, but what we had done is set them up for a bigger fall. That is what I'm trying to get across as well as talking about those bigger falls.

Let me put it into this way, too. Trees. Now, my wife's just informed me of a bill, \$700 to have the trees trimmed. I spent the weekend resuscitating a chainsaw. I burn wood luckily. But the point being is I am not the Lorax. I am not here to -- to be stomping around saying we can't cut the trees. But everything has what we call a diminishing return. Where I spent a lot of time is teaching you people how to build energy efficient homes; however, you soon recognize that for each additional inch of insulation that you add in the attic, the next inch does less and less in reducing energy costs. This is true of so many things in nature and in business.

And in the case of cutting trees, there is a sweet point somewhere. And that sweet point, you to say where is it before you spend, let's say, \$50 million. So you have to sort of find out where that is, spend accordingly till you hit that diminishing return, and then go on to other things.

For instance, there is something called tree wire. Now, our utilities from the decision of 2008, from docket -- people have read -- Kevin was reading off dockets, 07-06-63. Basically, did not think tree wire was a solution. We need independent opinions on that. That's what we need to have.

The other thing is there are things that I have talked with some of the utilities about it. There are technical devices called autoreclosers and sectionalizers. How much is the right number? One utility I talked to said they think they have the right number. But when you start looking at the losses, maybe not.

The autorecloser can find out where the fault is separated from the rest of the grid and the larger part of the grid remains operating. So we have to look not just at those limited solutions.

What I'm proposing is that we go to a more decentralized system. And I would say over the next -- I've said this a million times, I think that -- this is nothing new -- I think this is a plan that I am giving you for over the next 30 years but now is the time to start. And basically, the characteristics of a decentralized system are that you have small generation close to the point of use. It's redundant and modular. It's diverse and dispersed. It can operate isolated, what we call islanding from the grid. Close to end users, we said. There should be user controllability, and that's important. And there should be, if possible, some storage in there so if systems are going to fail, they've going to fail gracefully rather than abruptly.

You know we all have our UPS systems for your computers just for that reason.

Okay. I'm going to shorten it up so if there's questions.

We heard a lot about the smart grid. And the smart grid, if it is implemented correctly, has great promise. However, if it is done incorrectly, it would open up infinite more paths for cyber intrusion. So it's something we have to be careful of.

I just got done talking briefly about user controllability. One of the things about the smart grid is, is you may make a deal with your utility to, say, turn off some of your load during certain times of the day and in return, they will lower your bill. That's nice. But we don't want the toasters taking over. So I mean we have to make sure that we have a certain amount of control that we maintain when we make those deals with the utilities.

What this could mean is that they did it right, you wouldn't need peaking generators because they could lower the temperature in your room, let's say, three degrees, you know, ten minutes out of every half hour. You hardly even feel it. But it has to be something people enter into knowingly. So, basically, I'm pushing for as recommendations: First, before you do any of the things that I talked about with distributed generation, you must go to the all achievable cost effective conservation and load management, then you can start putting in your resiliency. What I would suggest in the mid -- in the medium term and close term is we do our first responders, our hospitals, gasoline stations. About a

third of the gasoline stations couldn't pump gas. This happened originally during the Kobe earthquake in 1995, I believe it was. And what they started doing is putting photovoltaics on gasoline stations so that they could refuel emergency vehicles and emergency generators.

We want to get our telecom resources on distributed generation. Sewage plants, and pharmacies, which maybe have insulin if somebody in your family or my family might need. These are things I think we need to do.

We need to give a rate of return that is equal to or greater than some of the rates of return that we give to the utilities for doing other things, like transmission. I understand from Commissioner Esty, they get a 13 percent return for transmission. We should be doing that for something that does some additional societal good.

And, again, providing for incentives, but setting annual targets to do some of this, not just setting something, like our climate change legislation had 20 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050 with no numbers in between. Unfortunately, I've been part of legislation that did that. We have a name for it, NIMTOO, not in my term of office.

And then I would say applying for federal funding to help us do it for security reasons.

So that is what I have to say. And I hope I put the dots together.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Joel, for your presentation.

Are there questions from members of the committee for Joel?

Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just quickly, you did have something information on tree trimming. Do you think that the way the tree trimming is occurring now is in knots and that we should just add wires or should we do more trimming. Is the way to trim -- the trees are trimmed, the way that it's done is that adequate? I see maybe they're not trimming them properly or the right way. I mean, there might be a right or wrong way of doing it than just cutting those Cs out of the trees. If you have some comments, I'd appreciate it?

JOEL GORDES: Well, as I said, I'm not the Lorax. So I don't know if I qualify to answer that, but basically, I think we should do it responsibly, surgically. Usually, the thing was looking at ones that are dead, dying, diseased and such like that four or five Ds, and then looking at the hazard trees, which I think Senator Fonfara mentioned that are outside the exact area of where they normally trim.

And the tree that ourselves and our neighbors took down, we did it as a joint neighborhood thing, were hazard trees. Definitely, they were not going to disrupt anybody else's power on the street, but they sure would have done a number on my neighbors and their automobiles. So there's other reasons, too, and such. And where people -- we didn't think the utility would do it. Where people do it on their own volition, is something that maybe of some

value. So I'm really not qualified to say much more on it, but I don't think -- I don't think we should be -- we should be careful in what we do.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you for your testimony.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Senator Fonfara.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you. More of a comment, Madam Chair, and I know how much you appreciate that.

But -- again, I think, Joel, that you've been at this for many years. And you know, basically, foretelling the future, and if we live long enough, you will be right on all accounts. But I think that in some ways, you know, in the age of instant media, instant reaction, far too many people wanting their cake and eating it too. In other words, they -- as I've said many times, they want to have the second most treed state in the country or whatever we are, and -- but we want our lights to stay on in the middle of a hurricane. Not very realistic.

But, you know, what you've been talking about in terms of decentralizing the electric system, you're here speaking about this storm, but you've been saying these things for a lot of years. And I guess, you know, it's important I hope some people will be listening to you that -- that, you know, God forbid, we ever do have a cyber attack on our electric system here, how prepared are we for that? You know, will we be having hearings following something like that? And I know you're too much of a gentleman to ever come in and say, I

told you so, but you have been telling us. And I don't -- I'm not certain how far we're going to get. I hope we'll make progress with respect to preparing better for a storm. I don't know how much progress we'll make to prepare for an attack on something so important.

We know now how we can be brought to our knees in a tropical storm. Much less what people have said if it were a hurricane 1, 2, or 3, or some other kind of premeditated attack. So I don't know the answer here, but I'm glad there is someone out there who continues to tell us that we need to think about these things. Whether we want to pay for doing what you want us to do or suggest we should be doing -- I sort of doubt it. But it -- it makes us think. And hopefully, one these days we can do more than just that.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

JOEL GORDES: I'll say something about the tropical storm and I denigrate it, too. Hey, this is not a category 5 or a category 3, even, hurricane. If that happened, it would be absolutely horrendous because of the basic physics of it.

But Dr. Moletti had something that -- to give you some -- some pause and comfort and that is -- this was a sentence here: Hurricanes that have been downgraded to tropical storms or depressions after moving over land are sometimes caught in a mid latitude cyclonic storm system. Then severe flooding -- flooding can occur in noncoastal areas.

I think that's what we had. So he's saying that it could be still very significant under

those conditions.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Joel.

JOEL GORDES: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: And as I said, it's always a pleasure.

JOEL GORDES: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: We're going to move on to the next part of our day, and we're going to have the electric utilities come up and I'm going to first bring up from Connecticut Light & Power, Robert Hybsch, who is the vice president of customer operations; and William Quinlan, who is the vice president of customer solutions.

And I see Mr. Jeff Butler is going to be coming up with them, although his name is not on the list, so we welcome him as well.

Before you speak, gentlemen, let me just preface the fact that some people asked us why we were bringing the utilities back this afternoon. They had a presentation that was last Monday morning. And the reason that we're bringing you back this afternoon is that for all of us, this is a learning experience. We learn best from sometimes from our mistakes.

And so, we were hoping at this point that after all of the comments that you've heard over the last two days and whatever, you know, you have done within your own companies, what our thoughts are as to what we should do going forward, and also your suggestions for what we may need to do to work more closely with you as well. So again, to prevent some of this.

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So that is the rationale for why you are here a second time and that applies also to the cable and phone company providers that are coming up a little bit later. Thank you.

JEFFREY BUTLER: Thank you, Chairwoman Nardello, and members of the panel.

As she mentioned, I'm Jeff Butler, the president and chief operating officer of CL&P. I -- actually, I've asked Bill Quinlan, who's our vice president of customer solutions who has been working with -- has begun working with towns and through the customer feedback we're beginning to address that issue; and Bob Hybsch, who's our vice president of customer operations to talk more about the specifics of the storm.

What we actually have included today in our package is that a brief update on some of the specific actions, the part we're taking as result of both our own internal lessons learned but also from feedback we're hearing both internally and externally through customers and our towns. So we provided a very high level overview last week and we have much more specifics to share of some of the specific actions that we're already beginning to address.

Before I turn it over to Bill, one group that I think I really truly forgot to recognize last week and that was literally the thousands of volunteers in the state that supported other organizations in support of the restoration across the state, and I think it very important that we recognize those volunteers who came forward.

And so with that I'm going to turn it over to

Mr. Quinlan and Mr. Hybsch.

WILLIAM QUINLAN: Thank you, Jeff.

And as Jeff indicated, my name is Bill Quinlan. I'm the vice president of customer solutions for Connecticut Light & Power Company. And I do want to start by saying that we are very pleased to be here today. And just actually thank the legislature for holding what turned out to be, I think, very informative sessions. We've been listening very closely to some of the constructive feedback that we've gotten from many of the folks who sponsored testimony, particularly from our customers in the towns and cities that we serve throughout the state, and to tell you today that we take very seriously the remarks that we've heard, and we are certainly factoring that feedback into our plans for the future. And hopefully, we can demonstrate some of that today for you.

As we do for every major event, since the storm, we have been conducting our own internal review -- and Bob is going to speak to this in a minute -- but he's been literally meeting with hundreds of employees throughout our system who were involved in the frontlines during this storm restoration effort and through this self-critical analysis that we're performing, we expect to learn some very valuable lessons, and it's going to help us to drive our continuous improvement out into the future.

We've also been reaching beyond the company so we've conducted very comprehensive surveys, both with customers and municipalities. And just last week, we launched a statewide outreach effort. And this is going to be, in

essence, a series of forums held throughout the state on a regional basis to cover all 149 towns and cities that we serve. And we are working very closely with legislative leaders and the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities to make those sessions just as constructive as they can be.

In essence, what we're trying to do through that process is to get all the issues out on the table and work collaboratively with the towns and cities on designing the action plans that we're going to take in the future really to get to the heart of the issue, which we've heard is in large part around both communications and coordination.

We think those -- those areas, communications coordination, are the key to building strong partnerships we need with these municipalities in the future, and we're going to make that a high priority over the next several weeks.

So although our poststorm reviews are still in process, we have already identified several areas where improvements are necessary. What we're going to do next is going to walk you through some of the details around areas for improvement that we've already identified and then we will answer any questions that you have. So hopefully, everyone's got a slide deck that was circulated earlier today and I'll just ask you to turn quickly to page 2 of that slide deck. It's the one entitled "Municipalities."

So there's been a lot of discussion here throughout these hearings about our partnership with the towns and cities that we serve. And we clearly understand the importance of that in dealing with events,

like Tropical Storm Irene.

Fundamentally, it really starts with improving communications and coordination. We've listed a series of steps that we intend to take to strengthen communications and coordination. And it all starts with -- you know, let's have a common understanding of the restoration process. I think as Mr. Butler outlined last week, there is a process that we undertake when we restore a customer's -- in a major event like this.

I think we need to make sure we're all on the same page as to how that process is going to unfold and factor importantly town priorities. That's something that we attempted to do throughout the state during hurricane -- excuse me -- Tropical Storm Irene. And I think in many instances we're successful in meeting the towns' priorities, but in certain areas as you've heard last week, we need to improve. We need to factor those priorities into our restoration processes.

One area of particular attention is the third bullet there, which is on "Make Safe and Road Clearing" processes. You know, we've heard directly from our towns. You've heard from many of them last week that that's an area of particular focus where we believe through further coordination of efforts, we'll be able to get through that make safe and road clearing process a far more efficient fashion. So Bob when he makes his remarks is going to talk to you about the specifics of that, but we think there we need a task force to hone in on exactly what needs to be done differently.

The second major topic there is something you've heard a lot about, which is our town

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liaison process. So just a bit of history on this. This was a lesson learned out of the march 2010 wind storm event down in Fairfield County where we did not have town liaisons in place. We, essentially, instituted those during the course of that event. And a town liaison is, essentially, a single point of communication between the utility and the towns for coordinating our restoration efforts.

You know, we did it on fly in Fairfield County during that event, and we -- we thought it was such a success that we wanted to employ it statewide. So between March of 2010 and this most recent event, we've had a process where we built out our ranks of town liaisons. We now have about 150 of them identified throughout Northeast Utilities. And many of them have undergone significant training in that intervening year around how we restore power, you know, our electric system, generally.

And I think you've heard many instances where the town liaisons worked perfectly (inaudible) and actually exceeded our expectation. Where they were that single point of contact, it worked well for the town. Just this morning, we heard two or three instances where it worked as designed.

I will say -- and you've heard some of this last week -- there were instances where it didn't quite meet our expectations so we need to undertake a review to figure out why we weren't successful in each and every town across the state.

There are a couple of specific items that we've already identified: One, providing

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town-specific information to the towns. You know, we tend to communicate on a circuit basis or on a regional basis. And what we've heard loud and clear from the towns is they would like to understand what's going on within their town borders. They'd like us to translate our business into a language that they understand and is meaningful to them and their residents.

So you'll see at the back of the package, we did append what we refer to as a town briefing sheet. That's the very last slide in the dock -- in the deck. And it's a communication device that we developed during the course of the -- of our restoration of Tropical Storm Irene. And it was, essentially, an attempt to put in one page the status of each and every town that we were in communication with from a restoration perspective: Where are their priorities; how does it fit into the overall restoration process; you know, where are the critical customers that remain without service; and, you know, I think based upon the success we saw in this most recent event, we intend to institutionalize that for going forward to storm events.

The second topic here is Enhance Training and Technology. Another thing we learned during this event is that our town liaisons, well, they're very well intentioned and very capable employees who essentially have the best and brightest within NU serving in that role. In many instances, they don't know our electric system to be as effective as they can be. So we provide them with additional tools, technology and training so that when we deploy them out into the field to provide that critical communication link, they're as quick as they can be and they have meaningful

information and they know our systems and can communicate it well to the towns.

And then the final bullet there around Pursuing Technology, Provide Impacts and Restoration Activity. This is a work in progress. So we have been developing for some time now some new interactive technology which allows us to overlay, in essence, our circuit maps, our outage management system, town street maps, all in an interactive way.

And once we have that technology up and running -- it's still in a developmental phase so it's going to be a while before we get to that level of application -- we think it's going to be a very powerful tool in, essentially, getting us to the point where we can communicate effectively with the towns. So I think over time you're going to see that technology become a reality. At least that's my hope and expectation, and then I think we'll be far better equipped to have the level of communications and coordination with the towns that we're seeking.

The final section on this slide just describes at a high level the municipal outreach that we are already conducting. As I said, we've begun these surveys. We've begun the debrief sessions. The regional forums that I was alluding to are going to be done on a regional planning organization basis. We're going to conduct 15 such forums across the state. Based upon all the feedback we received from the sources, included from these hearings, we're going to be doing a very thorough analysis of that feedback, designing our corrective actions and, hopefully, instituting them in the very near future.

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So that's just a high level process flow. It's a closed-end process where we intend very much to get back in touch with the municipalities to pursue these action plans as a team. So those are the steps that we've identified on a municipal level.

The next slide touches upon our customers. First and foremost, again, we've heard from many of our customers that they need more meaningful, timely and accurate restoration information. Some of this is technology based. We need to more closely tie our outage management systems to our customer information system so that we can give restoration projections on a detailed level. Right now, most of our systems look as statewide on a regional basis. We hope to be at a position where we can begin providing restoration projections down at a town and street level and not just a general and global projections as you've heard here.

Now during this outage, we instituted customer callbacks. This is a new -- new approach for CL&P. It worked very well where we're doing a lot of outgoing calling to our customers. We tend to expand upon that in the future. And then, finally, with respect to timeliness and accuracy of communications.

We've heard from many of our customers that a series of calls over an extended outage like this would be very well received. First informing them that we are aware of their outage; that a crew has been dispatched; and that there is a restoration projection. So we are taking a very hard look at that series of communications and trying to align it with industry best practices so that there are multiple communication points for each and

every customer.

We did institute a lot of new, at least for CL&P, communication channels during this outage. And you can see the statistics there on social media. We also used our IBR system quite extensively. We pushed out a lot of, we think, meaningful information through our website and how to -- in excess of a million hits.

We also used text messaging quite extensively during Tropical Storm Irene. But one thing we've heard, again, from customers, and again, through these hearings is that in many instances where a town is completely without power and telephone and other forms of communication, we really need to look at enhancing conventional communication methods and getting into the local communication channels and pushing out information.

And that is something that, you know, and hearing some of the town fathers speak here, I -- many of them institute quite, I would say, creative ways of communicating with the citizens. We need to figure out a way to build upon that and expand our conventional communication channels.

So with that I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Hybsch. He's going to cover the steps we're taking from an operational perspective.

ROBERT HYBSCH: Thank you, Bill. My name is Bob Hybsch, vice president of customer operations for Connecticut Light & power.

I draw your attention to Slide 4, please. This slide basically describes the process that we're currently going through, which is

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part of our emergency response plan.

Connecticut Light & Power has a emergency response plan on file with PURA and the municipal offices throughout the state. It's based on the National Institute Management System which you've heard earlier today, as it is a best practice.

Part of our plan is to conduct an operations storm critique, and to date, we've completed 16, actually, an update to that -- we've complete the two more Friday afternoons. So we're up to 18 completed sessions with employees who were actually involved in the restoration effort from running the local work centers, to down wired guides, to planners, to line crews, to electricians. It's a broad interview with these employees, basically, in a formal fashion to gain knowledge of what went well, and where do we need to improve as an organization. We're also conducting a survey with some other more functional groups utilizing the town liaisons to capture that as well.

We've captured input from employees involved in the restoration effort. And we plan to provide those employees with a summary of the findings in each of their work centers. And in summary at the end, we plan on taking all of the findings from the 13 work centers and satellites that we opened and take all of this input and develop a lessons learned with action items and assignments to be completed so that we can take the lessons learned and bring them into reality updating our emergency response plan.

Some of the preliminary findings, yet not formal -- as we're still undergoing -- but clearly, the cut clear and make safe process,

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we need to work with state and local officials to formalize this plan and define roles and responsibilities. The input I've gotten so far is with some towns, some towns were very well prepared, as you've heard today and worked with us very closely and understand their role to clear up the road of the trees. Our role was to clear our facilities from the public ways.

There were other towns that the expectation was we'd stay and actually physically remove the trees from the road because it was beyond their capabilities. So we had a broad spectrum, and I think we need to find a way working with state and local officials to speed up the process of cut clear and make safe the public ways.

As it was, CL&P was involved in over 1500 road openings, and it took a dedicated part of our -- a substantial part of our resources. The first 48 to 60 hours of the storms that we were, in effect, opening to the more damaged communities, opening roads with the towns -- over, you know, seven-, eight-, nine-day period. So I think we as a state can do better in this area and be more efficient.

Outside line resources. One of the things we learned bringing crews from all over the country is we need to standardize the definition of a crew and what -- and how many people make up a crew. I think in the electric utility industry, a crew is typically, one bucket truck and two qualified line mechanics. What we've found in other parts of the countries, it ranges from three trucks and seven men to five trucks and 15 men which puts a lot of pressure on our logistics group from food and lodging.

We think 20 to 30 crews are showing up, that's 50 or 60 people. In effect, 100 may show up. So we really need -- and the process is already underway on the three-state effort to define that clearly and improve as we bring in mutual aid from the outside and the definition of the exact amount of resources.

Communication-wise, we want to work with communication companies to develop some type of a tagging process because during this particular event, our crews were required to go out multiple times to the same downed -- there were TV wire or communications wire because the public was calling it in multiple times. So I think if we can work with our -- the joint owners and communications companies to develop a common tagging process that will alleviate a lot of false trips.

And one of the things we used for the first time down here, which was very successful, I first learned it the ice storm of 2008 up in New Hampshire was the use of outside electricians. We hired them through electrical contractors and we brought in hundreds of electricians to complete the house-end repairs, which really sped up the restoration overall.

During a normal restoration, the restoration curve if you bring a lot of customers back quickly, then it takes several days to restore those house-end connections. By bringing in the electricians in early, we started this process on Monday after the storm hit. The electricians landed on Tuesday. We were able to figuratively cut off the tail of the storm and save a couple of days because we were running the power lines to the house. That's

a best practice, we plan to formalize in our future plans.

So that basically summarizes the preliminary findings, but we expect there to be many more findings as we complete our internal review.

And I'll draw your attention to Slide 5, we don't have to spend a lot of time on this. Commissioner DelGobbo did a great job of talking about the vegetation management program. We brought this slide today because there were a lot of questions last week on this issue. So you know the funding levels, CL&P currently has a robust vegetation management program. And about 3700 miles were trimmed on an annualized basis under our current funding. And to just put that in perspective, we have about 17,000 miles of overhead line.

But our findings to date is that CL&P's support convened a Connecticut task force or review team to review and improve existing vegetation management public policy, includes state, municipal and employee participation.

We heard an arborist early today who had a lot of excellent points on the overall need for vegetation management within the public ways and that extends well beyond the public right-of-way and extends on to private property, if we truly if we harden our system.

Earlier you heard testimony that, you know, the best practice is implementing tree wire. CL&P extensively uses tree wire throughout the system. But when a large tree comes down, you know, it snaps the pole. It snaps the cross lines and overloads the system. So we really, from our perspective, we would welcome a team

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effort to work with the vegetation management adjacent to the public ways in the State of Connecticut to reduce the future impact of inclement weather, like the Tropical Storm Irene.

I draw your attention to Slide 6. And this here, I won't go through in the interest of time, but I just wanted to summarize that this is a current improvement objective for the organization, CL&P, segmented by municipalities, customers and operational improvements. And we've identified whether they're short-term initiatives or long-term initiatives, greater than six months or more and that will give you some idea of (inaudible). We basically view this as a starter list. And we'll continue to pursue our evaluations from our external perspective, with our towns and public officials, as well as internal.

And at this time, we'd be more than happy to entertain any questions you may have.

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

Senator Fonfara, followed by Representative Reed, followed by Representative -- no, okay. By Representative Reed. Well, we'll get to each of you. How's that?

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just briefly thank you for your presentation, very helpful. And clearly, you've -- you've taken good notes from the last forum and incorporated them into your response today.

A couple things, one is have you considered in

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this process and Senator Williams mentioned this in some of our meetings leading up to the hearings, a mock disaster effort, where both the utilities and -- all the utilities the private companies, as well as the municipalities, engaging in a replication, if you will, to see how your new approaches and -- this would involve United Illuminating as well -- but to see how they would -- how they work prior to an actual event?

WILLIAM QUINLAN: Yes. We think that's an excellent recommendation. Today, as part of our emergency response plan, we do mock drills table top exercises within the company, and I think expanding it to include state and local officials where you have -- you'd have much greater value in planning for your next disaster.

SENATOR FONFARA: And the second thing is -- and I had the conversation with Jeff Butler about this, previously, and I remember testimony from United Illuminating about their investment in -- if I have this right -- identifying ways to better predict when customers would be restored. And I know Jeff educated me on this about the difficulty that you might have a main line down but there may be several other points along that line leading to someone's home or business that could be out and it's very difficult to understand how many of those points are -- where there's a break in the line, but I go back to this. I've said it several times now and I'll say it again.

I think that most people, reasonable people, understand that in a storm there are going to be outages. The biggest frustration is not knowing how long they will be out. And how

they can plan for that outage. If it's a day, they plan one way; if it's three days, they plan another way; if it's a week, they'll plan a third.

And I just -- I hope you'll talk to United Illuminating about what their -- what they're working on in that regard. I understand it may not be a simple matter of installing a smart meter in the system in that you get instant feedback. I understand that. But I do think it's really worth your while both from the standpoint of the customer's expectations, as well as public relations for you folks, that's where the biggest frustration -- in my opinion any way, the biggest frustration is for a lot which folks is not knowing how long they're going to be out of power. So I hope you'll --

WILLIAM QUINLAN: Yes, we will definitely consider that. I've been in industry 34 years and we can accurately estimate the length of the total restoration. I think we're getting better at estimating on a town or work center basis. The great challenge (inaudible) if this is an industrywide issue, is identifying restoration projection for an individual customer because we need to physically verify the extent of the damage and put it into a work plan.

And in this particular event, we had 16,000 -- in excess of 16,000 trouble spots. We had to physically go to and make corrections and so early on in the storm to expect a restoration projection for those 16,000 events is quite a challenge, but we are more than willing to work with (inaudible), with anyone who has solved this challenge because it is a tremendous challenge from the operational

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perspective how to work and run a restoration at a local (inaudible).

SENATOR FONFARA: Lastly, I'll be very brief on this. Joel Gordes spoke about decentralizing the system. This is not a new concept on his part, nor is it new here. I would urge the companies to look at that as part of your infrastructure. I don't think that should be considered somehow a violation of, you know, our decisions to take you out of the generation business. This is about the quality of life of our state and our economy and that would be something that I would certainly consider -- and I venture to guess that might could chair would as well. So I hope that you'll look at that as part of the discussion going forward.

Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

WILLIAM QUINLAN: Yes, Senator, just one comment. I listened with a lot of interest to what Mr. Gordes had to say. And you know, one of the things that is interesting is the degree of automation on CL&P's distribution grid. We are one of the more automated system. We have the ability to sectionalize portions of the system and isolate portions of the system. We're one of the more automated systems that you'll find out there. So, you know, in the smart grid technology that he's talking about, many of them have been implemented at CL&P starting years ago.

So I think we are in front of the industry with respect to automation perspective, and you are seeing more and more distributed generation which is the other concept he was

referring to, small localized generation which is becoming more prevalent. And I think you going to continue to see that grow, but I do think there's merit in both of those. But to this point it's got to be done consciously.

And you have to really protect the security, cyber security issues that he raised. I think that's a national standard that's being developed. We have to look into that aspect of distribution system automation, but there's no doubt that technology has merits and it's worth exploring.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Next we have Representative Reed.

REP. REED: Thank you, Madam Chair. I love some of these things. It's really clear that we've got a lesson-learned situation going on here. And really ramping up the liaison is a great idea to create some institutional memory, again, so that they know exactly where things are, and, you know, what the priorities show be in town. And I'm wondering, are you going to be able to implement all of these within available resources, or are you going to be looking for new revenues?

WILLIAM QUINLAN: It's a little early to answer that question, but I think with respect to specific points on liaisons, I wouldn't anticipate additional staffing to provide that coverage.

Right now, our town liaisons are drawn from our existing employee pool. In some instances, you have an accountant or a lawyer.

Some are from our regular employee affairs group. Someone who's skilled at communicating, can translate some of the technical information. So I think we'll continue to use that model and seek additional employees to cover that need. And some of the other things that we're talking about, like a new piece of technology, for example, or an expanded tree trimming, you, we have to look harder at the cost associated with that.

Specifically on liaisons, I would not anticipate additional costs.

REP. REED: And another quick question. I think we all discovered that old technology worked (inaudible) experience, and I've had a lot of my constituents ask me about creating a directed radio. Just, you know, where you have your own frequencies. And I'm wondering if that's something that you can help us get and share it with municipalities so there would municipality time on the frequency or, you know, create some sort of system that is really a directed response and give information and so people at least have backup transistor radio.

WILLIAM QUINLAN: It's a very good point, and it's something that was a lesson learned here. I personally wasn't anticipating the conventional technology to be as important as they certainly were.

You heard, I think, last week, the first selectman of Branford talking about the Boy Scouts handing out flyers with restoration information to citizens and to, I think, in certain instances customers who were disabled. That was a communication channel they used. That was kind of creative. I think we learned

that battery-powered radios were used extensively in many of the hard hit areas. So I do think we need to take a hard look at those more conventional technologies and approaches to make sure we have it in place for the next event. And the radio is one, certainly.

REP. REED: And just one more quick question. I'll make it quick.

You spoke of the first selectman of Branford who's my first selectman. It's my district. He tells me that he did not ask for the electricity to be shut off to our town. And I think, Mr. Butler, you had said that it always happens that it's the town itself that requests to shut off the electric system if they feel too much damage has been done. And so I'm wondering what that protocol is when and who makes that decision if you feel that the larger grid is in danger and that the smartest move would be to shut off all electricity in a given town.

JEFFREY BUTLER: The way our system is built, is we have protective (inaudible) that automatically clear a fault. And I do know during this event that we did not go in there and say we're turning off the town, unless the town requested it. And there wasn't that many towns. But there were a few towns that contacted CL&P and requested that we deenergize the town.

But we look -- and our system is built to protect itself. So you know, whether it is breakers in a substation or reclosers, or fuses, it will -- it protects against those faults and deenergizes the system. So --

REP. REED: So it might have been an automatic shut down based on --

JEFFREY BUTLER: Correct, yes. I mean it -- and I know Mr. Quinlan lives down in that area. There was extensive damage. And I suspect most circuits in the town of Branford were deenergized because of trouble in the circuits, not because anyone made a conscious decision of deenergizing. The whole town was in bad shape.

REP. REED: Yeah. Thank you very, very much.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

And thank you for your testimony today, and thank you for coming out to Windham a couple weeks ago. I appreciate it.

I have a couple of questions based on some of the information I've heard and I've gone over. And just with respect to the tree trimming priorities. You look to more densely populated areas when you decide to trim or what kind of a plan do you have -- you must have some type of plan?

ROBERT HYBSCH: Yes, we have a cycle trimming program where we put main emphasis on -- I'll try not to use technical terms here -- but it's the main lines. We call them the main feeders. But it's basically on the major arteries, the streets that run throughout the city where you'll see a cross arm with three conductors. We'll do more expansive trimming

there.

And it's the primary focus then we go off to the lateral, but primarily, our trimming program is on a cycle program where we trim every so many years by circuit. And unfortunately, circuits don't run contiguously with the town boundaries. Sometimes circuits expand to multiple towns so if I -- it's really difficult to translate circuit jargon into town data.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you for that. That's my next question. Because I was just going to ask you about the circuits because a lot of the questions came up about how the circuits operate, where the batteries are on the circuits, and how they're addressed and also when, say, a tree falls on a wire and breaks it, in terms of the circuit and in terms of transformers, the impact on those things, sometimes it looks to me -- and I have no idea how this occurs, but it shuts down transformers that might otherwise had been working if there was some other way to shut off the power before it -- would it break the line? Am I getting that, or is --

ROBERT HYBSCH: Yeah, probably the simplest explanation is if you can picture a beautiful 80-year-old maple tree with the leaves off -- preferably a hundred feet from our lines. If you can picture that and every branch -- you know how on the branch extends off of a branch, extends off of a branch. You've got the main trunk line. Right? As you go out to the edge of the tree, every time a branch goes off a branch, we have some type of a protection device.

You could have a recloser, which is like an

automatic circuit breaker in your home. We have some at the substations. But as you get out further to the edge of the tree, we have manual fuses where if a line is interrupted, a fault occurs on the line, from the tree, you actually -- it blows the fuse much like if you have an old fuse in your house where you have to go downstairs and change the fuse. We have to send a line crew out to patrol the line and make sure there are no other faults or no wire down once they verify it's safe, or they have to make repairs.

They make the repairs, then they reenergize that section of the line, but basically, our restoration priorities are from the trunk out because if you repair out on the ends first because you're doing, you have to reenergize the trunk the tree before we get out to all the laterals which it's dependent on.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you. Just to follow up on that. Because if you're in a densely populated area, your trunk is somewhere in the mainstream of that area but then in the densely populated area, I would imagine there's a lot of small limbs compared with going out to, say, a more rural area. It would seem to me that you have one large main line with just a few limbs. So in terms of your priorities, how you would wrest those divergent types of situations for circuits?

ROBERT HYBSCH: Well, in this particular storm, and most -- our number one priority is working with towns to clear roads. Once we got that in hand, not a hundred percent but to a relative degree, we began restoration. And when we go out after restoration, we allocate resources out to the field and then in each work center they have an emergency operation

center, and by work center, they are determining the priorities trying to restore the most amount of customers (inaudible) first.

And so if you're the customer out on the end of that branch and you're the only customer out, you're going to be one of the last customers to have service restored. Because our priorities once we get the hospitals and all our high priority party 9-1-1's done, we focus on the most amount of customers (inaudible).

REP. JOHNSON: As I would expect you would.

Thanks so much for your testimony

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you for your preliminary report.

Obviously, you've been listening to a lot of people, including what you've been hearing here for sure. I want to say how pleased I was to look at page 2, your first bullet there, Achieve a Common Understanding of Restoration Process. I think in my district that was a major issue. When a truck showed up that first day or on Monday, they thought they were there to fix the line.

And if they had known there was an assessment process, I think that -- I don't think even -- I went to all the emergency meetings, and I don't think even the townspeople that were there understood that process until about

maybe Day 4. And we, you know, took away a lot of frustration.

The fellow that we have working with us as our liaison did great with working with our priorities. And he asked us every day, he was very clear on that -- and this is in Madison -- and every day that was -- we met twice a day and it was top on his list. And the 48 hours, that little break because we felt we got a lot of response Sunday and Monday and then all of a sudden it slowed down, but we knew tree removal was being done and we knew, you folks, were a major part of it. I think maybe we could communicate that enough to our residents when we could have done a better job with that.

I have just one question and one comment. What if this had been worse? I know you brought so many people and the coordination effort was amazing, but what if it had been a Category 3 or 4? Where do you think we'd be today, right now?

ROBERT HYBSCH: A category 4?

REP. KOKORUDA: -- or --

ROBERT HYBSCH: We'd probably still be restoring power.

REP. KOKORUDA: Okay.

ROBERT HYBSCH: DEMHS did an outstanding job issuing that report and extrapolating the damage to our system based on wind speed up to a Category 4. But as far as managing the resources, the beauty of the National Institute Management System is scalable. This plan was developed by the fire department out

in California years ago when they had those widespread wild fires and they bring in tens of thousands of resources to manage that. So we have a plan in place that can manage it, but it takes time. And that would be the main impact. It would take many, many weeks to restore power from a Category 4.

REP. KOKORUDA: And then finally, I just wanted to say this was historic damage, at least in my district. And as someone said today earlier, I think it was Director DelGobbo, the scale of this was not lost on most of us, and I just want to commend you and UI and all the other companies the fact that this was done so safely is incredible. It's just remarkable that with all this coordination that no one was hurt so thank you for that.

ROBERT HYBSCH: Thank you.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Other questions from members of the committee?

Yes, Senator Meyer.

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I'm not a member of your committee, but I appreciate your courtesy.

Gentlemen, I thought I might give you -- I represent a district that's similar to the districts represented by Representative Kokoruda and Reed. It's the shoreline of Connecticut, that part of the shoreline that includes Branford, Guilford and Madison. And I want to give you just very briefly, my impressions. I don't think that CL&P was prepared by the Monday after the storm to

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really move forward. That it was my clear impression. I don't think CL&P was well prepared to restore power until Wednesday afternoon or evening or Thursday morning. That was my impression.

My further impression was that you did not have sufficient crews until much later in the week. And that when those crews arrived, from discussions I had with some of the crews, CL&P was not doing an effective job of coordinating the crews. I talked to a crew from Indiana that said that they had been sitting in their trucks for five hours waiting for -- waiting for an assignment.

The other impression I had was that you didn't have clear restoration priorities. The example I would give you of that is the road that I happen to live on in Guilford is called Mulberry Point Road. And Mulberry Point Road, the lines on that road serve probably 500 to 600 people. And one tree went down on one of the significant lines that serves that road and it wiped out service for everybody on that road, the 5 or 600 people. And yet, despite the fact that we all phoned that in and I, indeed, spoke with President Butler, as well, we didn't get that tree taken down and power restored until Saturday after the storm. So I wanted to give you each of those impressions with you in a -- what was a very difficult area of the storm. We took a clobbering in that area.

And I want to just ask you one question: Does CL&P have written standards for the restoration of power that -- and I think you referred to a fire study in California -- do you have written standards concerning the restoration of power that particularly aims at

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the timing of restoration that would be dependent, for example, on the number of homes and businesses that lost power, or dependent upon the severity of the storm, you were talking about the fact that you'd still be restoring if you had a Category 4 hurricane. We had a tropical storm. Do you have -- do you have written standards that relate to that restoration?

ROBERT HYBSCH: Yes. The answer to that question is yes. It's on page 5 of 28 in section 1 of our emergency response plan. And it's under section 2.2, Safety Policies, subsection 2.2.1, Public Safety and Restoration Priority Guidelines. And so it's clearly spelled out for each of our work centers to follow. And we clearly review those time and time again during the event.

And if you point to the area of the state you reside, that restoration probably didn't start until Wednesday in earnest. That's accurate because we spent -- that area was so heavily damaged, we spent the first two, two and a half days opening roads and clearing trees and making it safe. It was -- in fact, we didn't really get to 100 percent of those but our clear focus was on public safety those first couple of days.

WILLIAM QUINLAN: And if I just might add, I will say the damage assessment in the eastern part of the state, given the kind of broad geography and the amount of damage, first along the shoreline, but even moving up into the northeast part of the state, the damage assessment phase took longer in the east than it did elsewhere. And I think it's due to both of those factors.

And I think you are aware that once we recognized what we were exactly dealing with, the amount of damage in those areas, we did infuse some additional leadership to provide the direction and the oversight that you're referring to. I'm sure those crews were working just as efficiently as they can. And Mr. Hybsch talked about that vast number of crews that we ultimately deployed in that area. I think other here talked about the logistical challenges of that.

We put some very senior leadership in the field managing those crews making sure that work was done as efficiently as it could be, but it was a significant challenge, and it was due to -- both to the number of square miles that we're talking about but also the extensive damage.

And we didn't honestly have our arms around that until a day or two in. We talked last week about helicopter patrols that gave us an early indication of that. But it was very, very extensive, particularly down in the Guilford area.

SENATOR MEYER: You know, you did have a very good coordinator. I think his name was Peter Clark.

JEFFREY BUTLER: We did.

SENATOR MEYER: In Madison and Guilford. And Mr. Clark was very responsive. I talked to him many times.

But let me just follow -- one quick follow-up question and then I'll move -- let the chairman move on.

Since you do have standards, written standards, for power restoration, did you actually achieve those standards in Tropical Storm Irene?

ROBERT HYBSCH: That will be something that will have to be reviewed after the event. We're talking about that during the critique. In fact, our line crew of professionals really want to restore power. That's what they want to do. That's what they live for and, you know, and in the 16 -- 18, meetings I've attended so far, there's been an apprehension why did we spend so much time clearing roads because they really want to restore power. That's -- they're dedicated employees that really want to restore power.

So we will do a review after the storm, it's ongoing now, to evaluate how well we did in seeking out those restoration priorities, but I can tell you that there was direction from the EOC in Berlin, Connecticut. I was there every day, and we gave clear direction, you know, we're going to be focusing on town centers and schools and making sure that we're going through this restoration priority, the way it's designed in the book.

SENATOR MEYER: Okay. Well, I really hope that you'll share those results with the General Assembly. We have a tremendous obligation here to our constituents, both business and residents, and there is a question of whether or not we should have more legislative standards and understanding whether or not you were able to meet your own standards would be helpful for us.

Because if you didn't meet your own standards, we should be talking with you about, you know,

enough support that you can -- one way or the other -- that you can meet those standards. So this never, ever happens again.

WILLIAM QUINLAN: Thank you. And we'll be certain and happy to share that information once it's available. I will say that, you know, as we conduct these forums with town leaders and better understand the priorities that the towns and municipalities have, we may be adjusting some of that sequence. You know, we learned during the course of this event that in some instances, towns had priorities that, you know, were, I would say, unanticipated.

If you look at the normal progression. And there was obvious things, like hospitals, fire departments, you know, police departments, ultimately schools. For them it was the onset of the school year. But, you know, hospice facilities and waste water treatment facilities and, you know, that list kept growing. And you know, if you put yourselves in the shoes of the town, these were very legitimate priorities, and we did try to factor them into our overall restoration process. But I do hope through this dialogue that we're going to conduct that we're have a more holistic set of priorities so it can be factored into our restoration plans in the future.

SENATOR MEYER: Thank you.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

And thank you for your presentation, and I wanted to just personally thank you because in this week's segment, you were able to identify

some very clear cut objectives, very specific, that helps us in our deliberations, as well, so I appreciate it your taking the time to do that.

ROBERT HYBSCH: Thank you.

JEFFREY BUTLER: You're welcome. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: And next we're going to have from United Illuminating, John Prete. He's the senior vice president of electric transmission and distribution; and Anthony Marone, senior vice president of business services.

ANTHONY VALLILLO, SR.: Madam Chair, with your indulgence, I would like to join just to make a couple of comments. I've been here since 9:30 this morning. I've been inspired by Mr. Gordes to actually come up here and talk.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Vallillo, of course, you can make some comments, especially after sitting here all day.

ANTHONY VALLILLO, SR.: Thank you. I'd appreciate it. And then Mr. Prete and Mr. Marone will give their presentation.

Just a couple things and I tried to pick up on a few of the items that were discussed today. From sort of a macro-level. There was some talk about, you know, people trying to struggle with how do you assess the magnitude of this event? And you know we talk about is it a hurricane, is it a tropical storm -- I'm not really going to go there, but let me give you this data point. In a typical year, 8760 hours on UI's system, our customers experience about 225,000 individual customer outages. That's over an 8760-hour period.

In an 8-hour period of this storm, we had 171,000 individual customer outages. So, I mean, you think about that over an entire year, we had 225,000, and in 8 hours we had 171,000. I mean, that -- I think that should impress people of the magnitude, and of course, the thousands of areas that we had to do repairs on.

The other thing is, you know, as we look at this, again, from a macro-level, we should we should as we look at this process, the PURA process, the Governor's task force, that we should really try to focus on creating solutions for problems and not trying to deal with things that are anecdotal. We really should be dealing with things that are systemic.

And, for instance, I'll give you an example. A lot of talk this morning about utility poles. In our service territory -- and I'm only speaking for UI -- we have 135,000 utility poles. And in this storm, not one pole came down, other than the fact that a tree fell on the wires attached to that pole, or fell on that pole itself.

None of the poles came down by themselves. They're structurally sound. We have a very good program in making sure they're structurally sound, inspecting them and replacing those that are needed. So, again, it's one those things that, hopefully, those kind of things we can present information and we can put that aside as not something we should be focusing a lot of time on.

When we talk about the crew hours, you know, we are a very strong advocate -- and I

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believe I can speak to the fact that the president of our union Moses Rams, he's -- who is here -- I think is still here. We're on the same page here. That in a multiday storm, when you talk in seven to ten days, you know it's going to be that long -- a 16-on eight hours off is the optimum schedule. You start working people longer than that, you're asking for serious trouble because, again, when you're talking about eight hours off, it's not 8 hours of rest.

They've got to come back to the work location, change their clothes, take a shower, whatever, go home, try to get some sleep, come back. So, at best, they're getting four or five hours of sleep. If you start working 18 hours schedules, they're getting two, three hours sleep.

So not only are they working in hazardous conditions with a hazardous material, but now they're driving large utility trucks on public roads. We can't have people that are tired and just worn out. I mean, it just makes no sense. So we would very strongly resist any change to working that kind of schedule for a multiday event.

There was some talk earlier about the device that Seymour, I guess, has to check lines. I won't go into a lot of detail but it's basically a potential tester. We -- I had not -- I was not aware that Seymour was doing this.

And I don't know if any of the towns in UI's service territory are. But we're going to check with every single one of them because that is a serious departure from fundamental safety protocol. We should not -- they should

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not be doing that. And there's a whole lot of reasons why but they could really get themselves seriously injured because they don't understand what they're dealing with or how to deal with it effectively. So we'll follow up on that to make sure that, you know, that that doesn't happen.

The other thing we talked a lot about staffing, prior history staffing of crews and current. And I'll just caution you on one thing: UI has added crews. We've given you the numbers versus ten years ago, 77 versus 100 today. But also even going back further, we used to do -- crews used to be mostly three- and four-man crews. Most of our work today is done with two-man crews. So even the fact that we have more people, we actually have more crews because we have better procedures, better equipment, better technology, so we use less people to do the same work than we did years ago so that the crew numbers with actually magnified. So we actually have more today than we did even 20 years ago.

And then the last thing about -- I want to mention is cost recovery. UI has currently has -- we collect zero dollars in our rates for a major storm expenses. We do collect some money for minor storms which we expend every year, but for major storms there's nothing in our rates.

Our last rate case, the storm reserve that we had was eliminated. Chairman DelGobbo talked about our CEO Jim Torgerson agreeing to do that, which is true, but also that was with the anticipation there would be a regulatory asset set up for any major storm that we might have going forward. So that was the bargain.

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And we fully expect that the cost of this repair, which in our case is 20 to \$25 million, will be and is being set up as a regulatory asset.

We understand our obligation to react to a storm like this and go out and do whatever we need to do, spend the money, that -- we put the cash out there. We don't have any, you know, the cash flow is on our nickel. But we fully expect under the regulation bargain that, you know, this is symmetrical, and our customers are going to have to pick up the costs for this. Again, we'll go through all the prudence and reviews and all of that. We're fine with all of that, but we collect nothing for these costs in rates today. So, unfortunately, when something like that happens, we didn't order this storm. You know, Mother Nature brought it to us so we have to -- we have to deal with those issues.

So with that I'll turn it over to Mr. Prete and Mr. Marone.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Vallillo, can I just ask you a quick question about that since that's quite important.

ANTHONY VALLILLO, SR.: Yes.

REP. NARDELLO: Are you saying that in setting it up as a regulatory asset, you're not going to go through the normal rate case process?

ANTHONY VALLILLO, SR.: Oh, yeah, there will definitely be a regulatory process that will deal with those costs in a recovery mechanism. And, traditionally, that is usually done through a rate making process. You know, in the next rate case, so to speak.

But, again, there's always an opportunity for us to ask for specific relief if we think we're not going to have a rate case, or, in this case, it's a financial burden on us. But most likely, you know, it'll go through the normal regulatory process which means it will be dealt with in a context of a full rate case. But clearly, those costs, we would expect, would be looked at as a prudent cost recovery for dollars we've spent to meet our obligations.

REP. NARDELLO: And I understand, Mr. Vallillo, just to be very clear, that as we look at it, we always like to look at these not just this specific incident but in terms of the trouble rates. And I think that would be the fairest way to be fair to the company and then to be fair to the ratepayers as well.

Thank you.

ANTHONY VALLILLO, SR.: Uh-huh.

JOHN PRETE: Good afternoon. Thank you very much, I will be brief. I want to make sure that we answer questions and at the same time we are respectful of the time that you spend here already. We've put together a two-page summary of what we were asked to bring, which was lessons learned. Last week, I think we went into a lot of detail. I think we're in a model that we continuously learn so we actually started learning the day of the storm so I'll just highlight and certainly won't go into a lot of detail unless you would like me to.

So if you go to page 2 of what was handed out, number one, we've talked about that. We would fully support a collaboration with the state

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municipalities, local officials, on tree -- tree management as we are calling it. We talked about the envelope. We talked about the cycle and duration and the unhealthy tree administration. The one thing we didn't talk about was the "right tree" -- "right tree, right place," and we've done that with a lot of our towns.

We know that folks are in love with their trees, and rightfully so, I think there is a way to balance both of those. And then, finally, I would add to that vine management, which is part of our program, I think, was brought up today and rightfully so by the tree warden.

Second item is about information. Chairman Fonfara, as far as we're concerned, you hit the nail on the head. When people's expectations grow and so must our ability to handle that. So we are in the process of what we would call integrating a lot of the technologies we have in place, plus taking it advantage of emergent technologies to get specific information to folks, people, customers, yourself, as government leaders as soon as possible, certainly sooner than it was during the Storm Irene.

We have conducted customer surveys. We can get into the details. We did publish some of those and they were in the press towards the latter part of last week.

Number four, we are continuing on our effort to meet with each of the 17 towns and cities that we serve. We've done two so far. We have a majority of the towns that did very, very well. Certainly looking at why they did so well is a good way to start meeting with

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the towns that it didn't go so well. So Mr. Marone can get into a lot of detail. He's actually the one that is spearheading the notes for our company. But certainly the two things are all about the process and if anybody understands the process that would be a step in the right direction and a priority.

And then certainly the method and manner that you go, we've talked about "make safe." It is a process where wires down are made safe and the road closure activities can go forward. We are in the throes of our assessment, and we expect to finish that in the next week to 10 days, and again, that would be a constant learning.

Number six, we've talked about which is the training and education across the stakeholders. It is not just the company and municipalities. It could include others, like the fire departments and police. I think the two things that were brought up rightfully so is the first responders, that is the training that occurs across accounts often. I think if we were more engaged in those and participate that would again would go toward with the process of improving.

And then with the EOC, each of our towns did and took very active steps in activating their EOCs the Thursday or Friday before the storm. We've had a training program and educational programs with them months prior to that, and I think we need to make that a continuum whether it's twice year or once a year. I think that will fair out.

And then, finally, on resource and staffing, I think there are other ways of getting more resources. As we saw the resources for the

line and tree area from Maine to Florida were tied up because the storm, indeed, hit those areas.

So lastly, in conclusion, I know AT&T and the whole issue about joint pole ownership cause the committee here to ask some questions and from our viewpoint it works very well. We actually had a AT&T representative, both from a management point of view, but ones that could actually form in crews actually at our ops centers.

So when the assessment came through that a pole was down for whatever reason, we knew what pole it was, and it was brought back to our command center to the extent that it was a AT&T pole and dispatch tree and line crew from AT&T was dispatched to make sure that that pole was replaced or taken care of after the make safe activity was going forward. So it worked out very well from our point of view because of that.

So with that concludes and I can certainly answer any questions that you might have.

REP. NARDELLO: Other questions from the members of the committee?

Representative Kokoruda.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you, Madam Chair.

And I looked into the selectman -- First Selectman from Simsbury last week who said that they really weathered the storm quite well because they've been very aggressive in their tree management. How involved now -- what will change as far as the municipalities -- are the municipalities going out and

cutting trees themselves or is this something that they are coordinating with utilities? How does that work? And why would West -- or Simsbury seem to be ahead of most of us? Are they a little bit smarter, or do they just have a good plan in place with some good advice?

JOHN PRETE: I think it's been talked about a number of times. The residents of the state of Connecticut are proud that they are a tree state. So that is certainly a political -- a desire that they have and that's fine. It's a balance, I think, as the Chairman has stated. If that's the case, then the outages will be greater than those that will take a very aggressive approach.

In Simsbury, I'm not totally familiar with the details but we have towns that are willing to get the stakeholders together and balance the need to perhaps do a little bit more aggressive management in the tree area, and it's just not the tree trimming as we found out. The unhealthy tree -- I'm don't know if we can get the exact statistics, but the trees that have either uprooted or came down were unhealthy and there are our methods that you can determine whether or not the tree that looks on the outside, very healthy, has some deterioration going forward on the inside. And I think that the towns now understand the value of that balance.

REP. KOKORUDA: Thank you.

ANTHONY MARONE: I just might add, I mean, we very clearly saw during the storm a strong correlation, although there are no statistics on this data, our coastal towns that are more heavily wooded with trees experience more

damage, and we had to explain why that was. If we look at a town, like Fairfield versus Bridgeport, and you think about just the makeup of those communities and the difference in the damage. And it's just not the number of customers that experienced an outage but it's type of outages and the numerous small outages with more trees versus a more urban setting where you don't have that same dynamic. So it changes the characteristics of the type of outages and then also the restoration that's necessary to be able to bring back all those customers.

REP. NARDELLO: Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Just quickly, could you review again what you said about how you coordinated your relationship with AT&T and how you managed your poles?

JOHN PRETE: Yes. Prior to the storm I believe it was Friday, one of our vice presidents of the ops center actually contacted AT&T in preparation. That's one of the things I (inaudible) in our storm prep program. And in their discussion, they arrived at a solution whereby AT&T would actually have a representative -- we have an office and storm management area in Shelton so that they would actually take up post there, so to speak. So that both the management and the foreman and leaders as well as the crew showed up there.

So when our assessment came through in the example I gave shortly after when the pole was broken, we were able to determine whether was our custodian pole or AT&T. To the extent it was AT&T, they would be dispatched right from

that location before any other crews went forward. Unless it was, of course, a wire situation, in which case we would have a line crew first.

REP. JOHNSON: So you think you were able to avert a long wait for one UI, or AT&T through early coordination?

JOHN PRETE: Yes, I do.

REP. JOHNSON: Okay. Great. Thank you for your testimony.

JOHN PRETE: You're welcome.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Further questions from members of the committee?

Senator Fonfara.

SENATOR FONFARA: Thank you for your testimony. Can you tell us -- and I should've asked this of CL&P as well -- but to what extent in the evaluation process you're going through will there be meetings between the two companies and also with telecommunications companies to share that information with each other and how you can learn from each other. So it isn't a silo effort -- you know, when you figure out something that works well, but it's only yours and not shared with others?

JOHN PRETE: I can speak for ourselves and I'll speak for Mr. Butler. I've talked to him many times during the event and I continue to I think in those discussions anything that either company thought was better, we instilled in the company and I would expect

that to go forward with this assessment as well.

SENATOR FONFARA: I hope so.

ANTHONY MARONE: Senator Fonfara, I might just add also that the regulatory process, the docket is a docket for both companies so things, like interrogatories and our response to them, and so forth, will be part of that docket process together so by nature of that there's a lot of sharing information that will happen through that process, as well, as they look at the overall storm and our responses.

SENATOR FONFARA: I didn't know this. It shouldn't be solely that is the means by which information is gleaned. That to the extent that I think the public would expect and certainly we would expect that you all know each other very well and that from this event that we all can learn from if somebody has an approach or some ideas that everybody can benefit from, I would hope that it wouldn't be just solely through the department's prescribing PURA's procedural examination that that information comes out.

ANTHONY MARONE: Certainly not. We speak to each other quite regularly on all sorts of topics and this is certainly one of the ones that dominated our interactions over the last month plus.

SENATOR FONFARA: I do have one quick question. I know there are people still waiting to testify, but I'm sitting here thinking about this hearing and last week's hearing, the discussions regarding the cost of repair. And I wonder how many years has it been since there was another -- major storm in

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Connecticut and not I guess (inaudible) of that in a storm was -- would have to be considered, but in terms of statewide effect, it's been several years hasn't it?

ANTHONY MARONE: Yes. I think Hurricane Bob, which I'm not positive of the year, but I think it might -- I've heard, I think it was 1992. We'd have to check that.

SENATOR FONFARA: Almost 20 years.

ANTHONY MARONE: But it's been quite a while since something that would be close to this sort of magnitude. And certainly, Gloria. But I believe there was at least one event since Gloria that would have statewide impact.

SENATOR FONFARA: And you may not want to answer this, but to the extent that one storm every 20 years, is it -- is it worth, you know, the price that we would pay to pick up the pieces of a storm of that nature every 20 years as opposed to what we are talking about here, planning to, you know, there will be a cost to this. There will be a cost to preparing and being better prepared. And I don't know if we're -- maybe we should've started with that as a consideration is that something that we want to pay for -- for an anticipated once every 20-year event.

ANTHONY MARONE: It's absolutely something to consider as we go forward here and do our internal reviews and interact with the regulatory process, with the legislature, and so forth. Because certainly, it wouldn't be -- it makes sense or would be prudent to have the number of resources that were brought into this state to deal with this between all the utility companies, to be here all the time

ready to go. That wouldn't make sense to have those resources paid for every month in your electric utility bill. So there is a balance here that need to be made and part of this process needs to be to figure out what's that right balance.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

I see no other questions. I thank you for your presentation and testimony today.

ANTHONY MARONE: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: At this point, we're going to call the -- and I'm going to ask the telephone providers and wireless to come up together and since Mr. Emra, since you represent both I'm going to ask you to go first and interest of time if you will just combine both of your presentations in both of those areas.

Actually, well, now as I look at it, you're representing all three. Let's just do telephone and wireless for now.

JOHN EMRA: Absolutely, happy to do that. Good afternoon. My name is John Emra with AT&T. It's a pleasure to be with you again this week to talk about Hurricane Irene. I'm going to be very brief with my comments, you know we certainly heard last week, we heard a continuation of it this week that the company needs to do a better job of communicating with local municipalities about who our local contacts are, the steps that municipalities need to take under various circumstances whether it just be a pole that goes down at the time of a car accident, for example. So we've taken that to heart.

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We are already doing a number of things to make sure local municipalities know who their local -- we have a dedicated individual contact for every city and town in the state and make sure they know who that contact is and the best way to reach them. Make sure that they know that we have personnel stationed at the state emergency operations center on a 24-by-7 basis, so they will be able to answer any questions that may arise during a future storm or a future event, and finally, to talk to them about the processes and procedures for downed poles and the right number to call, what happens after call is made, what the different steps are between AT&T, between the electric utilities and in between the other attachers on the poles. So that's one of the big learning steps that we've taken away from this process.

Secondly, in terms of employees, we have a meeting scheduled for next week with our senior operations staff to meet with the CWA to talk to them about the issues -- some of the issues they raised earlier and we think that will be a good and fruitful discussion, and we look forward to doing that.

And finally, there is a national effort that is under way because this was an event that impacted AT&T's operations both from now in Puerto Rico all way up the eastern seaboard. There's a lot of learning that happened not just here in Connecticut but throughout our enterprise. We typically do that as part of these poststorm events so that is something that is ongoing right now so we can figure out what national things -- what worked, what worked in Connecticut, specific circumstances where we can take what we learned here and use elsewhere.

That's the extent of my prepared comments that I have, and I'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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

Representative Johnson.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you for your testimony.

JOHN EMRA: You're welcome.

REP. JOHNSON: I just wondered in terms of the testimony we just heard from UI with respect to coordinating and getting in touch with AT&T, first, before the storm to see if there was a way to manage utility pole breaking or, you know, having to be changed or any of those things, did you find that that went better with UI than it did with CL&P or --

JOHN EMRA: No. I think really because Mr. Prete, from UI, was responding just from UI's perspective. I can tell you we embedded our operations staff in the emergency operations center both at United Illuminating and at CL&P, so we had a similar experience with both companies. We think that is a very useful tool. One of the things we've done the past. The best way to make sure you have communication, a good open communication between the two of them.

I do want to clarify what I consider to be a misunderstanding. The question earlier as to what happens when a pole goes down, and it's a AT&T pole or a CL&P pole or UI pole, will we

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put up a pole for one of the other companies, and the short answer is yes. On a day-in-day-out basis, no. It is really the responsibility of the custodial of that pole. But if there is a storm, for example, we are happy to work with each other. We do that quite often. There was a major wind storm in Fairfield County in March of last year that we worked very closely with the electric utilities, both CL&P and UI.

We didn't have a lot of impact from that storm to our plant. There were a lot of poles that were down. They weren't poles that we were custodial owners of so we went out and replace poles for them. That is a kind of a standard practice and what happens is, we just bill each other. It's almost a bill and keep relationship, because at the end of the day they also help us when we need help. We have, I think, a very good cooperative relationship between the three companies, and also I would say between the other attachers to the pole.

REP. JOHNSON: Thank you for that clarification because numerous people came to me and said that they had heard that there was a problem trying to make a distinction with which pole belong to who, and there was a holdup in terms of replacing the poles and getting everything back up because there had to be CL&P or AT&T had to be there before the pole was addressed.

JOHN EMRA: The thing of the utmost concern to all parties is that, A, the pole remains safe, so AT&T's crews are not licensed to operate around electricity so if there is a pole down, and there's an unsafe situation, we do need the power companies to make that situation safe before we will go and set a new pole. And also we should note, too, that setting the

pole is not something that happens particularly easy. It's anywhere from 6- to 12-hour process to set individual pole.

So if a pole line is down, Senator Prague mentioned to me last week a pole and was down in Columbia that I did some research for her on and there were three poles down -- it was, you know, upwards of 18 hours worth of work to set those three poles. It is not necessarily an easy process, and understand we have a lot of attachers on the poles. So we may set the pole.

The electric companies have to come in and put their electric facilities at the top of the pole then depending on who the cable company is, we may or may not put those cable facilities on. There may be other attachers on the pole. It is a bit of a delicate symphony that needs to happen, honestly, between all the companies that are on the pole. It's not something that happens relatively easily. It takes a lot of work, a lot of coordination between all the parties.

REP. JOHNSON: Great. Thanks so much.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

REP. NARDELLO: Mr. Emra, can you address a couple of the comments that were made earlier today regarding the maintenance of poles and the fact that they were marked for maintenance and haven't been attended to. I'd like you to start with that.

JOHN EMRA: Yeah, and think the first issue is and something that is good for the committee knowledge to know is that we have an ongoing pole inspection process, we inspect every

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single pole in the state of Connecticut to check its worthiness. That happens on an ongoing basis. Also, every one of our staff members when they're out there working in the field, one of the things they first need to do before they go up is to make sure the pole they're looking at and they are working around is safe. If they happen to notice a pole is not safe and it's an unsafe condition, it will be replaced immediately.

Now if there's another pole that we know -- and there are poles that we know that do need to be replaced, that they are reaching, sort of, the end of their lifecycle, they are marked to get replaced but there is a dramatic difference between a pole that is in an unsafe position and needs to get replaced right away as to one that's reaching the end of its life. One is a much more critical situation that it needs to get replaced immediately. Others, they get replaced over time. We replaced thousands -- we've placed and removed thousands of double poles and added new poles in the state in over the last several years. It is just an ongoing cost of doing business for us.

REP. NARDELLO: And the second question, based on today's testimony, is the issue of the fact that other states' crews are brought in, when there are local individuals that weren't dispatched. Can you address that?

JOHN EMRA: I need to do a little bit more research to be honest with you to make sure I understand exactly what the circumstances were. I think the question was we have crews who do pole restoration. They're both -- we have in-house employees who do pole restoration and we have contractors who do

pole restoration. It all depends on, you know, the hour the day and the relative workload as to whether or not you might get up employee who does pole restoration or if you get a contractor who does pole restoration.

In both cases, they have to follow the exact same rules, in both cases all the work is inspected and signed off on by managers, but I am not really sure, Representative Nardello, what the specific allegation was. And I'm hopeful that the meeting I have with the union on October 4th will bring that to a little more light in understanding exactly what the issue was and address it appropriately. It's hard for me to really necessarily address what they're talking about because I'm not sure that I believe it's accurate or I'm not understanding it correctly.

REP. NARDELLO: Any other questions from members of the committee?

Representative Becker.

REP. BECKER: Just a quick follow-up to --

First of all, thank you, Madam Chairman.

Just a quick follow-up to one of her questions which is on the pole maintenance. You say it's an ongoing process. I understand that. You have a set schedule that within a X number of years --

JOHN EMRA: A pole is removed?

REP. BECKER: What the useful life is or how far in advance of their useful life they should be removed? And what's your -- you check the poles all the time but is there a set schedule

by which all of them are checked?

JOHN EMRA: So every pole is check continually on a ten-year basis, but then you have people out on the field working all the time looking at poles.

To answer your question about a "useful life," there is not necessarily a industry-specific metric that you hit. It really depends on the pole. It depends on where it's located. So if you had a pole along the shoreline, it's exposed to much more harsher elements than you would necessarily in the woods, for example, it depends how much weight is on the pole. I can tell you there has just been a lot of churn, going on constantly replacing poles just because there's a lot more attachers to the poles, a lot of competitors who have the right to access and attach to the pole, so they've been doing that.

So a lot of our pole inventory has just been turning over as a matter of course, a lot bigger poles, unfortunately, but that's also a function of that. So there's not a set deadline that you set to say this pole needs to be replaced because it's this age. It is much more ongoing, you know, Look at this pole, doesn't need to get replaced," and if it does, we'll replace it.

REP. BECKER: And so how frequently is a pole checked, on average? I understand people are working in a particular area but look and see is it there but --

JOHN EMRA: We have kind of -- by our estimate folks are looking and working around poles on probably and every two-year basis they're out there, you know, touching the pole, touching

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the facilities that are there. That is probably the best answer that I can give you in that regard.

I do want to say I have to disagree with Mr. Henderson's assertion that a pole that came down as a result of the storm because they were rotted. I do not believe that to be the case in any -- any circumstance. I think with all due respect if a 300-year-old tree lands on a pole line, the pole is going to come down whether it was put in the ground yesterday or if it was put in the ground 10 years ago. So I do have a problem with that sort of assertion because I don't think the facts bear that out at all.

REP. BECKER: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

Mr. Emra, at this point, if you'd make your comments regarding the cable section and then we can move on to the other speakers and --

JOHN EMRA: I don't have any additional comments beyond what I made earlier. I mean the reality is our preparation and, you know, before the storm and steps we took after the storm, they apply to all of our facilities whether they view wire line, traditional telephone facilities, whether they be our video facilities, whether they be our wireless facilities. I don't have any additional comments to offer you. I know, also, the afternoon is late.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you.

If there are no further questions, we're going to move on to the next speaker, which is

Michael Chowaniec from Cablevision.

MICHAEL CHOWANIEC: Good afternoon, Madam Chairwoman and Chairman Fonfara, and members of the committee. My name is Michael Chowaniec. I am area director of government affairs for Cablevision here in Connecticut. I am pleased to be with you again here this afternoon.

The hour is late and I know we've all been here for a very long day so I'll just touch upon a couple of the points that I think we've reflected on as we've been continuing to do our assessments post Tropical Storm Irene.

A couple points, first of all, and I think some other speakers have touched on this, there had previously been established an informal liaison process with the two electric utilities that was going to more rely on us speaking to them either via e-mail or over the phone when restoration processes were occurring. What ended up happening during the storm several days into the recovery process is that we ended up being in a position to embed our staff at both UI and CL&P's emergency operation centers. And we thinking that was very helpful.

It was in a position to -- we were in a position to basically receive information on a real-time basis, and we ultimately think that that process needs to be refined a little further, but it clearly puts us in a position to both receive information from them but also to the extent that our network has communicating back to us. You know, in the future, the hope would be that we would also be in a position to benefit their restoration efforts by us sharing information with them,

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as well, so that would be the first point I would make.

Secondly, and Chairman DelGobbo mentioned this earlier, after the storm hit, as part of the restoration process, PURA and the emergency management department established this communications task force. I think it took a little while for it to get up and running. But I think ultimately it clearly benefited the state and I think it benefited us on the service provider side as well. There were a couple of incidents where we were able to leverage them in terms of communicating with municipalities. And I think we were in a position to share information across various service providers, so obviously that was established on an informal basis but I could see something like that being established on a permanent basis to be beneficial to service providers and, also, to be beneficial to the state.

And lastly, and this is something that we communicated actually to PURA, when the communications task force spoke after the storm, they were actually asking service providers to give them some initial feedback on what it was that we thought worked and didn't work.

And I know this is going to be a delicate balance and I think this is going to involve a lot of people looking at the information very carefully but we would ultimately suggest that it would be of benefit to taking a look at UI and CL&P's prioritization plans when they go through the restoration process and possibly looking at communications assets, not the cable industry specifically, per se, wireless providers all of us, and seeing if our assets

in our facilities could, in fact, be more formally factored into how they prioritize their restoration efforts.

Clearly they need to balance a lot of needs, here whether it be hospitals, fire departments, police stations, but we ultimately think that as folks realize during this process, communications was a key component of this in terms of customers being able to understand what was going on and, also, utilities being in the position to communicate with their customers and to be a position to potentially evaluate how it is that our assets should be dovetailed with their prioritization efforts I think would be helpful.

So I am prepared for any questions you might have but that pretty much summarizes my comments. Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Questions from members of the committee?

Thank you, Mr. Chowaneic.

Next we'll have Robert Early from Comcast.

ROBERT EARLY: Good afternoon, Chairman Nardello, Chairman Fonfara. Thank you for letting me speak to you today on behalf of Comcast. I believe most of my comments are going to mirror the speaker in front of me so I will try and be brief. Reaffirm what's important, which was one of the things that worked well was the communication that we had with the electric distribution companies.

The coordination that we saw during and immediately after the storm with the companies

actually really helped us restore our customer services more effectively and also we learned some things for next time. In fact, CL&P was gracious enough in some instances to actually give the people that we had embedded in their storm centers training on the different software that they use, which turned out to be very beneficial and how we were able to put together the plans in the field and restore our services after the storm.

We would also like to also echo the complimentary remarks of Mr. Chowaneic on the communications task force that was set up. It proved to be a very valuable resource in sharing information in real time about what towns across Connecticut were having problems and allowed us all to be communicating the best practices and strategies for how we were going to restore services to those towns.

One of the things that we learned from the storm was in the communications area, which was the use of the web. We find that's something that was very effective, and we are going to optimize web content going forward to make sure that it can be used on handhelds which get used quite a bit, obviously, when there is an electricity outage. So that's something that we are working on now in a lesson that we learned from the storm.

There was a section on our website that talked about hurricane season and your services that was something that we communicated to customers prior to the storm. Probably about a week before the storm hit we began preparations that followed the plan that we have filed with the PURA in June of 2011 that spelled out the roles and responsibilities, how we would communicate with employees and

our customers.

And I think one of the things that I will say, too, is just thank you to our employees that were willing to work round-the-clock, many of them were personally impacted by the storm. They worked long hours. We incented them where under our practices to put in the appropriate overtime but some of these folks we had to get hotel rooms and meals and they worked really in an effort to get everyone up in our service territory as safely and quickly as possible so we need to thank them.

And we also -- I guess the only other thing that I would add is that we did set up a call-in number to make sure that employees, in the wake of the storm, could call in to find out if they would have a safe work environment, and we did take some steps to make sure that those employees could work from home after the storm did. So, in that way, we made sure that we had adequate staffing on our front level, employees interfacing with our customers and also out there restoring services after the storm.

And I'm happy to answer any questions you might have. I know you have detailed answers to the questions that we provided last week.

Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Other questions from members of the committee?

None. Thank you, Mr. Early.

ROBERT EARLY: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Next we'll have Daniel Mullen from

Verizon Wireless.

DANIEL MULLEN: Thank you members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the effects of Tropical Storm Irene.

My name is Daniel Mullen. I am executive director of government relations for Verizon. I handle wireless policy matters for Verizon throughout the Northeastern United States. I have with me here Rich Bozick, who's available for questions afterwards on any wire line questions you may have.

Many of the comments from the first hearing were helpful as we reflect on our response to this. As many of you know, Verizon provides mobile wireless services statewide and wire line services in the Greenwich area. We are proud of how our network performed and how our company responded, but we always take situations like this as an opportunity to learn so we can do better the next time.

Most cell sites and all of our landline central offices located in the communities that lost commercial power, continued to serve customers thanks to our backup batteries and generators. Making sure our network is prepared 365 days of the year, allows us to respond quickly and to keep our customers connected when they need their service most. We provided customers and the general public with free charging and domestic calling options within our stores in some of the most severely impacted communities. We supported emergency officials and first responders in their recovery efforts. Verizon also made \$100,000 donation to the National Red Cross so we can help and assist victims of the storms

throughout the East Coast, including Connecticut.

Verizon's review of our involvement and performance in response to the storm is ongoing. While our network performed very well, we heard comments calling for a better communications with customers, government officials and first responders in local communities. Rest assured Verizon is aware of the testimony presented by other participants and comments lawmakers shared during these hearings.

We will work to incorporate suggestions and recommendations for improvement. Our experience with Tropical Storm Irene reinforced the continued importance of coordinated efforts with the power companies. We observed the benefits of establishing a telecommunications task force, which among other things, highlighted the importance of prioritizing cell towers and other critical telecommunications equipment for commercial power restoration where generated power is not a place.

We can work better together to establish priorities for restoration, essential point of communication will be very helpful due to the many people involved from local municipalities, FEMA, DEP and the power companies. We appreciate the efforts of Commissioners Esty and DelGobbo, and DEP and PURA staff to help organize the essential points of contact. We have an opportunity now to review our collective experiences and develop an ongoing response team made up of public and private entities for future situations.

Thank you leaders, chairs, and representatives. And we would be pleased to answer any questions you have.

REP. NARDELLO: Thank you, Mr. Mullen.

Are there questions from members of the committee?

Senator Guglielmo.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Thank you, Madam.

Just a real quick, direct question. I got an e-mail just today from one of my constituents who wanted to know the, you know, the technology and why the service was out? Is it due to the batteries? Is that what happens? Why the Verizon service was not available for, I think, he said 16 hours?

RICHARD BOZICK: You are referring to the cell phone wireless service --

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Yes.

RICHARD BOZICK: -- or landline service?

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Yeah, cell phone.

RICHARD BOZICK: There were very few communities impacted in Connecticut from my understanding.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Okay.

RICHARD BOZICK: We have generators at all our sites. There were a few situations where the facilities that connect our cell towers to the rest of the network did not have power so there were a few situations where like that, yes.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: And there were generators but for some reason they weren't functioning in those few areas?

RICHARD BOZICK: The generators at all the towers that are allowed to have generators, which is the lion's share of our generators, were all up and functional. I am talking about some of the facilities that connect our cell towers to the rest of the network --

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Okay.

RICHARD BOZICK: -- did not have the power.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Thank you.

RICHARD BOZICK: But that was -- again, that was in very, very limited situations.

SENATOR GUGLIELMO: Thank you very much.

RICHARD BOZICK: You're welcome.

REP. NARDELLO: Further questions?

Seeing none. Thank you, Mr. Mullen.

DANIEL MULLEN: Thank you.

REP. NARDELLO: Next we have Benjamin Aron from Sprint Nextel.

BENJAMIN ARON: Good afternoon and thanks for having me here again. It is late and as with the rest of folks that have been up here, I think I'll try to keep my comments short in the interest of time.

I'd like to start out by saying that Sprint

Nextel is proud of the men and women that took care of its restoration efforts to get its network back up and running. And that as with the rest company that have spoken here today, the preparation efforts for the next event are ongoing.

I am pleased to report that we're taking lessons learned and we are interviewing folks from many different organizations within the company and trying and find out from them what they perceive to work what didn't work and what need we need to do better.

We've also conducted -- are in the process of conducting outreach to cities and states, and communities in the affected area around the North Carolina all the way up through the New England states, including Connecticut, to try to find out what their experiences were with what worked and what didn't and what could be done better.

We are pleased to report that Sprint Nextel's network facilities were 100 percent operational throughout the storm. And that the cell sites that were lost or out of service during the storm, of those, a very negligible percentage were out due to site damage. We look forward to working with PURA and their proceeding to investigate the storm.

To report a call interesting takeaways that I had from my own internal discussion with folks that were involved in the restoration, points that I'll probably be making -- the company will be making with PURA during its proceeding. The first of those was that the area lacking the most on information flow is probably is reports on the roads that there were a lot of lost man-hours with crews taking

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trips to locations that turned out not to be accessible. And that meshes, I think, with a lot of the testimony that we've heard from the first selectman and the local representatives, so that's certainly an area where better information flow could be helpful in the future.

Another interesting takeaway was that, in Connecticut -- and some other states as well -- but certainly in Connecticut, the instances of colocation which is where multiple providers are located at a single facility, that colocation being as prevalent as it is, it resulted in multiple trouble tickets for utilities. So if Verizon and AT&T and T-Mobile and Sprint, are all located at a particular tower and there is no power at that particular facility, they'd probably all have a trouble ticket in. And whether that slows down the process or speeds up the process, I don't know but it is certainly something we can look into.

The same would go for T1 facilities that are down. If they are down to an entire site, then the likelihood is that all the providers at the site are without that T-1 facility and that, too, would generate four tickets or three tickets depending on the extent of colocation at a particular facility.

Sprint is and has been for quite some time very concerned about public safety in the state of Connecticut, and Sprint has more probably than all other carriers combined to ensure that public safety communications in Connecticut are continuous and uninterrupted. We work with the State directly to reprogram its public safety radios. We worked with many of the municipalities, cities, and towns

directly across the state, as well, and we look forward to continuing that relationship and preparing for the next storm.

That is the end of my prepared remarks, other than to note that comments -- the questions that were posed last week have been answered and those have been put in the record, although if you like, we can extrapolate on those.

REP. NARDELLO: Questions from members of the committee?

Thank you, Mr. Aron, for your testimony.

BENJAMIN ARON: Thank you, madam.

REP. NARDELLO: Well, we have come to the end of our day. I think everybody for being here and for staying with us the entire day. I think the final thing that we need to say here and I think that and I think that my cochair has said it as well. This is just the beginning. This is not the end. This is really the beginning of the process so that we can do the formal overview that is necessary and make recommendations necessary to assure better service in ongoing storms and to, you know, look at what are our problems, what are our successes, what can we do better. So you can expect that within the next few weeks that there will be some formal comments that are made through the committee process on what we believe the recommendations should be regarding the future and from what we heard today. So I thank you all.

Any (inaudible)? In that case, thank you very much for being here and have a good evening.