

# Storm Communications

[ORGANIZATION] communication plan is geared primarily to post-storm communications. The communication plan does call for certain activities before and during the storm; however, during that time, our customers will be bombarded with warnings and preparedness messages. Our message will be one of many.

After the storm, if customers are without electricity, power restoration will quickly become the primary focus for our customers. It is at this time that our communications must be effective and thorough. [ORGANIZATION]'s emergency communications is based largely on the need for a "single voice" from the utility.

## **General Hurricane Season Communications:**

- Place Ad in Hurricane Editions of local newspapers
- Place radio spots on local radio stations
- Update website/social media appropriately
- Include hurricane preparedness information in energy bill
- Contact EOC to coordinate information dissemination
- Contact media to establish information requirements/methods
- Record/distribute pre-, during- and post-storm radio announcements
- Identify graphic designer for post-storm work
- Confirm availability of web designer to assist on web updates
- Update procedures and make available to media
- Present hurricane presentation to Customer Services department

## **Pre-Storm Communications:**

- Confirm media contacts and needs
- Confirm plan with EOC (###) ###-####
- Activate hurricane page on website and drive customers to social media sites for information during and after the storm.
- Issues press release about the utility's preparation activities and emphasize customer safety
- Contact graphic artist
- Contact web-site designer

## **During Storm Communications:**

- Maintain contact with radios and update as appropriate
- Collect information to prepare first news release
- Activate During Storm Radio Spots
- Activate [ORGANIZATION]'s phone messages as appropriate

## **Media List**

### **Key Local Radio Stations:**

#### **[STATION]**

- NEWS LINE: (###) ###-####
- [PHONE CONTACTS]
- [EMAIL CONTACTS]

### **Key Local Newspapers:**

#### **[PAPER]**

- NEWS LINE: (###) ###-####
- [PHONE CONTACTS]
- [EMAIL CONTACTS]

### **Regional Broadcast Television Outlets:**

#### **[STATION]**

- NEWS LINE: (###) ###-####
- [PHONE CONTACTS]
- [EMAIL CONTACTS]

# Pre & During Storm Content

## Pre-Storm Press Release - General Safety Tips

### [ORGANIZATION] PRE-STORM GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

[LOCATION] – With a Hurricane Watch announced for the [LOCATON], [ORGANIZATION] is asking that you take the following safety precautions:

- Turn your refrigerator and freezer to their coldest setting and keep the door closed. If the power goes out, this will keep food fresh longer.
- Unplug your television before lowering or taking down your outside antenna. Use extra caution and beware of power lines, which may be nearby.
- Disconnect all electric equipment.
- Keep flashlights, battery-operated radios, extra batteries, canned food, and bottled water handy.
- If you own a swimming pool, turn off all pumps and filters. If you don't, water from the approaching storm can damage them.
- **If evacuating the [LOCATION], [ORGANIZATION] recommends all customers shut the main power off to their home at the main circuit breaker to avoid fires caused by rising waters.**
- If your power goes out, use flashlights instead of candles or kerosene lamps. Be careful cooking over flames, a gust of wind through a door or window could start a fire and the fire department may not be able to respond.
- If you own a generator, be sure to follow the manufacturer's recommendations. Make sure your generator is in a well-ventilated location. Plug appliances directly into the generator. Turn your electricity off at the fuse box in order to prevent safety problems for [ORGANIZATION] workers. Additionally, remember to turn the generator off before turning your house power back on.
- Do not touch fallen or low-hanging wires and anything they may be in contact with. A seemingly harmless wire may still be energized. Also, stay away from puddles where downed lines may have landed.
- Keep telephone lines clear for police and emergency services. Please call [ORGANIZATION] only to report downed power lines, or to let us know that power is out in your home after others in your area have been energized.

###

## **Pre-Storm Release - What To Expect**

### **[ORGANIZATION] PRE-STORM – WHAT TO EXPECT**

[LOCATION] – [ORGANIZATION] is prepared to restore service as quickly as possible if facilities are damaged by **[insert name of storm]**.

Restoration efforts will begin as soon as winds diminish.

[ORGANIZATION] has established priorities for storm restoration that are intended to emphasize health, safety, and essential community services and to restore service in a manner that will affect the greatest number of customers first.

Here's what will happen:

#### **Before the Storm:**

- Line and electrical crews will be in the field working until winds exceed 35 miles per hour. At that time, all crews will be called in from the field. If power outages occur at this time, [ORGANIZATION] will not attempt to restore power. All restoration will take place when the storm has passed.
- Essential utility employees will be on standby to begin the restoration process immediately after winds diminish.

#### **Local Generation:**

- [ORGANIZATION] has over 100 megawatts of local generation available if the tieline is severed. If the generating units weather the storm without damage, the units will be started as soon as winds die down.

#### **Dealing with Customers' Calls and Power Outages:**

- [ORGANIZATION] office personnel will accept phone calls from customers reporting electrical hazards such as downed power lines or sparking lines, as well as customers reporting outages. This information will be immediately sorted and prioritized for field crews. In order to keep the process as efficient as possible, we ask that customers call only one time to report damage or an outage.
- After reports have been prioritized, employees from the engineering and meter services sections will survey affected areas to assess damage and to determine equipment, materials, and personnel necessary to restore power in areas.
- Employees from the electrical and line sections will begin restoring power.
- [ORGANIZATION] has a number of contracts and agreements in place so that emergency supplies and additional crews from other utilities will quickly mobilize to assist in the restoration effort, as necessary.
- [ORGANIZATION] crews and crews from other utilities will work as quickly as possible to restore power. Emergency services such as the hospital, the police

and sheriff's offices, and radio stations will receive top priority. The time required to restore power is largely due to the extent of damage to our distribution system.

- If the tieline is severed, local general will be available to supply power. However, customers should expect [ORGANIZATION] to call for conservation. Rotating power outages are also a possibility.

###

## **SPOT A -- Pre-Storm Radio Announcement: 30**

### **TREE TRIMMING #1**

AT [ORGANIZATION] MORE THAN [#] EMPLOYEES ARE DEDICATED TO PROVIDING YOU WITH RELIABLE ELECTRICITY THROUGH THE YEAR, AND ESPECIALLY DURING HURRICANE SEASON.

DURING HURRICANE SEASON [ORGANIZATION] CREWS ARE IN ALL NEIGHBORHOODS TRIMMING TREES, BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP.

NOW IS THE TIME TO TRIM TREES SO THEY ARE AT LEAST FIVE FEET AWAY FROM POWER LINES.

IF YOUR TREE HAS ALREADY GROWN CLOSE TO ELECTRICAL LINES DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TRIM IT YOURSELF. INSTEAD, CALL [ORGANIZATION] AT (###) ###-####.

AT [ORGANIZATION] WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###

## **SPOT B -- Pre-Storm Radio Announcement: 30**

### **TREE TRIMMING #2**

DO YOU KNOW THAT MOST POWER OUTAGES ARE CAUSED BY TREE LIMBS INTRUDING ON ELECTRICAL LINES?

YOU CAN HELP REDUCE POWER OUTAGES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD IF YOU FOLLOW THESE TWO TIPS:

FIRST, KEEP YOUR TREES TRIMMED AT LEAST FIVE FEET AWAY FROM POWER LINES. IF YOUR TREE IS ALREADY GROWING NEAR ELECTRICAL LINES, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TRIM IT YOURSELF – INSTEAD, CONTACT [ORGANIZATION] .

SECONDLY, IF YOU ARE PLANTING A NEW TREE, CONSIDER HOW TALL THE TREE WILL GROW AND CHOOSE YOUR LOCATION SO IT WON'T INTRUDE ON POWER LINES.

AT [ORGANIZATION] WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###

## **SPOT C -- Pre-Storm Radio Announcement: 30**

### **READY TO RESPOND**

WE AT [ORGANIZATION] HAVE LEARNED A LOT FROM PREVIOUS TROPICAL STORMS AND HURRICANES.

WE'VE TAKEN THOSE LESSONS LEARNED TO IMPROVE OUR HURRICANE PROCEDURES SO IF A

STORM HITS THIS YEAR WE WILL BE EVEN MORE PREPARED TO RESPOND TO YOUR NEEDS. WHILE ALL OF US AT [ORGANIZATION] HOPE THAT THIS YEARS STORM SEASON PASSES UNEVENTFULLY FOR THE [LOCATION], REST ASSURED THAT WE WILL BE READY TO SWING

INTO ACTION TO RESTORE POWER TO YOUR HOME AS WELL AS THE HOMES AND BUSINESSES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

AT [ORGANIZATION] WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###

## **SPOT D -- Pre-Storm Radio Announcement: 30**

### **IN THE EVENT OF AN OUTAGE**

NOW THAT HURRICANE SEASON IS UPON US, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT LIGHTENING AND HIGH WINDS BLOWING TREES INTO ELECTRICAL LINES CAN CAUSE POWER OUTAGES.

TO STAY SAFE DURING A POWER OUTAGE FOLLOW THESE TIPS FROM [ORGANIZATION]:

- KEEP A FLASHLIGHT HANDY,
- LISTEN TO A BATTERY OPERATED RADIO FOR UPDATES ON THE WEATHER AND ON POWER RESTORATION,
- IF YOU MUST DRIVE TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS AND REMEMBER TO TREAT INTERSECTIONS WHERE TRAFFIC LIGHTS AREN'T WORKING AS FOUR-WAY STOPS

AT [ORGANIZATION] WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###

## **SPOT E -- Pre-Storm Radio Announcement: 60**

### **PRE-STORM (ONLY RUN WHEN A HURRICANE WARNING IS ISSUED)**

WITH HURRICANE WARNINGS POSTED IN OUR AREA, [ORGANIZATION] ENCOURAGES ALL OF ITS CUSTOMERS TO TAKE THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:

- FIRST, KEEP FLASHLIGHTS, BATTERY OPERATED RADIOS, EXTRA BATTERIES, CANNED FOOD, AND BOTTLED WATER HANDY.
- TURN YOUR REFRIDGERATOR AND FREEZER TO THEIR COLDEST SETTINGS AND KEEP THE DOOR CLOSED SO FOOD STAYS FRESH LONGER.
- DISCONNECT ALL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT LIKE TELEVISIONS AND COMPUTERS.
- IF YOU HAVE A POOL, TURN OFF ALL PUMPS AND FILTERS.
- IF YOU HAVE A PORTABLE GENERATOR, FOLLOW THE MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDATIONS, KEEP IT IN A WELL VENTILATED AREA, PLUG APPLIANCES DIRECTLY INTO THE GENERATOR, AND REMEMBER TO TURN THE MAIN POWER OFF IN YOUR HOME BEFORE TURNING ON THE GENERATOR.
- FINALLY, STAY TUNED TO THIS RADIO STATION FOR IMPORTANT UPDATES

[ORGANIZATION] HAS BEEN PREPARING FOR THIS STORM AND WE'LL BE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###

## **SPOT F – During Storm Radio Announcement: 30**

### **DURING THE STORM**

WITH SEVERE WEATHER PASSING THROUGH OUR AREA, [ORGANIZATION] ASKS THAT YOU TAKE THE FOLLOWING SAFETY PRECAUTIONS:

- FIRST, STAY INDOORS UNTIL THIS STATION ANNOUNCES IT IS SAFE TO GO OUTSIDE.
- SECONDLY, KEEP ALL TELEPHONE LINES CLEAR FOR POLICE AND OTHER EMERGENCY SERVICES. PLEASE ONLY CALL [ORGANIZATION] TO REPORT DOWNED POWER LINES OR TO LET US KNOW POWER IS OUT IN YOUR HOME WHILE OTHERS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD HAVE POWER.
- FINALLY, WHEN IT IS SAFE TO GO OUTDOORS, PLEASE STAY CLEAR OF ANY DOWNED POWER LINES AND ANYTHING THEY MAY BE IN CONTACT WITH.

AT [ORGANIZATION] WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###



# Post Storm Content

## Post Hurricane Communications:

- Prepare articles/messages for media
  - Articles need to include:
    - Stress Customer Safety**
    - Organization**
      - How many crews, actual number of employees working
      - Need for additional crews or outside utility assistance
      - Outline of [ORGANIZATION] actions to restore service
    - Facilities Assessment**
      - Number of substation out of service
      - Number of transmission lines out of service
      - General extent of damage
    - Customers Affected**
      - [LOCATION] hardest hit
      - Number of customers affected
    - Restoration Status**
      - Efforts/Results
      - Successes and special problems
      - Time estimates (if possible)
- Release restoration updates every 3 hours the first day; twice daily from then on and/or as needed
- Send release/radio scripts and restoration updates to [ORGANIZATION] phone operators, EOC, etc.
- Act as spokesperson -- field media calls, provide sound bites to radio by calling local media or establishing press conferences for media influx
- Activate and schedule post-storm safety radio spots
- Distribute pre-designed safety ads for print media
  - **Keep a detailed list of all invoices related to radio and print advertisements. In the event that the [LOCATION] are declared a disaster area by Presidential Declaration, [ORGANIZATION] may be entitled to recoup costs from FEMA for these expenditures related to a named storm.**
- Assist System Control with pre-recorded messages

## **Post-Storm Press Release – Damage**

### **[ORGANIZATION] POST-STORM – DAMAGE**

[LOCATION] – Damage [ORGANIZATION] from Hurricane \*\*\*\*\* was relatively (high-low), according to initial reports from [ORGANIZATION]'s System Control. The hardest hit areas appear to be \*\*\*\*\*. [ORGANIZATION] is now assessing damage reports and assigning extra crews and equipment to the affected areas.

[ORGANIZATION] System Control estimates about \*\*\* percent of the customers are without electricity. Initial data indicates that \*\*\* of [ORGANIZATION]'s substations were knocked out of service. Most of [ORGANIZATION]'s other damage appears to be from \*\*\*\*\*.

[ORGANIZATION] cautions the public to stay away from wires that are down or dangling. Report such hazardous conditions to police or to [ORGANIZATION] System Control at (###) ###-#### as soon as possible. Also, make sure children stay away from all wires and poles, a seemingly harmless wire may still be energized.

###

## **Post-Storm Press Release – Restoration**

### **[ORGANIZATION] POST-STORM – RESTORATION**

[LOCATION] – [ORGANIZATION] now estimates that about \*\*\* of its \*\*\* customers have been returned to service following the disruption of service from Hurricane \*\*\*\*\*. [ORGANIZATION] crews have been working around the clock to restore service to the [LOCATION].

By \*\*\*\*\* (a.m./p.m.) today, \*\*\* of the \*\*\* substation(s) originally out of service are back on-line. \*\*\* [ORGANIZATION] personnel have been working in the field to restore power and crews from utilities in \*\*\* have come in to help in restoration efforts. [ORGANIZATION] now estimates that, except for isolated cases, almost all customers should be back in service within the next \*\*\* (days/hours).

Many telephone calls have flooded [ORGANIZATION]'s switchboard during the past \*\* hours and we ask that customers refrain from calling to report that they are without power unless their neighbors have power, but they do not.

[ORGANIZATION] appreciates its customers concerns and cooperation during this post-storm period.

###

## **Post-Storm Press Release – Safety/Re-establishing Power**

### **[ORGANIZATION] POST-STORM - SAFETY/RE-ESTABLISHING POWER**

[LOCATION] – [ORGANIZATION] urges customers to take special precautions when they return home and attempt to re-establish electric service following flooding.

- In many instances a professional electrician should be contacted.
- If you decide to reset your circuit breakers, follow these tips:
  - As you approach your home, watch for downed power wires. Avoid any downed power lines, they may still be energized and extremely dangerous. Report downed lines to [ORGANIZATION].
  - Be sure to wear dry shoes with rubber soles. Stand on something dry and non-conductive. Dry wood or dry wooden furniture are good examples of non-conductive materials.
  - Do not stand in water when operating switches, plugging in or unplugging appliances, resetting breakers, or replacing fuses.
  - When resetting fuses, use a dry, non-conductive tool such as a piece of PVC pipe. Also use only one hand. Keep the other hand behind your back. Do not touch the metal breaker box or other grounded objects in the area.
  - If circuits will not reset call a professional electrician.

After you have reset your circuit breakers continue to act cautiously:

- Check appliances to be sure they are dry and that cords have not been damaged.
- If a breaker trips or you see smoke or smell a burning odor after you plug in an appliance, unplug the appliance and have it checked.

###

## **Post-Storm Release – Debris**

### **[ORGANIZATION] POST-STORM – DEBRIS**

[LOCATION] – [ORGANIZATION] asks customers to avoid piling debris near power line poles or where poles used to be. This could slow the restoration process.

Please keep all utility easements – areas under power lines either in the front or the rear of your home or business – clear of all debris.

Do not attempt to remove debris from around electrical equipment – especially downed power lines. Debris near electrical equipment may also be energized and dangerous.

[ORGANIZATION] only asks that you not add to any debris in these areas as it will slow down the process of getting to downed power poles, lines, and transformers that need to be replaced or repaired to restore power.

###

## **Post-Storm Release – Generators**

### **[ORGANIZATION] POST-STORM – GENERATORS**

[LOCATION] – With widespread power outages affecting [ORGANIZATION] customers, many have begun to use portable generators. [ORGANIZATION] offers the following tips to ensure your safety and the safety of [ORGANIZATION] employees who are working to restore your power:

- Read all instructions carefully and abide by the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Locate the generator in a well-ventilated area, preferably outside your home. Carbon monoxide, a by-product of gasoline-powered generators, can be deadly in enclosed areas.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator. Limit the number of appliances you plug into your generator. The generator has a recommended wattage, make sure the wattage of all appliances do not exceed the rated wattage of the generator.
- Avoid connecting the generator to your home's wiring at the circuit breaker. This can cause electricity from the generator to backfeed into [ORGANIZATION] lines, endangering our employees and possibly even your neighbors.

###

## **SPOT A -- Post-Storm Radio Announcement: 30**

### **AFTER THE STORM #1**

FOLLOWING THE STORM, SAFETY SHOULD BE YOUR TOP CONCERN.

FIRST, [ORGANIZATION] URGES CUSTOMERS TO STAY AWAY FROM FALLEN OR LOW HANGING WIRES AND ANY STANDING WATER THEY MAY BE IN CONTACT WITH. LINES MAY STILL BE ENERGIZED AND DANGEROUS.

SECONDLY, DO NOT TRIM TREES THAT ARE NEAR POWER LINES AND DO NOT PILE DEBRIS NEAR [ORGANIZATION] POLES OR UNDER LINES, AS THIS CAN DELAY RESTORATION EFFORTS.

CONTINUE TO LISTEN TO THIS STATION FOR IMPORTANT POST-STORM UPDATES.

AT [ORGANIZATION] WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###

## **SPOT B -- Post-Storm Radio Announcement: 60**

### **AFTER THE STORM #2**

THE STORM MAY HAVE PASSED, BUT THE NEED FOR CAUTION HAS NOT.

[ORGANIZATION] ASKS THAT YOU TAKE THE FOLLOWING PRECAUTIONS TO ENSURE YOUR SAFETY:

- FIRST, STAY INDOORS UNTIL ROADS IN YOUR AREA HAVE BEEN CLEARED OF DOWNED POWER LINES. IF YOU MUST LEAVE YOUR HOUSE, KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE FROM THESE LINES AND ANYTHING THEY MAY BE IN CONTACT WITH, ESPECIALLY PUDDLES. EVEN HARMLESS LOOKING WIRES CAN BE ENERGIZED WHEN CROSSED WITH POWER LINES CARRYING LIVE VOLTAGE.
- SECOND, PLEASE REFRAIN FROM DRIVING UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP ROADS CLEAR FOR POLICE, FIRE, AND [ORGANIZATION] VEHICLES THAT ARE OUT RESTORING POWER.
- FINALLY, WE ASK THAT YOU HELP US BY KEEPING TELEPHONE LINES CLEAR FOR EMERGENCIES. ONLY CALL [ORGANIZATION] ENERGYS ERVICES TO REPORT DOWNED LINES OR TO LET US KNOW YOUR POWER IS OUT AFTER IT HAS BEEN RESTORED TO OTHERS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

CONTINUE TO LISTEN TO THIS STATION FOR IMPORTANT POST-STORM UPDATES.

AT [ORGANIZATION] WE'RE WORKING TO KEEP US ALL SAFE.

###