

1 STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
2 PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION AND
3 NEW HAMPSHIRE HOMELAND SECURITY
4 & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

5

6 April 9, 2009 - 7:00 p.m.
7 Timberland Regional High School
8 Performing Arts Center Auditorium
9 40 Greenough Road
10 Plaistow, New Hampshire

11

12 RE: DECEMBER 2008 ICE STORM REVIEW
13 Hearing to receive public statements.

14

15

16 PRESENT: Chairman Thomas B. Getz, Presiding (NHPUC)
17 Commissioner Graham J. Morrison (NHPUC)
18 Commissioner Clifton C. Below (NHPUC)
19 Asst. Director Kathryn M. Douth (HS&EM)

20

21 ALSO PRESENT: Reptg. the New Hampshire PUC Staff:
22 Randall Knepper, Director - Safety Div.
23 Lynn Fabrizio, Esq.

24

Reptg. NH Homeland Security & Emergency Mgt.:
James C. Van Dongen, Public Information Off.

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28 Court Reporter: Steven E. Patnaude, LCR No. 52

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Okay. Good evening,
3 everyone. My name is Tom Getz. I'm the Chairman of the
4 Public Utilities Commission. And, on my right is
5 Commissioner Clifton Below, on my left is Commissioner
6 Graham Morrison, and on my far left is Assistant Director
7 Kathy Doutt, from the Department of Emergency Management.

8 FROM THE FLOOR: Excuse me. That's very
9 distracting. Can you have them knock it off up there?

10 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Okay. If we could keep
11 it down a little bit in the back, it would be helpful for
12 the folks up front who are trying to hear. Thank you.
13 Also here tonight from Emergency Management is Jim Van
14 Dongen, seated in the front door, and in the back of the
15 room is an attorney with the Public Utilities Commission,
16 Lynn Fabrizio. And, walking down the aisle, on my left,
17 is Randy Knepper, who is the Director of the Commission's
18 Safety Division. The public statement hearing this
19 evening is a joint effort by the PUC and Emergency
20 Management as part of our after action review of the ice
21 storm. And, we will be reviewing the preparedness and
22 response both of public utilities and state government to
23 the ice storm that began on the evening of December 11,
24 affected approximately 60 percent of New Hampshire
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1 customers at its peak, and resulted in some customers
2 going without service for as long as two weeks.

3 In very general terms, an after action
4 review is focused on analyzing what happened, why it
5 happened, and how it can be done better in the future. In
6 order to effectively analyze what happened, we have begun
7 by systematically and comprehensively gathering data.
8 And, this data gathering effort started during the ice
9 storm, with the records and notes kept by the various
10 individuals involved in responding to the ice storm.

11 In addition, the Public Utilities
12 Commission submitted a first set of 50 interrogatories,
13 requests for documents to the various utilities, asking
14 for documents and answers to particular questions. And,
15 that first round of interrogatories was answered on
16 February 27. We have sent -- our Staff has submitted a
17 second round of interrogatories, and those answers have
18 been submitted to the Commission as well. Now, you can
19 see the questions and answers on our website. If you go
20 to www.puc.nh.gov. And, on the front page, there will be
21 a portal indicating to the December 2008 Ice Storm, and
22 all of the documents that we've collected so far are going
23 to be on that, on that page of the Web. And, some
24 utilities have also submitted information and reports on
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1 their own. They're found on the website and they're a
2 part of the information that we'll be looking at.

3 We've also posted a comment form on our
4 website for public input, that asks specific questions
5 about the ice storm, and we have posted the 150 plus
6 comments that we've received to date. In the back of the
7 room this evening, there's also a hard copy of what is the
8 comment form on our website. And, if you could fill that
9 out and hand that in as well, that would be appreciated.

10 Now, the hearing tonight and the nine
11 others that have been scheduled around the state, are
12 another part of the information gathering effort. And, we
13 expect that hearing your experiences during the ice storm,
14 and your recommendations for corrective measures, will
15 help us both in identifying issues and deciding on
16 specific courses of action that we can take in the
17 upcoming months. Your analysis of what went wrong and
18 what went right and your recommendations about how things
19 can be changed for the better are critical inputs to the
20 process.

21 And, I'd also like to point to a couple
22 of other steps that have been taken since the ice storm.
23 Over the past couple of months, the Bureau of Emergency
24 Management, headed by Director Chris Pope and his
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1 assistant, Kathy Doutt, who is here tonight, they have
2 held a series of meetings with local, public safety, and
3 community officials, which Kathy will explain in more
4 detail. And, in addition, Emergency Management has
5 initiated a review process for State agencies, which she
6 will also describe.

7 One other effort that will occur this
8 spring concerns the issue of undergrounding utility lines.
9 Chairman Naida Kaen, of the House Science, Technology and
10 Energy Committee, will be holding an informational session
11 in her committee to better understand the potential costs
12 and benefits of undergrounding utility lines. And, she
13 will be also looking at the prospects and the pluses and
14 minuses of moving to more Smart Grid alternatives for
15 monitoring outages in New Hampshire.

16 Now, as we collect what is obviously a
17 large amount of information, we will be identifying the
18 data to identify issues that need attention and
19 remediation. While it is not our intention to prejudge
20 anything, I think there is no serious debate that
21 communications on many levels must be improved. And, that
22 was identified very early into the ice storm, and
23 beginning with comments that Governor Lynch made in the
24 first press conference a couple of days into the ice
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1 storm. But it's because of the obvious need to fix those
2 communications issues that the PUC Safety Division
3 Director, Mr. Knepper, is also facilitating a review of
4 utility communications practices. This effort will
5 include communications to the PUC, to state Emergency
6 Management, to local emergency directors, and to the
7 public generally. The goal of this effort is to identify
8 model practices that should be adopted by all utilities.
9 And, our goal is that those new practices will be in place
10 prior to the next winter season.

11 At the same time, there are other issues
12 that require a closer look before we can come to
13 definitive conclusions. In general terms, from the PUC's
14 perspective, we will be looking at whether the utilities
15 were reasonably prepared, that is, "did they plan
16 properly?" And, we'll be looking at whether they
17 responded reasonably, that is, "did they execute their
18 plans effectively?"

19 Within that framework, we will be
20 looking at particular issues, which include, among other
21 things, the effect of tree-trimming on customer outages,
22 the status of mutual aid arrangements among utilities,
23 protocols for prioritizing restoration, and decisions on
24 allocating work crews. Now, depending on what emerges,
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1 the PUC can proceed in a number of directions, including
2 directing utilities to implement new practices and
3 procedures, we could start a rulemaking on particular
4 issues, and, if necessary, we can begin formal
5 adjudicative proceedings to address particular issues that
6 might emerge.

7 To assist us in this review, both
8 because of the sheer amount of data that must be sorted
9 and analyzed, and because there may be certain subjects
10 that require specialized expertise, the Commission has
11 issued a Request for Proposals for consulting assistance,
12 and we are reviewing those proposals, and should be
13 selecting a consultant within the next several days.

14 Now, as I noted earlier, we have not
15 reached any specific conclusions at this point, and that
16 is because it is our job to take an objective look at all
17 of the facts. But I can assure you that we will follow
18 the information we receive wherever it leads.

19 Now, we have a couple of goals in mind
20 through the process. First, is to issue a report in
21 September that will set forth the results of this after
22 action review, including recommendations for specific
23 proceedings that may be required as a follow-up. And, a
24 second goal is to make sure that the utilities have

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1 improved their planning and response protocols, especially
2 as it concerns communications, in advance of next winter.

3 At this time, let me remind you, if you
4 would like to speak tonight, there are public statement
5 forms in the back of the room. If you could fill one out
6 and hand it in to Ms. Fabrizio, and, if you indicate that
7 you wish to speak, I will call on you in the order that I
8 receive the forms. If you do not wish to speak and you
9 want to make a comment, you can fill that in as well.
10 And, as I noted earlier, there's also the lengthier
11 comment form that you could fill out and leave at the back
12 of the room. Also, if you're not inclined or don't feel
13 comfortable speaking tonight in public, we will be staying
14 around afterward. And, if you want to share your comments
15 with someone on our Staff, or with us, or with someone
16 from Emergency Management, then we'll be happy to talk to
17 you in that form as well.

18 So, before we turn to the public
19 statement forms, I'll ask Assistant Director Douth to say
20 a few words about what the Emergency Management Division
21 has been doing.

22 MS. DOUTH: Thank you, Commissioner.
23 It's good to be here this evening to hear your comments.
24 Just want to give you an overview of what Homeland

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1 Security and Emergency Management has already done. As
2 the Commissioner has said, we are also gathering data. We
3 have collected 40 local after action reports. Forty towns
4 have submitted after action reports to us for review, and
5 including what went well and what didn't go so well for
6 those particular towns. We also have collected after
7 action reports from various public agencies. We posted,
8 along with the local government center, public safety
9 meetings, at which we gathered information. We've
10 appeared before legislative committees. We've brought the
11 news media in. The State EOC staff has come in with their
12 own comments and insight into this, and also had meetings
13 with several business sector groups, such as engineers.

14 We'll be synthesizing all this data, and
15 have already started to do so, to develop our own state
16 improvement plan. At the same time, and shortly after,
17 because it will be a long process in itself, we will be
18 revising the State Emergency Operations Plan. There's
19 nothing like a big disaster to really unfold everything in
20 front of you to deal with things you just don't have to
21 deal with in the normal course of an emergency. This is
22 the biggest disaster that New Hampshire has seen and the
23 State Emergency Operations Center has had to deal with for
24 many years. We had to do things we hadn't done in a long
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1 time, put up points of distribution, which we did for
2 water, for food, for shelter equipment, and for generators
3 for community infrastructure.

4 When you think about what this was all
5 about, you cannot help but remember those that died during
6 this emergency, during this disaster. We had four deaths
7 related to the disaster. We had 200 injuries; most of
8 them related to carbon monoxide. At the same time, there
9 were 59 shelters that were open during this time, they
10 housed over 1,500 people. They had a capacity for
11 approximately 10,000 people. For the first time, we had
12 17 pet-friendly shelters, because there are a lot of
13 people that won't leave their homes if they can't bring
14 their pets.

15 I, like Commissioner Getz, will remain
16 afterwards, if there's anybody who would like to talk to
17 Homeland Security and Emergency Management, and I believe
18 Jim is going to join me with that, if you're not
19 comfortable in making any type of public statement. We'll
20 be taking notes if anything pertains to the Emergency
21 Management side of the house. Thank you very much for
22 having us.

23 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you, Kathy. Let
24 me say a couple more things before we start. So, when I
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1 call the first person down, if you could come to the
2 microphone here on my right, then that will help make sure
3 that they can be heard, and it will also help make sure
4 that our court reporter, Mr. Patnaude, can record all the
5 comments. We'll be keeping a transcript of the comments
6 tonight, and that will be available on our website as
7 well.

8 One other update. I'm not sure if folks
9 are aware of this, but our understanding is that there was
10 an outage today in the Unitil territory. The reports that
11 we've received is that the source of the outage was a
12 Public Service Company of New Hampshire 115 kV
13 transmission line that feeds into the substation that is
14 the meet point between the PSNH and the Unitil service
15 territory, understand that several thousand customers were
16 out for approximately a half hour. That PSNH has been
17 doing maintenance on that line, and that may be the cause
18 of what brought that transmission line down. And, that
19 they then did a work-around to make sure that the area of
20 the Unitil's franchise was fed from some other directions.
21 So, that's the information I have so far on what occurred
22 today. And, I know there's folks from Unitil here today,
23 and Mr. Knepper may have some additional information about
24 that. So, if folks wanted to ask later about that, then
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1 we'll see if we can give you more information. But,
2 again, we'll be looking into that and trying to make sure
3 what happened today and understand what the reason for it
4 was and whether the response was reasonable under the
5 circumstances.

6 So, with that, the first person I have
7 is Peter Powers, from Newbury. And, I'd also ask, if
8 there's -- it sounds like, looking at the list, there may
9 be folks from -- maybe mostly Unitil customers, but there
10 may be some folks from PSNH. So, just in case, could you,
11 when you identify yourself, if you could also tell us what
12 company, what's your electric company.

13 MR. POWERS: Good morning -- or, good
14 evening. My name is Peter Powers. Thank you very much
15 for having us tonight. I'm actually a General Fore Person
16 for Asplundh Tree Experts. And, we have Unitil crews --
17 we're attached to the Unitil crews through all three
18 districts, three companies throughout Unitil. Also, I was
19 there during the ice storm, right through the whole event.
20 And, we wanted to make sure that we express what we saw,
21 what we observed throughout the whole event.

22 First of all, I have a letter here that
23 was given to us by a line contractor that participated in
24 the total outage, brought in from another state. I'd like
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1 to read it verbatim, to make sure we honor everything that
2 is on the letter. This is addressed to Mr. Gary Shelto,
3 which is my Vice President and Manager of the State of New
4 Hampshire for all of Asplundh.

5 "I am writing to you in reference to the
6 meeting that you will participate in in regards to the
7 Unitil's storm restoration response after the
8 December 2008 ice storm. I own and operate an electrical
9 contracting company located in Chattanooga, Tennessee,
10 Service Electric Company, that's specializes in power line
11 construction and maintenance, as well as storm
12 restoration. While our crews have been in many states to
13 perform storm restoration from tornadoes to hurricanes to
14 ice storms. We would like to report to you that the ice
15 storm in question was by far one of the worst we have ever
16 participated in. We dispatched 70 plus -- 75 plus men and
17 equipment within a few hours of the call from Unitil.
18 These men knew for the most part what they were getting
19 into, but found devastation far beyond their expectation
20 when they arrived in the Northeast.

21 Since the date of the arrival, up to and
22 including today, we have received calls, e-mails and
23 letters from residents thanking us for assisting in the
24 restoration efforts. We have unfortunately also received
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1 negative calls/comments to which we do not share with our
2 men. For anyone to assume that any utility can be
3 prepared for a disaster of this magnitude is a dream, and
4 a wild one at that. Nobody can plan for and stage the
5 many resources and materials, etcetera, to respond to such
6 a disaster. Then, during the restoration process, the men
7 were hit with a major snow storm. Even this did not stop
8 the work. The work went on until completed.

9 While nobody likes to be without power,
10 something we all take for granted until it's gone, we
11 don't realize how our actions prior to the storm could
12 impact the restoration process in a major event such as
13 this one. When we don't let utility companies trim our
14 trees or have wider right of ways, we compound the problem
15 when an event like this occurs. When we make utility
16 companies use alternative routing of power lines, we cause
17 restoration to be delayed in the event of a major storm.
18 Nobody thinks of these issues while fighting the utility
19 that needs to build their power line.

20 I can assure you that no individual
21 involved in the restoration process has trouble falling
22 asleep when they finally lay down whenever possible. They
23 work 17 hours per day in the freezing cold while
24 dealing with the unknown issues of whether or not the

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1 downed line re-energized or came down again. Is that pole
2 stable we're working on right now? Can I put that wire
3 back onto it? Is that generator that's installed in that
4 house installed properly? Is it going to backfeed and
5 kill one of us? Is that car going fast down this hill
6 right now going to see me when I am up in my bucket truck?
7 Is it going to avoid me?

8 Through all of this, I can say that
9 Unitil was extremely accommodating and supported our crews
10 in every way possible. Unitil's own crews and assisting
11 other crews all worked hard than anyone could expect in
12 the extreme circumstances. For anyone to place blame on
13 something that could not have been managed any better is
14 absurd. Unitil's customers should be thankful that the
15 restoration efforts went as well as they did. I think
16 that in -- I think that should be responsible -- it should
17 be your responsibility to support Unitil's efforts, rather
18 than criticize. Your company [committee?] should be --
19 should see that Unitil gets positive reinforcement, rather
20 than negative press. Your committee should be commending
21 Unitil and its employees for the outstanding effort put
22 forth during the restoration process.

23 I find it hard to digest any negative
24 press after what I call a "successful restoration". All
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1 of our men returned home late Christmas Day, after driving
2 straight through in most cases to be with their families.
3 We brought home all parts and pieces we arrived with and
4 with no accidents. This is a successful journey and it
5 was due to the support of Unitil personnel involved. My
6 hat is off to the Unitil folks, and I think that the local
7 politicians should commend them for all the hard work
8 during the restoration process. Until the lights go out,
9 you never appreciate what happens when you flip that
10 switch. On the same token, you can never appreciate what
11 it takes to restore power after a major storm until you
12 have worn the boots of a lineman.

13 I trust you will have a favorable result
14 from your meeting and will finally thank Unitil employees.
15 Sincerely, Jody Shea, President and CEO of Service
16 Electric Company, Chattanooga, Tennessee."

17 Also, on the same token, I worked right
18 through the crews, through the evening. And, as we
19 approached, we have a complement of three crews that
20 normally are assigned to Unitil out of Kensington. Those
21 crews were brought back to work probably about an hour
22 after they left on that Thursday evening. They were
23 brought back in anticipation of what was to be coming out
24 out of the west. Those crews were kept right through the
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1 night. We assigned them to different areas of the
2 district. And, as the storm progressed and got worse, all
3 the supervisors of Unitil, we made the phone calls. We
4 had these crews, Asplundh crews from Indiana, West
5 Virginia, as far away as Tennessee were already en route.
6 They arrived here within the morning hours of Saturday.
7 To get these crews, every state in the Northeast needed
8 the same amount of crews with the same amount of talent.
9 We had to bring them all in from outside the normal area,
10 because everyone was affected at the same time. It's not
11 just these few towns, it's the whole entire Northeast.

12 So, I believe Unitil did a great effort.
13 I worked side-by-side with them. The organization
14 internally was very good. The mass of the destruction was
15 beyond what any of us thought it would be. So, thank you
16 very much.

17 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Romeo Bilodeau.

18 MR. BILODEAU: Thank you. I'm also from
19 Asplundh Tree Expert Company. My name is Romeo Bilodeau.
20 And, I'm the Regional Safety Supervisor for this area. I
21 go out and make sure my crews are working safe, make sure
22 they're not taking any shortcuts to try to get it done
23 quicker. Safety is always first so nobody will get hurt.
24 I have a letter here that I wrote. And, also, I've been
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1 in this tree industry for 18 years, and I also worked many
2 storms; hurricanes, microbursts, I worked tornadoes, and
3 also ice storms. Back in '98 we had a big ice storm in
4 New Hampshire, hit part of New Hampshire. That was one of
5 the biggest storms that we've ever seen in this area. But
6 this storm was, by far, worse than the storm in 1998. I
7 was in Florida for a full month back in 2004 and worked
8 hurricanes for a whole month with crews, and these
9 hurricanes were nothing like what I saw out there on this
10 storm, on this ice storm. It was a very bad storm. Also,
11 these crews are out there working their way through roads,
12 clearing it out, utility companies come in behind them,
13 putting the lines back up, and once in a while they would
14 have to set a pole. But some areas were so bad that they
15 had to set pole after pole after pole. There was a lot of
16 destruction. And, setting poles is a very time-consuming
17 task that needs to be done.

18 Also, after some of these roads were
19 cleared, we had to turn around and go back and clear them
20 again, because these trees were full of ice, and it was
21 heavy, and trees were still snapping while we were out
22 there working after the roads were clear. So, sometimes
23 it takes two or three times to clear one road.

24 In my opinion, I think the utility
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1 company did a great job. They pulled every source that
2 they had. They had storms, ice storms throughout this
3 country while this one was going on, and so it was kind of
4 tough to grab everybody, because other states were taking
5 crews also. But they took as many crews as they could
6 find to help with this restoration.

7 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Shane
8 Donahue.

9 MR. DONAHUE: Actually, first I would
10 like to start off by, I believe it was Romeo and Paul, I
11 would actually like to thank them for their good job they
12 did during the storm. I believe most of what we're here
13 for is to point the finger at the PUC and Unitil and for
14 the power companies for not providing for us. But what I
15 forget -- I think we all forget, or, rather, forget to
16 realize is that these men here were outside in this storm
17 every single day working for us to restore power, in
18 dangerous conditions, like they said, with trees snapping,
19 who knows what else was out there. I was in my house. I
20 was not here -- out there. These men were outside. And,
21 one of the things I noticed is, in the papers, what we all
22 read is how it was the power companies' fault for the
23 delayed response. It was their fault. They didn't do it
24 for us fast enough.

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1 And, what I would like to bring to your
2 attention today is, first of all, my name is Shane
3 Donahue. I belong to the Amesbury Emergency Management
4 Agency. I am partially Emergency Management, I am also a
5 student. I am also actively involved in anything with
6 emergency management that I can. One of the things I
7 noticed, and I thank Chris and everyone else here in New
8 Hampshire, I just moved here myself, that's why I'm from a
9 Massachusetts Emergency Management agency. What I would
10 like to point out to you today is I think you guys are
11 great, Emergency Management. I think this storm was a
12 wake-up call to you. Our mitigation plans, our emergency
13 operations plans, they were not up-to-date, they were not
14 intact. And, I think, from my opinion, and I could be
15 wrong, and I do not mean to disrespect you guys
16 whatsoever, but I believe that Emergency Management, for
17 this state, and for whoever else may be involved, is
18 pointing the finger at the power companies, almost to try
19 and dodge a bullet.

20 Now, let me explain to you what happened
21 on a local level, from what I saw from Plaistow. I
22 offered, right while the storm happened, I contacted
23 William Scully, Emergency Management of Plaistow. And, I
24 said "Anything you need, I am here. This is my cellphone.

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1 I can provide you with whatever support I can. I can have
2 my agency give you any generators. We're all set.
3 Anything you need, I will have it brought over to
4 Plaistow. I can make this happen." I heard nothing from
5 William Scully. I think he's a great guy. He was a
6 firefighter, and he's been at it for 20 years, he's
7 experienced, he knows what he's doing.

8 But, what we'll come to realize these
9 days is there are old Emergency Management and there are
10 new ones. There are the old ones, who are the retired
11 policemen, they're retired firemen. They have the title
12 of "Emergency Management". They are the ones providing
13 for our safety. There are new Emergency Management these
14 days. And, there are huge discussions going on right now
15 in the Emergency Management community, about the new
16 Emergency Management. Who are college-trained. Coming
17 out of college, with college degrees, providing us with
18 safety. Their background is from an education, rather
19 than from the police and firemen, who have been providing
20 us Emergency Management. I'm not saying they are bad
21 people; they are great. But it's a new day and age.

22 Chris Pope, I believe, State Emergency
23 Manager, I think he's a great, he does a great job. But
24 he mostly, from what I've heard about him, his degree is
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1 National Security. This is Emergency Management. We need
2 people who can stand up and say "Okay, we don't have
3 power. We need to think this out before we run to FEMA
4 and ask for our money, and then point the finger at
5 someone else." Let me point out a few examples to you
6 all: 125, who here is from Plaistow, if you could raise
7 your hand?

8 [Show of hands]

9 MR. DONAHUE: Thank you. We're all well
10 aware of how 125 was completely jammed, blocked up,
11 because everyone from Epping, and even north, was coming
12 down towards us for gas, because down near Haverhill was
13 the only place to get gas. What if fire and EMS had to
14 move down 125? They couldn't. It was jammed. No one was
15 moving. Cumberland's. Cumberland's is a huge gas
16 station; lots of people go there. This is an example of
17 our mitigation plans being out-of-date. Someone should
18 say "Okay, during the ice storm, we should have got
19 Cumberland's on a generator." If there was a problem, why
20 are we wasting our time right now, pointing the finger at
21 our power companies, rather than writing a new mitigation
22 plan, saying "Okay, next ice storm, we're going to put
23 Cumberland Farms on a generator, so that, when this
24 happens again, we're not going to have 125 blocked. We'll
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1 have access."

2 What about Timberlane? Not opened as a
3 shelter completely. Put that in our mitigation plans.
4 Our selectmen need to realize we need to bring our plans
5 up-to-date. We need to bring in new people. We need to
6 form committees, to say "okay, this is a new idea. This
7 is a new idea." Atkinson. I remember driving through
8 Atkinson, and posted, I don't know if you're here today,
9 but posted on a tree it said "No heat, no water. Merry
10 Christmas."

11 This is not all PUC's fault. If we're
12 putting our safety in their hands, they need to have a
13 bigger salary for providing for our safety and our power,
14 or we need to focus on what is the real issue here today.

15 Another thing I wanted to point out was
16 -- I forgot. So riled up. For example, I'm an EMT,
17 ma'am. I'm not aware of your condition. But there are
18 people here on oxygen, there are people here on
19 medication, there are people here that -- there are
20 elderly -- I'm not saying you're elderly -- but I'm saying
21 that there elderly people in our community that need
22 attention, and they always need attention. Whether or not
23 our Emergency Management said they went around checking to
24 see if they're okay, that's not good enough. We need to

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1 make sure 100 percent that they are okay. And, that is
2 coming from an EMT's perspective.

3 That's another thing I wanted to point
4 out. That's pretty much my concerns today that I wanted
5 to bring up and just put that out there. That maybe we
6 should not be putting all of our focus on the power
7 companies, because next ice storm, when it happens all
8 over again, because our Emergency Management is too busy
9 gabbing about who is to blame for it, and that's not only
10 my opinion, because every newspaper article I have read
11 about the ice storm has pointed the finger at our power
12 companies. And, that is not going to solve our problems
13 today. What we need to do is focus on Emergency
14 Management. We need to step up as a community and say "We
15 need better plans. We need to make sure, next time this
16 happens, we're going to function all as one."

17 Thank you. And, that's pretty much all
18 I have for you today.

19 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Lieutenant
20 Baldwin.

21 FROM THE FLOOR: Points were directed at
22 Mr. Scully, he should be able to speak at this point.
23 There were a couple points aimed at him.

24 LT. BALDWIN: I'll defer.

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1 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Does Lieutenant Baldwin

2 --

3 LT. BALDWIN: I'll let Mr. Scully speak.

4 MR. SCULLY: I will fill out a form for
5 you afterwards, okay? Good evening. William Scully,
6 Plaistow, the Emergency Manager for the Town. I'd just
7 like to direct one point. Telephone logs of all calls
8 coming into the Emergency. Young man, you never called
9 me. You never talked about Amesbury. Did you?

10 MR. DONAHUE: I have numerously --

11 MR. SCULLY: In the past. In the past.
12 During this disaster, you did not contact this Town.
13 Fact. In fact, the last e-mail, other than this one
14 you're circulating around town, was "Please call me. Come
15 on down. And, we'll get you involved." Never heard from
16 you. The Town has the most current plan that is in
17 existence. Okay? Before you criticize the Town, you
18 should come and learn your facts. This town and
19 surrounding towns did the best they could under the
20 events.

21 So, that's the only thing. I mean, I'll
22 address any questions later. But, basically, you never
23 called. You never brought up the thing about Amesbury.
24 We had other things going on. So, don't lie to the

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1 public. That's all I got to say. Yes, sir.

2 MR. DONAHUE: One --

3 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Well, now, wait a
4 minute, gentlemen. This is not going to be a dialogue.

5 MR. DONAHUE: No, it's not a -- No. I
6 want to point out one thing.

7 MR. SCULLY: It's the official police
8 log of the calls.

9 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Mr. Scully, you've made
10 your point. If we could move onto the next speaker.

11 MR. DONAHUE: If I could just point out
12 one more thing?

13 CHAIRMAN GETZ: No. We're going, moving
14 on to Lieutenant Baldwin. And, actually, I'm glad you're
15 here, Lieutenant. We spoke quite a few times during the
16 ice storm. And, during these situations, you have a lot
17 of conversations, but you never see who's on the other
18 side of the phone.

19 LT. BALDWIN: It's good to see you.

20 CHAIRMAN GETZ: And, I just wanted to
21 make a point, for any of you folks from Atkinson, the
22 Lieutenant did a great job on behalf of his communities
23 during the ice storm.

24 LT. BALDWIN: Thank you, sir. It's good

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1 to put a voice with a face now. From the getgo, I was on
2 the ground during the entire storm, until the last -- the
3 last person in my community had power. What I did was I
4 moved my family out of the house, placed them somewhere,
5 didn't see them for seven and a half days. And, you say
6 "well, what does that have to do with this?" Well, it
7 shows the dedication of people and different organizations
8 within your community that came together to deal with the
9 situation that we weren't all really prepared for. But we
10 did the best we could.

11 Everyone was blaming the utility
12 companies for not being quick, you know, with the lack of
13 response. Well, I can tell you, I worked hand-in-hand
14 with them every single day, in the control room, for 17-18
15 hours a day. I was there before they got there, and I was
16 the last one to leave. And, I was the liaison, as part of
17 the Emergency Management Team of Atkinson, I was the
18 liaison person, because it's about communicating.

19 Now, the only constructive criticism
20 that I could give the utility company is the lack of
21 communication, but we've already established that already.
22 And, they worked, eventually, once I got communicating
23 with them a few days later, they were very good. Because
24 they had a person right on the scene that I was working

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1 directly with, and he fed me good information. We worked
2 hard-in-hand. Now, what made it difficult was, when you
3 have everybody coming at this one gentlemen, who is the
4 supervisor for this area, trying to ask him "When am I
5 getting my power?" "When am I getting my power?" You
6 know, and I had to say "Hang on, they're doing the best
7 they can. They have to get the main trunks up first, the
8 main big lines up first, and then work inland."

9 And, I have to tell you that it
10 eventually worked itself out. And, with the -- based on
11 the communication, the dialogue I had with the utility
12 companies, and as well as the PUC, and as well as with the
13 Emergency Management Team of the State, which I have to
14 give a lot of credit to as well, these people, they heard
15 from me quite a bit, and they answered every question I
16 had. I know there's things that I could do better as
17 well, in terms of getting messages out to all residents.
18 I had some -- We had some -- We had the lake area, Hemlock
19 Heights. We deal with mainly Unitil, but we do have some
20 PSNH residents. Unfortunately, they were the last ones to
21 get up. But they eventually got it. And, I felt bad for
22 them up there in that lake region, because of where their
23 power comes from. I believe it comes from the Hampstead
24 area.

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1 Anyway, so, one of the biggest things
2 that I hope everybody gets out of this is that we are
3 working even more diligently to improve our plans and the
4 way we go about it. And, we certainly open it to the
5 public to get their input and to help assist us in
6 accomplishing that.

7 But, lastly, I want to just say is that,
8 with a storm of this magnitude, the time and place to
9 point the finger are done and over with; the storm's gone.
10 However, what we can do is what these folks are doing, is
11 going around the state, let's learn from it. Let's learn
12 from it and improve it and move on, and work together,
13 because that's what it's going to take. And, I'll tell
14 you what, Atkinson, I also -- we had a group of volunteers
15 at the Atkinson Community Center that were making food.
16 You know how we helped them move along, the utility
17 company move along, and the boys from Tennessee, God bless
18 them, because they enjoyed our food up here, I delivered
19 food to them every day, right up to their trucks. You
20 know what that saves? Do you know how much time that
21 saved? They didn't have to go down to Applebee's, you
22 know, down in Haverhill. It saved a lot of time. And,
23 they loved it, and they liked the appreciation of that,
24 because, look, we're all working together to accomplish
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1 one common cause, and that's to restore power for
2 everybody.

3 So, that's another idea. But, thank you
4 for your time, I appreciate it.

5 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. John
6 Sherman.

7 MR. SHERMAN: I'm John Sherman. I'm a
8 Selectman here in Plaistow. So, welcome to Plaistow.

9 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you.

10 MR. SHERMAN: Glad to have you here. I
11 did have a few comments. I was hoping I could ask
12 questions, but this doesn't seem to be the forum of asking
13 questions and getting answers or is it mostly comments?

14 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Well, we're trying to
15 take information in. If there are specific things, we'd
16 be happy to sit down afterwards.

17 MR. SHERMAN: Okay.

18 CHAIRMAN GETZ: But we're trying to get
19 experiences and suggestions.

20 MR. SHERMAN: Sure. Just to follow up
21 on some of the things that were said before, there's
22 always two sides to everything. Timberlane High School
23 doesn't have a generator. That's why they couldn't be a
24 site. We brought that to the attention of the

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1 Superintendent of Schools as part of our action -- after
2 action item. And, the School -- we believe the School
3 District is going to pursue that. This is a regional
4 school district. It isn't controlled by the Selectmen in
5 Plaistow. So, we have brought that to their attention.
6 But that's why Timberlane -- That's why this facility, for
7 example, could not be used as a safe site.

8 One of the previous speakers said
9 something to the effect of "no one worries about it until
10 the lights go out or the electricity goes out." Well,
11 that's very unfortunate, because there are people who are
12 getting paid a lot of money to plan ahead to worry about
13 what's going to happen when the lights go out. As a
14 matter of fact, at least one of those people got a pretty
15 good raise recently. So, saying that "no one worries
16 about the issue until the lights go out", that's an
17 inadequate statement in my point of view.

18 I don't think I'd recommend to the
19 taxpayers in Plaistow that we provide a generator to any
20 private company, Cumberland Farms or any other. We should
21 find alternative answers to that.

22 But, getting back to the comments I was
23 originally going to make, we had Unitil in at one of our
24 selectmen's meetings, a couple of executives from Unitil.

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1 And, one of the things I brought up is that there doesn't
2 seem to be any kind of service level agreement that PUC
3 has with any of the utilities. I work in information
4 technology, and that's a fairly common concept. If you
5 have an SLA or a service level agreement with a provider,
6 and that it's known ahead of time, you know, what the
7 arrangements are or what the provisions are, and there can
8 be penalties built in. Such as, if you don't have power
9 for five days, then there's some sort of penalty
10 associated with that.

11 So, the executives from Unitil mentioned
12 that it was their understanding that that kind of service
13 level agreement existed in Massachusetts with the
14 utilities. It pained me to think that Massachusetts was
15 doing something better than New Hampshire. So, I bring
16 that to your attention, and perhaps that's something that
17 could be built in.

18 One of the -- obviously, communication
19 was a huge problem. I saw that. I was at the Emergency
20 Center here in town for hours, and communication was
21 dreadful. Everybody knows that. That needs to be
22 corrected. It was a huge problem. But I think focusing
23 on the communication issues has taken away from the
24 response issues. I haven't heard anybody say, for
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1 example, Plaistow, for the most part, was without power
2 for eight or nine days. I mean, it obviously came up in
3 phases. But, roughly speaking, it was for eight or nine
4 days. I haven't heard anybody speak to the issue of
5 "well, how long should the power have been out, given what
6 the problem was?" Should it have been five days? Or,
7 even with all the changes that we're talking about making
8 for next year, if it happens again next year, if the same
9 exact thing happens again next year, will we be out for
10 nine days again? I haven't heard anybody talk about
11 improving the up-time, if you will, or, you know, how long
12 we were out. And, I think that needs to be talked about.

13 I couldn't get Unitil to commit to,
14 "okay, folks, when you make all these changes you're
15 talking about, how long will we be out next time if the
16 same thing happens again?" I think that needs to be
17 pursued.

18 I'm glad you brought up the issue of the
19 undergrounding of wires. That was one of the things that
20 was on my list. I think it's safe to say that, if all the
21 power lines were underground, we wouldn't have been out
22 even a second. Is that a safe statement to make? Or,
23 there still would have been some outage? Okay.

24 CHAIRMAN GETZ: It's impossible to make
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1 a blanket statement like that.

2 MR. SHERMAN: Okay. Well, I'm glad that
3 someone then is at least looking into an intelligent
4 discussion and analysis of what it will take to
5 underground the wires. We have been told for years "It's
6 way too expensive. Can't do it." So, I'm glad that
7 someone is pursuing looking into what that cost really
8 would be. Maybe it's not as bad as we had thought, maybe
9 it could be done in phases. Maybe if we took some of the
10 money that was spent fixing this problem, to
11 undergrounding the wires, we'd be better off next time.

12 And, I did read something, I think it's
13 in the Unitil report, or I've been reading a lot of
14 things, I just wanted to confirm that the -- I wrote it
15 down as a quote, that "The PUC has the power to order
16 utilities to change their practices in the best interest
17 of the public." Is that true?

18 CHAIRMAN GETZ: That's correct.

19 MR. SHERMAN: Wonderful. Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Let me just say one
21 thing in response for clarification. Kind of the whole
22 focus of our effort here, and when I was laying out in the
23 introductory comments about the types of issues that we're
24 going to be looking at, whether it's protocols for

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1 prioritizing restoration, whether it's what's the nature
2 of the mutual aid agreements, looking generally at
3 preparedness. We're going to be looking at all the data,
4 when the calls were made, when the crews came in. All of
5 that, including communications, we'll get to the point of,
6 if an identical type of event happens again, that we would
7 be working under a set of improved protocols, so that you
8 wouldn't have the same kind of lengthy effect. And, it
9 looks like we've got a rebuttal coming?

10 MR. SHERMAN: No, no. No, no. I'm
11 sorry. No, I agree with exactly what you're saying. If I
12 could just add one more thing? I shouldn't get up here
13 and speak without publicly, again, commending the staff of
14 the Town of Plaistow. I know there are a couple of other
15 selectmen here, I'm sure they feel the same way about
16 their town. But our people did yeoman work, yeoman effort
17 over those days, working around the clock. I saw it
18 myself. And, if I start naming people, I'll forget
19 people, but the entire staff did a wonderful job. And, if
20 the gentleman has a particular concern about an item, a
21 better forum would be to bring that to the Selectmen's
22 meeting in Plaistow.

23 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you.

24 MR. SHERMAN: Thank you.

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1 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Andy Abrahamson.

2 MR. ABRAHAMSON: Thank you for giving me
3 the opportunity to appear before you this evening.

4 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Certainly.

5 MR. ABRAHAMSON: My name is Andy
6 Abrahamson. I live on Sweet Hill Road. It's a
7 state-maintained road over in East Plaistow. I'm not far
8 from Brandy Brow's Junk Yard on Route 108. As a matter of
9 fact, the City of Haverhill is about 600 yards from my
10 home. So, I was able to get some gasoline during the
11 power outage. The power outage for me lasted eight days
12 and 14 hours. The service broke off at the pole. I
13 believe a limb came down off a tree on State property, and
14 broke the power line, broke the cable, and broke the TV.
15 I tried to reach Unitil with my cellphone. That was an
16 issue, because the cellphone number was not recognized by
17 Unitil as being a valid address for a customer. And, that
18 is an issue that I'm raising tonight, because every time I
19 tried to call Unitil with my cellphone, when I finally got
20 through, we had to establish with the Unitil customer
21 service rep. that that, in fact, was my home on Sweet Hill
22 Road.

23 The communications with the Town and the
24 State was basically nonexistent initially. I couldn't get
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1 ahold of anybody at Town Hall on Saturday and Sunday.
2 Power was out, of course, at 1:00 a.m. on Friday. That's
3 when we lost power at my home. I couldn't reach anybody
4 at Town Hall until Tuesday morning, and then they let me
5 know at that time that there was an Emergency Management
6 Center set up at the fire station, and that there was a
7 shelter set up at Sanborn Regional High School. And, this
8 is now four days after the storm event.

9 My daughter visited on Tuesday, and she
10 brought a printout from a webpage that she took off her
11 computer. She lives in Beverly, Massachusetts. And, she
12 brought a webpage that had a letter from Unitil. And, I
13 believe the webpage said we had something like 450 or 500
14 people still without power in the Town of Plaistow. So,
15 my hopes began to become slightly more optimistic, when
16 the power came back on, on the streets, on Tuesday
17 afternoon. And, I believe Sweet Hill Road is a feeder for
18 Route 108. So, it was, I'm sure, their objective in
19 getting that power back on.

20 I made errors -- made an error by
21 purchasing the Massachusetts Edition of the Eagle Tribune,
22 which doesn't have any Plaistow news in it. But then I
23 went and purchased the -- I did get a copy of the New
24 Hampshire Tribune, and all it had was news regarding Derry
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1 and Londonderry. I didn't see one article that stated
2 that Sanborn was open or the fire station had an Emergency
3 Management Center. When I was able to get to my son's
4 house or my daughter's house on the Internet, I didn't see
5 anything regarding Plaistow, Atkinson, or Newton.

6 I did have a neighbor stop by; nobody
7 from the Town stopped by. I did have a utility truck that
8 stopped down two houses a way, and I asked them to stop by
9 and connect my power. They said they couldn't do it,
10 because they were fixing the overhead lines, as opposed to
11 individual service. I did get ahold of Unitil finally on
12 the phone, and they continued to ask me to get the service
13 repaired on the side of my house. And, I continually said
14 "That isn't the problem. The problem is out on the
15 street, where the wire came off the poles."

16 Haverhill, which is, as I said, 600
17 yards from my home, Corliss Hill Road, for example, and
18 you folks from Plaistow now where that is, they had
19 National Grid trucks connecting service to homes. And, it
20 wasn't a truck with a lift, it was a truck -- it was a
21 small van-type truck, on Sunday afternoon, which I thought
22 was rather interesting. And, that was another, you know,
23 little ray of hope. Maybe the National Grid guys can come
24 up to Plaistow to help out? That wasn't to be.

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1 I'm going to make a long story short.
2 I've just had trees trimmed at my home. I have had -- I
3 spent over \$2,000. I had to have a crane come in during
4 the ice storm, because I had a tree that was ready to fall
5 on my barn. And, my barn is my workshop, and I wasn't
6 going to have that destroyed. I spent \$2,000 having
7 hangers removed, and most of you know -- some of you know
8 who hangers are, if you don't, it doesn't really matter.
9 I still have some hangers in front of the house, they're
10 on State property, Mayer Tree Service, or, in this case,
11 Tamarack, which is part of Mayer, will not remove those,
12 because they have an agreement with Unitil not to go near
13 the wires, as I'm told. Also, I'm told that the State,
14 who was contracting right now with Tamarack to remove
15 hangers off trees on state roads, will not touch that tree
16 neither, because it's over the power lines. So, you did
17 come down and take one hanger out that was ready to fall,
18 but there are still some more there. So, I'm going to
19 make a request here tonight in public for that to be done.
20 Twice in 20 years that I have been in the home I've seen
21 the trees trimmed. I think it should be done more often.
22 We've got a lot of trees, Pollard Road and Sweet Hill Road
23 are loaded with trees that are overhanging the utility
24 wires.

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1 I want to thank Bill Scully, who was at
2 the Emergency Management Center. My wife and I finally
3 had to get a hot meal, and we went out to the Sanborn
4 School. Bill was there, was a great help, just talking
5 with us. But I also realized, when I visited the
6 Emergency Center, that there were people that were in much
7 more dire straits than my wife and I. I had a Honda
8 generator, ran it once every three hours. There were
9 folks who had pipes freezing, there were folks on Sweet
10 Hill Road that had a fire in their home. Again, I'm not
11 going to criticize Unitil, I'm not -- because this was an
12 event that Mother Nature brought. But I do think the
13 response could have been better. I think the response
14 could have been quicker. I think there could have been
15 mutual aid. I think tree-trimming needs to be done.

16 And, I have one last comment. And, that
17 is, when I did call Unitil, I asked the service rep., I
18 said "Please have the truck stop by." By the way, it took
19 nine minutes to fix it. It was Saturday afternoon, and it
20 was fixed by folks from Nova Scotia. They drove in the
21 yard, they asked us if we would like to have our power on,
22 and, "of course." Great guys. I told this -- about this
23 to a friend of mine who works for PSNH, and he got really
24 teed off at me. He says, you know, "don't criticize us."

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1 I said "I'm not." I said, "I'm saying -- I'm suggesting
2 that the folks from Nova Scotia, who put my power on, were
3 very, very helpful."

4 When I did call Unitil, on Wednesday, a
5 customer service rep., who was harried at this point, I am
6 sure, told me that I am not special, and why should I
7 expect Unitil to hook up my power before everybody else?
8 I might have said the same thing. But that's something
9 that I didn't want to hear. All my neighbors had power.
10 The fellow diagonally across the street from me had five
11 flood lights on his home Tuesday night, Wednesday night,
12 Thursday night, Friday night, and I'm sitting there
13 freezing. Thank you very much.

14 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Jared
15 Keller.

16 MR. KELLER: I don't -- I just want to
17 -- I'm from Hampstead. PSNH is the power company for us.
18 I just want to say, I think they all did a good job on
19 restoring power quickly. We were out for seven days, but
20 there was a lot of damage on all the roads and a lot of
21 trees down, and I think they did a good job. And, I think
22 volunteers need to be more involved in helping to restore
23 power and getting involved in that.

24 And, that's all I had to say. And,
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1 thank you, from the power companies, for restoring power.

2 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you.

3 MR. KELLER: Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Dennis Heffernan.

5 MR. HEPPER: Good evening. Thank you
6 for having this forum this evening. A couple of quick
7 things. First of all, as everybody has said, you know,
8 we're not hear to point blame, but there are some
9 concerns. One of my major concerns now, seeing -- being
10 in Plaistow, you had referenced it today, we were without
11 power. Friday evening, into Saturday, early Saturday, we
12 were without power. Christmas Eve, into Christmas Day, we
13 were without power. Part of my concern is, is this
14 something that we're going to see from this past storm of
15 things that haven't been fixed or were just temporarily
16 fixed? That's one of my major concerns that I have, that
17 I see going forward.

18 And, the other thing is, if it can be
19 cleared up, as far as the tree-trimming reference, I've
20 heard a number of different things. That homeowners are
21 responsible for it. I know my neighborhood had told me
22 four years ago they had called, asked for, you know, trees
23 to be trimmed back, and they were told "that's up to the
24 homeowner." If that could just be clarified, I would

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1 appreciate it. Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Brian
3 Warburton.

4 MR. WARBURTON: Mr. Chairman, members of
5 the Commission, my name is Brian Warburton, and I reside
6 at 24 Sanborn Road, in Hampton, New Hampshire. My
7 electric supplier is Unitil. I thought it was important
8 tonight, very important for me to come over and speak and
9 applaud the efforts of all the utility companies during
10 this major ice storm of 2008. My comments are going to
11 really structure around the efforts of Unitil, because I'm
12 more familiar with them. But, for the record, let me also
13 state my background in public service and having worked
14 with these many utilities through the years. I was a nine
15 year selectman in the Town of Hampton. Virtually served
16 on every committee, from planning boards to planning
17 commissions and everything else. I currently am the South
18 Seacoast Superintendent for New Hampshire State Parks.
19 So, my territory expands throughout the southwest part of
20 the state, and encompasses working with many of these fine
21 agencies.

22 I think it's important to state that
23 what we should all be about is about bringing people
24 together within communities. And, at times like this, if
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1 anything, we saw this happening. From my residence in
2 Hampton, New Hampshire, through my effort with State Parks
3 and dealing with Emergency Management in Concord, and
4 certainly with the local communities and the utilities, I
5 found it quite refreshing that people were working around
6 the clock to get power restored.

7 For any of you who ever have sat on
8 local boards, if you go to a planning board, and you get a
9 house development approved, and within that approval it
10 talks about "50 year storms", and you could talk about one
11 or three condominiums or houses within that development
12 the amount of paperwork and approvals that go through, to
13 coincide with things not happening in a 50 year storm,
14 magnify that by 100 or a 1,000 times of what went on in
15 the State of New Hampshire, from December 11th and ensuing
16 the months after. We are four months later. People have
17 moved on. People understand these things happen. There
18 is no question that there were frustrations felt.

19 But, from a Unitil perspective, and from
20 those of us who have been fortunate to have worked with
21 the linemen, all the way up to the executives, both in
22 community effort, and having worked with Unitil, as far as
23 relationships developed, on things getting done, whether
24 it's projects or electrical service, or having a lineman
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1 stand on one of my seashell roofs at Hampton Beach or
2 actually coming down my street in 40 below weather. These
3 guys have families. They live in our communities. Their
4 kids go to school here. Their children work around the
5 state and go to school and beyond. The gentleman,
6 Mr. Donahue, said earlier, and I really appreciated his
7 comments, these people worked around the clock, and they
8 really did. And, I have to tell you, there's never a time
9 limit. Mr. Sherman's a Selectman in Plaistow, he can
10 certainly tell you, I'm sure there's many occasions that
11 residents come on issues that they want solved right away.
12 It just doesn't happen. And, as far as not getting back
13 to people, they were out doing the job.

14 We had, in the Seacoast area, several
15 days, from Hampton, all the way north to Portsmouth, and,
16 as you know, in the Portsmouth area, Public Service takes
17 over at some juncture, from Odiorne State Park, which is
18 one of mine, going northward. These folks were working.
19 And, they understood. They were frustrated, too. But we
20 had, not only to get power back, but you had the ability
21 to work with other folks within the communities, because,
22 after that, the tree-trimming, as somebody just mentioned,
23 the roads clearing, making sure elderly were safe, making
24 sure your own employees were safe, and their families, and
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1 people within the communities.

2 Everything that I ever been involved in,
3 and I certainly appreciate anyone coming out giving their
4 input, because I think it's important. But everything
5 that I've ever been involved with, in my public and
6 private career, has been about bringing people together.
7 I don't think we ever should be in the business of
8 identifying or pinpointing, whether it's two utilities or
9 four utilities, or a town or a government agency, or a
10 private sector outfit, or homeowners, whatever, when we
11 talk about electricity, we talk about all of us. And,
12 it's up to us, as good friends and neighbors, to look to
13 the future and say "Okay. What can we do to help out in
14 areas that maybe there needed to be some help?"

15 We should also feel very fortunate that,
16 in 2009, in one of the greatest states in the country, we
17 should be very fortunate to have companies like Unitil.
18 Because you can pick up the phone, not when there's an ice
19 storm, you can pick off -- you can pick up the phone when
20 you need their help on many our issues, which I won't get
21 in here tonight. That they always come to the forefront.
22 Their folks are so community-involved, it means so much to
23 them.

24 And, once again, Mr. Chairman, I applaud
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1 the effort that you put forth in your committee. It is
2 important at all times, just as I see in State Parks, and
3 I'm sure in Emergency Management and others, that public
4 input is so important. But, when I look at this, I look
5 at this being something that happened four months ago.
6 This company is very solid, very well received, in Hampton
7 and throughout the area where there's thousands of
8 customers, they are answering to the public.

9 I could tell you, in my own backyard,
10 I'm still cleaning up. We all have things that we're
11 uncovering. And, through all of this, in summary, after
12 this ice storm took place, we continued to have other
13 winter storms. So, think about it. You've got one
14 barrage after another, in the meantime, trying to answer
15 everybody's call. And, for three months or 12 weeks after
16 that, we're still dealing with this thing called "winter".
17 I think, remarkably, they did quite well.

18 So, in the end, once again, I hope we
19 can look in a positive nature to the good things that this
20 company has done, and the other electric companies
21 involved with this. I urge everyone to come forward in a
22 positive vent and to give Unutil the continued support
23 that they deserve. They handle a lot of issues every day
24 of the week.

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1 And, I'll leave you with this. In one
2 of my corporate careers, I ran a call center for 12 years.
3 And, I tell you, when I was Chairman of the Board of
4 Selectmen in Hampton in 1998, and further than that, I
5 happened to talk to Unitil on many, many occasion. And,
6 there never, and still isn't to this day, was a time where
7 I ever received any customer service response that was
8 mentioned tonight. And, I pride myself, having been in
9 the business of dealing with memories, of taking care of
10 public issues. And, that's why I associate, and a lot of
11 people do, and thousands of people applaud the good work
12 of Unitil. I thank you tonight. And, I further would
13 answer any questions, if anybody wanted to contact me.
14 But thank you again for your time.

15 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Steven
16 Hogan.

17 MR. HOGAN: Good evening. And, thank
18 you for having us here, and I appreciate it. My name is
19 Steve Hogan. And, I live in Hampstead. I'm a homeowner,
20 on 23 Golden Meadow Road, Hampstead. Our service company
21 is PSNH. And, I'm not a public servant, and I don't work
22 for a utility company. I am an executive with HP in the
23 service company business for 30 years. So, I know what
24 it's about to plan for customers, to prepare them, so that
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1 you're there to answer their needs.

2 In my particular situation, our home was
3 without power on Thursday night, and the general community
4 didn't get power back until Saturday, the week from
5 Saturday. We actually had a tree that did fall down in
6 our yard and knocked the wires from the pole to our house
7 down. And, of course, that was a concern for safety.
8 And, we notified PSNH through various efforts of driving
9 out of town, going to their website, as well as leaving
10 them telephone log calls.

11 The response, and I commend the linemen
12 and all the crews, they worked diligently, they worked in
13 hazardous condition, they were wonderful people. And, I'm
14 sure the power companies did what they could, but I would
15 say that the response was very lacking. Being without
16 power, I do work from home, I'm out of business, like many
17 other people who work from home. We were having a very
18 difficult time understanding when the power would be
19 returned. I used their website, which was constantly
20 updated with the new day when Hampstead would come up with
21 power. It was always moving out, it was never accurate.

22 Ultimately, the power did come on
23 Saturday, but my wire was still on the ground. Now, I was
24 prepared for the disaster. I had a generator, I had my
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1 neighbors. You know, you can count on your neighbors in a
2 storm. If you learn something, you learn that your
3 neighbors are there for you, when other people aren't,
4 like utility companies.

5 When they did come on Monday, two days
6 later, this live wire had now been on the ground for two
7 and a half, three days. So, that was a particular concern
8 to me, obviously. The crew that did come out were
9 courteous, kind. At that point, I got an army of trucks.
10 You know, suddenly five trucks showed up with tree
11 trimmers and so forth.

12 The direction I also want to go in this
13 comment is, the tree that fell on my wires I had reported
14 to PSNH. And, you can check the telephone logs, you can
15 check their website. And, in fact, it appeared one day,
16 when I came home from work, when I did go to the office,
17 that somebody had come and trimmed a branch, but that tree
18 fell down and knocked those wires down. And, I
19 continually and repeatedly asked to have that tree
20 removed. Private companies won't touch it, because it's
21 over the telephone wires. When they come out, they do an
22 inadequate job.

23 So, to your point of getting feedback, I
24 think tree-trimming, even in a private residence, somebody
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1 had brought that up earlier, needs to be clarified how far
2 they will go, because you can't get private people in to
3 do the job either, because they won't touch it. So, with
4 that, communication was a big issue for me and the
5 tree-trimming are the two points I would like you to look
6 into.

7 The last question I have, and I hope it
8 was a question, I didn't understand the prioritization
9 mechanism of how they were getting to towns and people.
10 My understanding is that crews were released. Now, there
11 was a peak of crews, crews were released. Hey, we were
12 still without power. And, seeing those trucks driving
13 south, back to their communities in whatever states they
14 came from, was pretty disturbing, when you're in there,
15 you know, pretty much feeling pretty much all alone, when
16 the neighborhood is cold and dark. Thank you for
17 listening.

18 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Paula Hogan.

19 MS. HOGAN: Hi. I'm not going to come
20 up here and say the same thing. I live and I also work in
21 Hampstead. So, I just wanted to talk about my work
22 situation. I work at Hampstead Chiropractors, which is
23 located at the Village Square. I'm not sure if you're
24 familiar with that area, but it's located on a state road,
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1 Route 111, and it's located in between East Road junction
2 and Central Street.

3 I believe sometime over the weekend,
4 maybe on Sunday or so, Central Street and north had their
5 power, Hannaford, Colby Corner, those businesses. And,
6 from East Road, those lights were on, and towards Salem,
7 on 111 West, had their power. We opened our business
8 Friday without power, Monday without power, Tuesday
9 without power, which is very difficult. The doctor
10 brought a generator Tuesday night, brought it in on
11 Wednesday, we had half the rooms open.

12 Wednesday morning I decided to call
13 PSNH, that's our provider. I had been calling about our
14 house and asked about the updates, I had never asked about
15 that location, just a mile from our house. And, they said
16 that there wasn't even a ticket, which I was real
17 surprised, because every time I called about our house,
18 they pulled that ticket up. There's about a dozen
19 businesses in that complex, a bank, some others. Anyways,
20 four hours later there were seven trucks in our parking
21 lot, and by 6:00 that night we had our power.

22 Again, my question is, "what, there was
23 never a call, never a ticket?" I find it hard to believe
24 that it was my phone call that actually brought them out

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1 there. It might have been a coincidence. But also we
2 would just ask the priority, why one part of the state
3 road had power a good four days earlier, and another part
4 did, but us, in the middle, did not. There were also a
5 handful of trees down on wires on Route 111 for many more
6 days, probably two weeks after this incident as well. So,
7 that's my comments. Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. And, well,
9 let me just say a couple things. One, as I said in the
10 introductory remarks, we're going to be looking at the
11 issues of prioritization. But, as a general matter, and I
12 think Lieutenant Baldwin spoke to this, you know, you're
13 looking at the major feeders first, trying to get the most
14 people on quickest, and then you work your way down to the
15 smaller circuits, and down to the roads, and then to
16 individual lines, and then to individual services. You're
17 also, as part of that prioritization, trying to address
18 public health and safety issues, like hospitals, etcetera.
19 So, there is a general plan for the re-prioritization.
20 We're going to look at how it was executed in this
21 instance.

22 And, another theme that we've all been
23 exposed to, we've heard consistently through these evening
24 hearings is there's a couple of houses, a street, a
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1 neighborhood that stayed out, while everybody else was
2 coming back on. And, there was some level of
3 miscommunication, something happened where either the
4 information wasn't getting to the utility companies or
5 getting from the utility companies to the people. And,
6 that's been a very -- it was very difficult to understand.
7 And, I think it's -- two types of communication needs to
8 be addressed there. Is that the communication from local
9 Emergency Management directors to the utilities, to make
10 sure that the utilities know where folks are out, and then
11 utilities reaching out in the other direction, to
12 neighborhoods and to people, just so that we can make sure
13 that those gaps don't occur in the future. And, that's
14 been a consistent theme that we've heard throughout this
15 process, and something that we're going to focus on. So,
16 thank you. Charles Stern.

17 MR. STERN: Good evening. I'm from
18 Hampstead. And, my power supplier is PSNH. And, I have
19 to tell you, I'm going to disagree with a lot of the
20 people that were here earlier this evening, I do blame
21 Public Service, and I'll tell you why. The crews, by the
22 way, did an excellent job, and I'll get to them. There
23 are three stages to this storm that nobody is talking
24 about. There is the time prior to the storm, that, if you
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1 had set it up properly, would have minimized the storm
2 damage. There is the storm itself. And, I grant you,
3 that was a very severe storm; one that probably could not
4 have been planned for. But, you know what, we have pretty
5 good weather forecasts now. And, extra crews were not
6 called up until after the storm hit. And, there is the
7 time after the storm, which is where we go back, look at
8 what went wrong, and fix it. It's not a matter of placing
9 blame, it's finding out what went wrong.

10 I lose power so often on my street. I
11 live on a cul-de-sac. I know my circuit number, it's
12 3141X. That's how often I lose power. The last time we
13 lost it was two days ago for two and a half hours. I lost
14 it for eleven days during the storm. Now, I built my
15 house there in 1979. And, to refresh everybody's memory,
16 Seabrook: "Cheap power. It's going to be there forever,
17 and it's going to be reliable. Build an all-electric
18 house." And, I did: Electric heat, electric hot water,
19 electric pumps for the well.

20 I now have had to do the following: I
21 added a wood stove; I changed my cook stove to gas; I
22 added a gas stove for heat. I have battery backup on my
23 computer system for six hours of run-time. The computer,
24 the light, the speaker phone, because I also work out of
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1 my house. That's how often I lose power. When the storm
2 hit, my cul-de-sac has six houses on it. Five of the six
3 had generators. They didn't buy them because of the
4 storm; they already had them. That's how often I lose
5 power. And, by the way, the sixth house, the person has
6 lived their less than a year. I think they will be owning
7 a generator pretty shortly themselves.

8 Now, I have a problem when you talk
9 about "prioritization", because I am literally the last
10 house on the line. My property ends in Atkinson, in fact,
11 I own land in Atkinson. So, anything that goes wrong
12 between the Derry substation and my house takes me down.
13 I was without power for eleven days. I know part of
14 Hampstead was up in seven. I was without power for eleven
15 days.

16 Now, there came a time, fortunately,
17 because I had already had enough power outages, that I had
18 gas and wood stoves to keep my house warm, and I now had a
19 gas cooktop so I could cook, I really didn't suffer all
20 that much. I did have to go out to get gas, and that was
21 expensive.

22 But Public Service has hoisted upon me
23 the burden of the following: Re-wire my house to
24 accommodate a transfer switch, to work with the guys who
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1 work on the line. I don't like plugging into the dryer
2 outlet, because it's going to kill you one day. But you
3 should have seen the people at Home Depot that were
4 plugging in, getting dryer plugs. So, I did it right, but
5 it cost me money. I had to buy a generator. I started
6 out with a kilowatt generator; I'm now up to seven
7 kilowatts. I had to purchase gas containers for the gas
8 for the generators, because, as you know, when you lose
9 power, there's no pumps around to pump gasoline, and you
10 better have enough for at least a couple of days. I have
11 to build a weatherproof housing, so I can put my generator
12 outside, so I don't kill myself with carbon monoxide.
13 And, during a storm, you don't want the generator to short
14 out, and it could be raining or it could be ice or
15 whatever it was; two days ago it was water. I have to
16 limit my travel to make sure nobody rips my generator off.
17 And, I have to service and maintain the generator cables
18 and everything else.

19 Now, I pay the same rate as every other
20 PSNH customer, and I'm always, always the last person to
21 get power. Now, I understand prioritizing hospitals, and
22 even doctors' offices or doctor parks, and police
23 stations, and community centers, and a few other things.
24 But I don't subscribe to the fact that it should always be
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1 the branch circuit with the most customers on that get
2 service first, because I pay the same rate, and I don't do
3 it.

4 So, I'm going to offer you some
5 suggestions. I can be critical, but I also have some
6 ideas for you. And, oddly enough, the selectman from
7 Plaistow, you and I, it's almost like we talk together.
8 There was a movie a number of years ago about President
9 Nixon, and there was a line in that about "follow the
10 money". I think what we really need to do is to provide
11 the power companies, the power utilities, with an
12 incentive to get to a reasonable up-time. Somebody else
13 talked about an "SLA". And, I propose this: You set some
14 minimum standard of up-time. I've arbitrarily picked,
15 what was my number here, 99.92 percent, which actually is
16 about seven hours of outage a year, which to me is about a
17 reasonable period of time. Anything less than that, I get
18 my rate prorated for the next year, down. So, if I only
19 have my service up for 95 percent in 2008, in 2009 I only
20 pay that ratio of 95 percent to 99.92 percent. And, this
21 continues year after year after year.

22 CHAIRMAN GETZ: So, it wouldn't be a
23 systemwide number, it would be "customer by customer"?

24 MR. STERN: No. It would be a
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1 circuit-by-circuit number, because it's the circuit outage
2 that you're worried about. Okay? So, in a way, I get
3 reimbursed to pay for my generator, to pay for my
4 gasoline, to pay for my transfer switch, and to pay for my
5 inconvenience, if Public Service can't keep my power
6 running. Okay? It's just that simple. And, if they
7 choose to put me on last, that's fine. I don't mind,
8 because at least I'll get that money back in a rebate.

9 Okay. The second thing that that does,
10 by the way, is the following: I believe that, on every
11 home buyer's bill of sale, on all that paper that you
12 sign, that number should be posted. So, that a
13 prospective customer knows, if he's buying a home in this
14 area, that he can expect to have to buy a generator,
15 because, guess what, the company is not providing power in
16 a reliable way. That number should be posted. Now, what
17 does that do for you? Well, guess what, towns, who want
18 the revenue from taxation, will try to find a way to make
19 their power more reliable; underground power systems.
20 And, the towns will do it on their own. Real estate
21 agents, man, if they can't sell a house in this area, I
22 think they will probably be lobbying people in the town or
23 in Public Service, or Unitil or whatever, to make the
24 electricity more reliable. You won't have to do it. It's

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1 a real simple solution: "Follow the money".

2 And, you know, the bottom line is, I had
3 no telephone, no Internet, no power for eleven days,
4 because, right next to my house, I had a very large pine
5 tree. Six years ago I called Public Service, and I said
6 "You know, I've got a pine tree. It's going to fall down.
7 You probably should come and trim it." And, the answer I
8 got is "We don't do that." I said "I know you don't do
9 it, you get a tree service company to come and do it.
10 But, you know, it really should be done." And, they said
11 "No". I said "Could you send a supervisor around to at
12 least look at it and get a judgment?" And, they didn't do
13 it. I called them three years ago. "You've really got to
14 get that pine tree down. It's dangerous." "No, we don't
15 do that."

16 This past November I brought in a tree
17 service company. The guy took one look at it and said
18 "You know, that tree's going to come down." I said
19 "yeah." So, we made an appointment to take the tree down
20 in mid December, about three days too late. And, let me
21 explain to you about this tree service guy, he runs crews
22 that trim the power lines for Central Maine Power & Light.
23 That's why he would have been willing to take it down.
24 But, if you talk to anybody else, you wouldn't. And, I
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1 have a photo of it, by the way.

2 When they finally did take the tree
3 down, they didn't remove the tree from the power line, the
4 telephone line, or the cable line. It was left still
5 hanging there. There was some reason they said they
6 couldn't take it down. I eventually went out with a
7 chainsaw and cut the tree and pulled it off; fortunately
8 nothing broke and I didn't get electrocuted.

9 So, you've heard other people say this
10 as well. There's a problem with trimming trees. My
11 suggestion is this: Offer the following: The utility
12 companies can come and trim as they will once every ten
13 years. But, if you have a problem, they should have
14 authorized companies that go out there, the same ones that
15 they use to trim the power lines, take a look at it, call
16 them back and say "Yes, this could be a problem." And,
17 they should offer to split the cost of taking down that
18 tree with the customer 50/50; because I would have paid
19 that to get that tree down.

20 Now, oddly enough, when I first called
21 Public Service to tell them about the tree, and the woman
22 said "We didn't do that", I told her, I said "Lady, let me
23 explain something to you. This tree is going to come down
24 on the power lines." She says, "Well, when it does, we'll
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1 take it down." I said, "Yes, but let me explain something
2 to you. You can schedule it now. You can take it down on
3 a regular weekday, in nice weather, and pay straight time.
4 Or, you can wait till it comes down in a storm, jeopardize
5 the crew's life, pay them double-time or triple-time to do
6 the same job. And, by the way, you wouldn't convenience
7 me that way. I wouldn't be without power." And, the
8 answer is "We don't do that."

9 Now, a final note is that my street is
10 very short, it's about a third of a mile long. It's a
11 cul-de-sac. Between the first and second telephone poles,
12 there were 20 trees across the line. Between the span of
13 two telephone poles, there were 20 trees across the line.
14 PSNH cannot tell me they did a good job of trimming. The
15 second house in had a tree fall across it and literally
16 yanked the lines out of the house. So, they were across
17 the road.

18 So, moving up to the point of the storm,
19 I can tell you, I think Public Service screwed up bad.
20 And, they still do it. I still lose power. I'm still
21 paying the same rate as everybody else, and I'm a little
22 fried about it, to be honest with you. Public Service
23 said "well, we want another buck every month or whatever
24 it is on your telephone -- on your electric bill to pay
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1 the crews." The crews did an excellent job. When they
2 got there, they did an excellent job. They were tired,
3 they were brought in, they were working under hard
4 circumstances. And, I agree, you guys did wonderfully.
5 But it didn't have to be that way. I didn't have to be
6 without power for eleven days. We didn't have to bring
7 out crews in really nasty weather to work for eleven days.
8 Had Public Service planned a little bit better, it would
9 have been so much easier for all of us. The response post
10 storm was fine. But what Public Service did prior to the
11 storm was pretty lousy.

12 Now, I know you've heard a lot about
13 communications, and you've talked about that. Yes, all
14 that stuff happened to me, too. But my problem is, I
15 would have preferred them to do something and not talk
16 about something. I would have preferred for them to tell
17 me my power was going to be without seven days, I wasn't
18 going to have it for seven days, even though that was
19 incorrect. But have it restored in three, because they
20 did something behind the scenes. So, communications is
21 very important, but action is more important.

22 If, when we're all done with this, if
23 when all is said and done all we did was talk, it doesn't
24 do me any good. I won't be impressed. Okay? I hope you
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1 take this as an invitation to come back, not just when
2 storms occur, not just when there are bad incidents, but
3 periodically come back and say "How are we doing? Is it
4 better? Is there anything more we can do?" Because
5 that's what needs to happen. Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Bill
7 Bennett.

8 MR. BENNETT: Thank you, lady and
9 gentlemen, for having this session tonight. I'm a
10 Selectman in the Town of Atkinson. And, I'm not here to
11 heap praise on Unitil, as the first speaker suggested, and
12 I'm not here to heap a whole lot of money on you guys, as
13 the second speaker suggested. But I do recognize that
14 this was an extremely severe storm. And, I've looked at
15 the self-assessment, and I find it thorough, honest, and
16 reaching proper conclusions. I think we haven't made much
17 progress on it. We're four months after the storm. And,
18 as you mentioned earlier, we had an outage here in
19 Atkinson today. And, five minutes before the power came
20 on, the person at the other end of that special
21 communication phone number, it was supposed to provide
22 police and fire inside, accurate information on outages,
23 that person said "They're still trying to diagnose the
24 problem." So, since it came on, the power came back five
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1 minutes later, I think someone knew what the problem was
2 and what was being done, but that person didn't.

3 With regard to the assessment, one
4 particular point has been raised several times, and that's
5 tree-trimming. And, even here in the self-assessment I
6 find a quote here "revisit trimming cycles to ensure that
7 they are in line with industry standards and regulatory
8 directives." As I said, this assessment's pretty good
9 overall, but I think that's dead wrong. You have to
10 ensure that the trimming cycles are "adequate", not that
11 they meet some standards. What that reminds me of, "in
12 line with industry standards", is our investment banking
13 crisis.

14 Which brings me to the issue that really
15 is paramount in both our power issues and the investment
16 banking crisis. This was not the first time for power
17 that we've had a problem. Someone mentioned the '98 ice
18 storm. There was Hurricane Gloria in the '80s, where we
19 were without power here in Atkinson for approximately a
20 week. All of the planning, all of the assessment of where
21 things might go wrong, and planning to make sure they can
22 be handled, should have already been done. I think the
23 gentlemen earning the paychecks in the top management at
24 Unitil were being paid to do that job, but were not doing
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1 it. So, I'm concerned that the current cost of assessment
2 and planning that should have already been done, and of
3 remediation, does not come back to the ratepayers now,
4 because I think it's a function we've already paid for.

5 I want to ask the PUC to take particular
6 care on one issue. Unitil is facing regulatory action in
7 Massachusetts for the performance in the Fitchburg area.
8 They may incur significant non-service costs as part of
9 governmental action in that area. Please take care that
10 none of those costs come back to New Hampshire ratepayers
11 or to Mass. -- well, you don't have to say
12 "Massachusetts", I don't want to imply that they should
13 also -- the ratepayers there should cover it either. The
14 Company should bear those costs.

15 And, lastly, it's just an observation, I
16 don't know the answer, I'm just curious. In the Executive
17 Summary of the assessment, on Page ii, there's a tabular
18 form of it's called "The Ice Storm by the Numbers". I
19 note that, under weather conditions, the amount of
20 freezing rain was very similar across the areas. And, I
21 was just wondering to what we can attribute the fact that
22 the Seacoast area has 66 percent of customers without
23 power, and the capital area had 37 percent. And, that's
24 just a question. If there's anybody who could answer

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1 that, there seems to be nothing in the weather conditions
2 to point to an answer there.

3 And, thank you. That's all.

4 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Maureen
5 Tebo.

6 MS. TEBO: Hi. I have PSNH for a
7 provider. And, I was without power from December 11th to
8 the 20th. And, I'm just going to tell you what it's like
9 for, you know, a lady that's living by herself, is on
10 oxygen, and can't go very far. All right. Lack of
11 information and non-response was shocking, from my
12 perspective. And, other than the very local, the town I
13 live in is Sandown, New Hampshire, the help I thought was
14 just "window dressing" manned by gatekeepers.

15 The best information I got was from my
16 brother, who was out of the country. He was vacationing
17 out of the country. And, he told us that you could get
18 gasoline in Massachusetts. I had a generator, but we
19 couldn't get gas. The second best thing is the Town of
20 Sandown Police and Fire Department did come and check to
21 see if I was all right. And, I had a land line that
22 worked. And, I'm a very loud lady for a small person.
23 So, I got on the phone and I called PSNH. And, the first
24 few days, you know, I was not -- I just took whatever, you
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1 know, I listened. By about the fifth day, I was getting
2 steamed. Because I had family members that were going to
3 get gas, and they were making sure that I had the oxygen
4 -- oxygenator that was running.

5 And, I felt I got lied to by PSNH.
6 Christmas music played while you were waiting to get on to
7 speak to somebody. That raises hell with people's
8 emotions right there before Christmas. This was a
9 tone-deaf company.

10 The local gas station couldn't use the
11 pumps. So, I had a generator; whoopie, you know, in the
12 beginning. I called the Governor's Office. I called
13 Public Service, Governor Lynch's Office, Senator Gregg's
14 Office, and my Congresswoman's Office. I always got a
15 functionary; no answers, sympathy, but no answers.

16 The Governor's Office told me that "the
17 PUC was basically a political organization, with no real
18 clout." I'm sure you'll be glad to hear that. The
19 Senator's Office, Senator Judd -- Judd --

20 FROM THE FLOOR: Gregg.

21 MS. TEBO: Judd Gregg. I'm sorry, I'm
22 nervous. His office told me that they were not interested
23 in individual problems, they dealt with businesses. All
24 this time now I'm calling PUC -- I mean, PSNH every day.

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1 No information. I had a crank radio. Ah, the music's
2 playing and you're getting -- you know, there's no local
3 news. Nothing on it that was local. Obviously, you know,
4 TV was dead. In fact, they asked me to notify them when I
5 got electricity.

6 I got a PSNH representative who was
7 manning the phones, one time I started to demand, because
8 I was out so many days, I was calling every six hours, I
9 said put my name up there, because you're never going to
10 get rid of me until I get the power back. And, I got a
11 rep around midnight on the seventh day, he said he
12 couldn't tell me when I'd get power, but he had good news
13 for me. And, here was my good news: "The costs of the
14 storm would not be passed along to me as a consumer. They
15 just got word that the insurance would pay." Out of
16 touch, may I say?

17 Now, the out-of-state crews that were
18 cut loose, and somebody already mentioned that. And, this
19 is a company that's on the Stock Exchange? State and
20 local representatives that were left impotent, and they
21 refused to get on the telephones. The Civil Defense was
22 not powering up gas stations to provide for generator
23 operations. It seems to me that we've got a new liquor
24 store coming in in Hampstead, the next town over. And,
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1 somebody told me they've got restrooms coming for the
2 Kancamagus Highway farther up north. Plenty of money for
3 that, though, isn't there? I'm just steamed, can you
4 tell?

5 What are they going to do different the
6 next time? They need a special number for dire
7 circumstances, a place a person like me can call. Not
8 just to say "Hang in there." But, you know, if they're
9 coming -- if they're not coming, don't -- every day it was
10 like "yes, we'll be there in a day" or "yes, it will be
11 two days." And, it never was. So, it just made you
12 angrier and angrier.

13 I don't know if Homeland Security is
14 involved in this. But, as far as I'm concerned, it's an
15 expensive decoration. It bothers more people than it
16 helps. Get rid of it.

17 I sent a written -- I sent in, I did it
18 online afterwards, a written survey. Was it the PUC who
19 had asked? All right. And, when I filled it out, the two
20 spots, they were blank for comments, and when I tried to
21 write in either one of them, it would not let me. Our
22 government in action: Ask for input, but rig the form to
23 ensure none. A pox on everybody's house. I was a steamed
24 woman. Can you tell? I still am.

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1 PSNH is a hollowed out company. Not
2 enough employees to handle the emergencies, but plenty of
3 board members and other high paying, fancy suited,
4 contemptible thieves. Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Well, let me
6 just say one thing about the website. I know there's --
7 And, we've put all the answers on our website, there's at
8 least 152 comments, boxes filled in in those areas. So,
9 they seem to be working for some people.

10 MS. TEBO: Okay.

11 CHAIRMAN GETZ: And, how are we doing?
12 You okay?

13 MR. PATNAUDE: Yes, that's okay.

14 CHAIRMAN GETZ: All right. Charles
15 Fowler.

16 MR. FOWLER: Yes. My name is Charles
17 Fowler. I'm from Plaistow, from Unitil. We live on a
18 state road, 121A, in Plaistow. The only comment I had was
19 that we lost the power, yes. Tree fell down, took the
20 line and meter right off the house. I know that my
21 problem is to get the meter back on, which is -- which is
22 I know that's from -- all electric companies are all like
23 that. I had my meter put back on. Okay? Wednesday night
24 the power company came up the street, which I know they

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1 use different contractors, it was JCR or J.C. Reed, out of
2 Raymond. They parked three trucks in front of my house.
3 One truck went down a separate road to check all the power
4 to see if it was all set. I went out and said to them
5 "Are you turning on the power tonight?" This was
6 Wednesday. He says "Yes". I says, "Well, if you do that,
7 I have a live wire that's down on the ground, laying in
8 the snow." "Yes. I don't care about that." "But it's
9 going to be live when you put the wire power on, right?"
10 "Yes, it is." "Can't you do anything about it?" He says
11 "You're not a priority." I'm like "How can I be not a
12 priority, if you turn the power on, that line is laying in
13 the snow or whatever?" He says "No. I have nothing to do
14 with it."

15 Those trucks sat out there for a half
16 hour. A half hour went by, they went up the street.
17 About five minutes later, the power came on on the street.
18 We called the electric -- we called Unitil that night. We
19 called Unitil on Thursday. They said "Yes, the power is
20 live. That line is live." "When are you going to come
21 out and do something about it?" "We'll have a truck there
22 at -- in the afternoon." Thursday night came along, we
23 called. And, nothing. "No. Friday. We'll have a truck
24 out there Friday." Okay. Friday morning my wife called;
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1 nothing. Friday night my wife called; nothing. Saturday
2 my wife called; nothing. Saturday night; same thing.
3 Sunday morning we called, this is when it started snowing,
4 Saturday night into Sunday. She called Sunday and said
5 "It's arcing." Ten minutes later we had a truck out
6 there. It took the guys ten minutes to put that power
7 back on. Those two trucks that sat out there for a half
8 hour, they could have done the same thing.

9 Mine was just a safety concern. You
10 know, it happened. Things do happen. Okay? But, when
11 you call and say, and even the electric company said,
12 "it's a live wire, laying in the snow." And, they said
13 "whatever." My concern is that, you know, I know it's
14 priorities, but when you turn power on, they ought to know
15 that the power is, especially when I told them, and all
16 they had to do, was, if they really wanted to do it, was
17 out in the street just disconnect it from the main line,
18 which I know they can do. But that company just said "I
19 don't want to hear it." The kid was like "I don't want
20 nothing to do with you." "Whatever." That's all I have.

21 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Jan Penta.

22 MS. PENTA: Hi. I live in Plaistow,
23 right down the street from here. We get our power from
24 Atkinson, though. So, when Atkinson loses power, so do

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1 we. Right after the storm, this entire side of town was
2 down. Two days later, three streets south of us had
3 power, all the way down to East Road. The gas station
4 finally came back on line. I was able to get gas for the
5 generator. Streets north of us had power. Our street had
6 no power for nine days. Not only did they not have power,
7 every time I called Unitil and tried to explain to them,
8 they never sent anyone down the street. We never had a
9 tree down. We never had a line down. Nine days, and
10 there was no damage on our street. And, every day -- I
11 didn't call for five days. I waited five days before I
12 started getting angry enough to call. And, I kept being
13 told "tomorrow", "tomorrow", "tomorrow". I said, "How
14 would you know? You don't even know if there's any damage
15 down here." There wasn't. But they couldn't restore our
16 power. When they did finally show up on Saturday night,
17 first time I saw a Unitil truck was an hour before power
18 was restored. Unitil did not restore power, some other
19 company that they had brought in, I don't know if it was
20 Tennessee or wherever, and I do appreciate the work that
21 they did, it took them less than 30 minutes to put the
22 power back on.

23 Four months later, I still don't have an
24 answer as to how come we were one of the last ones to have

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1 power, when the streets south of us, we're all on the same
2 feeder line, none of these are new developments, these
3 four streets have been there for over 40 years. They
4 haven't changed the grid that much to move us somewhere
5 else.

6 I could understand isolated houses,
7 newer homes that may be wired in differently. These are
8 developments that have been here for over 40 years. I was
9 fortunate enough finally to obtain a generator on Friday,
10 from someone who had his power back in less than 24 hours,
11 and he lives in Groton. I was able to get a generator and
12 keep two houses running, so that the pipes wouldn't
13 freeze. It's all well and good to say "well, go to a
14 shelter." But you know what? What do you do when your
15 pipes freeze, and now it's \$12,000 to have everything
16 fixed? So, once you're into it, you can't leave.

17 I still haven't gotten an answer from
18 Unutil. I got argued with two months ago. The woman told
19 me I had no idea what I was talking about. And, I told
20 her "You don't live in Plaistow. You don't know what
21 you're talking about. You don't live on this street."
22 And, the woman continued to argue with me.

23 The people that I talked to at the Call
24 Center were great. But you know what? They had no
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1 information. Nothing. Ten or twelve years ago, when we
2 lost power for five days, I was at least told then "well,
3 you know what, you're a pretty small street, so we'll
4 probably get to you last, because there aren't so many
5 customers. We're going to the streets that have more
6 customers first." I couldn't even get that out of them
7 this time. They wouldn't even give me that explanation.
8 They said "No. You'll get it when you get it."

9 Frustration. We have elderly people on
10 my street. We have ill people on my street. They didn't
11 care. Nobody cared. I can't even positively say that I
12 saw a police cruiser in nine days. They may have come by;
13 I didn't see one. That doesn't mean they weren't there.
14 But, nine days, with no explanation, and four months later
15 still none. And, that's all I have to say. Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. And, I know
17 there's been some issues raised tonight about the PUC's
18 clout. But I know there's some gentlemen from some of the
19 utility companies here tonight. If anyone could -- I'd
20 appreciate it if they could reach out to Ms. Penta and try
21 to answer her specific question about what her
22 neighborhood issues were. And, we'll follow up with that.
23 Jorge Mesa-Tejada.

24 MR. MESA-TEJADA: Thank you, Mr.

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1 Chairman. I commend you all for your patience and your
2 forbearance. I live in Hampstead. And, I wanted to give
3 you a different take. I wanted to give you my experience.
4 We lost power at 10:15 on the 11th, because an elm tree,
5 the top of it fell down and sheared the electrical line,
6 the cable line, and the telephone. Fortunately, it
7 severed at the pole. So, I never had the problem of live
8 wires on my ground. At that point, there was still power
9 in the development. We had had two incidents where it
10 would blink out and come back, you know, over a previous
11 hour. So, I called 911 and let them know because of the
12 wires. They were very quick. And, the police -- the fire
13 chief came to my house and verified the situation. So, I
14 told Chip, "okay, what I'll do is I'll mark the lines",
15 and I moved them out of the way, because they're not live,
16 I just moved them out. And, "now, you guys know what
17 happened, because I reported that." I was able to get
18 through to PSNH at that point. And, they accepted my call
19 and they logged it in. That was the last time I was able
20 to get through to PSNH.

21 Power was restored -- this is on a
22 Thursday, the 11th. Power was restored to us on Monday,
23 the 22nd, at 9:17 in the evening. In the intervening
24 time, thanks to the Town of Hampstead has a very good

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1 emergency preparedness situation, we were able to utilize
2 the shelter at middle school that has power. We had very
3 good meals. We could have hot showers. We were
4 comfortable. We did not suffer. And, then, we would go
5 to the house to sleep, because we have a very
6 well-insulated house. We left the house to go to one of
7 my nieces's houses in Windham. On Monday, when the house
8 dropped to 42, I drained the pipes. And, we were -- we
9 were resigned to wait for whenever our turn came. The
10 location of my house, it is up 111, between 121 and East
11 Road. It's one of those developments that feed out.

12 We never saw any crews until Saturday.
13 Thank God for the Canadians. They were down, they come
14 down 111 and started rebuilding the trunk. And, they
15 finally went into my street, Tewksbury Road, on Monday, at
16 about maybe 9:00 at night, the whole street had power
17 then. But I was resigned, because my line was down, I
18 would be the last. Lo and behold, they connected the line
19 at 9:17.

20 Now, we are self-sufficient. After 42
21 years in the development, we finally bit the bullet and
22 got a generator. Now, I have 72 hours worth of fuel on
23 hand, and we're okay. But what I want to relate to you is
24 that, had it not been for the preparedness of the Town of
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1 Hampstead, and I was a public official at the time, so I
2 had called "pull". I would not -- my family would not
3 have been able to be as comfortable as we were under the
4 circumstances. But the thing that really got us was that
5 neither the Police Chief, nor the Fire Chief, nor the
6 Selectmen were getting straight answers as to what was
7 going on. We had to depend on WGIR, when they had a
8 bulletin. And, then, the very false reports that we were
9 being shown on television on Channel 9 on the banner,
10 where, beginning sometime on Tuesday, they give you the
11 percentage of how much power had been restored to the
12 towns. As late as Thursday of the following week, they
13 were saying that 90 percent of the Town, power had been
14 restored. And, we knew better than that, because we
15 hadn't seen a truck.

16 What I ask you to try to emphasize is to
17 identify a single point of contact for town officials to
18 get that information, because the information that the
19 Police Chief and the Fire Chief had at the time, and I
20 kept asking them, because people kept coming to me and
21 asking me, because they thought, being a town official, I
22 could get information, was the same we all had from
23 television. Designate one point of contact, so that town
24 officials can go to that person, and that person

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1 disseminates the information. Do not spread false hope.
2 Simply be realistic. We realize that it was a tremendous
3 event. And, we'll just bear it.

4 But the cherry on top was that,
5 Christmas Eve, at 4:00 in the morning, we had another
6 power failure that lasted until 3:00 on Christmas Day.
7 Okay? Between the time power was restored on my house,
8 until that Wednesday, my wife and I set up the Christmas
9 tree. The family was coming for Christmas. They arrived
10 on Wednesday night. They would come to nothing. We went
11 down to Connecticut, it's too much, to my daughter's by
12 then.

13 But, if you were to improve the
14 communications to the town officials, so at least the
15 towns can be self-sufficient, then I think it will improve
16 the situation tremendously. And, I thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. And, as to
18 communications to the town officials, I mean, both the PUC
19 is working with the utilities to do that and Emergency
20 Management has been reaching out and doing after action
21 reviews with all of the towns. And, there is a Emergency
22 Manager for every town in the state, who is supposed to be
23 a single point of contact, and has a dedicated line into
24 whatever the utility is. But making sure that it works
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1 the way it's supposed to work is part of what we're
2 looking at in this after action review. Rick Harding?
3 Hartung?

4 MR. HARTUNG: Thank you very much for
5 being with us this evening. And, I'll try to be brief.
6 First of all, I'd like to thank, I'm one of the selectmen
7 in the Town of Hampstead, and I'd like to thank the fire,
8 the police, the SERT Team we had that ran the shelter, and
9 the Emergency Management Director. Our utility is Public
10 Service of New Hampshire, and I'd also like to mention the
11 Hampstead Area Water Company. One of the things that I
12 became involved in with this issue is a silent issue, is
13 that the water utility needs the electricity to move that
14 water. We do have a 400,000 gallon or maybe it's 500,000
15 gallon tank, but they need to be able to replenish that as
16 time goes by. In the midst of the storm, of the incident,
17 we lost a lot of water pressure. Working with Public
18 Service, there was some re-prioritization, and we got some
19 of those pumps working. But, I think, as Public Utilities
20 Commission, you need to put some weight on the onus of
21 these water companies to have plans in place or have some
22 backup generators and get them out there and get them
23 running early on. I think there was some time wasted, and
24 then the ability to get them on line with generators was
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1 late, if -- late and weak.

2 The other thing that I'd like to say and
3 kind of reiterate here is that the extent of the outages
4 was really not felt by PSNH. I was in contact with them a
5 couple times. I think it took them until Wednesday of the
6 second week to really get an idea of how bad Hampstead
7 was. We had talked to them over and over again, but I
8 don't think they had the real sense of the depth of all
9 these cul-de-sacs in one place or another. They had the
10 backbone up on Saturday. And, I think that the 121
11 backbone was powered on Saturday. And, I think they
12 thought they had a lot done, but there was a whole lot
13 more work to do. And, between Saturday and Wednesday, I
14 think we lost some time. I can't tell you why it didn't
15 happen, but it looked like we were left.

16 The other thing I'd like to suggest is
17 that the utilities participate in an education program to
18 help people to be more self-reliant. I mean, we are in
19 New England. These things can happen in New England. I
20 think we're all a lot more self-reliant now than we were a
21 year ago. But I think there's things that the public
22 utilities can do to assist, even if it's having food
23 available in the house, having blankets, one thing or
24 another. And, the Town is going to work a lot harder on
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1 communications. We'd love people that -- We always have
2 the same area for the shelter. It was open within 24
3 hours of the event. But a lot of people, we had people,
4 new people coming in, a lot of people didn't know it was
5 there, and we need to do a better job, too, to get that
6 out. Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. And, your
8 issue about the water companies is a very good one. And,
9 it's one that was identified a couple days into the storm,
10 and working with the -- at the Emergency Operations
11 Center, it was not only the public utilities, the private
12 companies had that issue also, the public and municipal
13 companies. So, in combination with Randy and his folks in
14 our Safety Division, working with the Department of
15 Environmental Services, we're looking at all of the small
16 systems, and trying to identify who needed, you know, who
17 needed generators and who had them and who didn't. But
18 it's a very, very important issue. Thank you. Jill
19 Rumore.

20 MS. RUMORE: I respectfully will pass at
21 this time. Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Charlie Lanza. Who
23 sounds like he knows something about this issue.

24 MR. LANZA: Right in time. Good
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1 evening. Thank you for taking my question. My name is
2 Charlie Lanza. I work for the Hampton Area Water Company.
3 We serve water to approximately 3,000 customers, in eleven
4 towns in southern New Hampshire. During the ice storm, we
5 lost power to every single facility we own and operate.
6 During the ice storm, we were fortunate enough to have an
7 affiliate, Lewis Builders, where we were able to obtain
8 two generators. We were also able to obtain an additional
9 five generators from local rental companies. We were able
10 to dispatch all of those generators in rotation by, I
11 believe, Sunday, following the outage. We also were able
12 to work with local emergency dispatchers to facilitate
13 cutting trees, moving limbs, things of that nature. It
14 appeared to work out quite well.

15 Biggest issue, come up many times
16 tonight, was the communication. Sometimes it was better,
17 a lot of times it wasn't as good. In the beginning, of
18 course, it was terrible. As the outage went on, we were
19 able to communicate better with certain public utility
20 companies, electric providers.

21 In the future, we would like to be able
22 to prioritize some of our key systems, such that we can
23 get them on line quicker. The selectman from Hampstead
24 mentioned the tank in Hampstead. Certain facilities, if
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1 they were on line earlier, would have been able to provide
2 water to that tank, thus providing adequate pressure
3 throughout the storm.

4 Also, PSNH has been very forthcoming
5 working with us to create a priority system. We're in the
6 beginning stages of it, but they appear to be willing to
7 work with us, and making sure that our key facilities in
8 Hampstead will be looked at prior to maybe some other,
9 some other facilities.

10 And, in closing, I'll keep this brief,
11 I'd like to thank all the utilities, and I'd also like to
12 thank everyone else involved in the restoration efforts.
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Don Doughty.

15 MR. DOUGHTY: Yes. Don Doughty. I live
16 in Atkinson, New Hampshire. And, I'm an electrical
17 engineer and an amateur radio operator, KBJ [sic]. I'll
18 just start with a quick introduction of the storm and what
19 happened. That night we knew there was going to be a
20 storm coming in. The lights went out. The UPSs went on.
21 So, we -- that's how we get notification, because I have a
22 UPS on our computers and on our Internet equipment. For
23 anyone who has Verizon FiOS, it does not back up the
24 Internet service with the battery, it only provides phone
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1 when the lights are out, so you have to add a UPS for
2 that. And, you know, proceeded to figure out that this
3 was going to be a severe outage, and went and rigged up
4 the generator for the sump pump. Called Unitil. And,
5 then tuned in the local 2 meter Skywarn Network in
6 Massachusetts just to get some idea of what the magnitude
7 of the storm was. There was no information available on
8 the local radio stations or the TV stations or anybody
9 that night about what -- magnitude of what was happening.
10 Other than the fact that you could listen and hear all the
11 branches and trees falling outside and see flashes in the
12 sky indicating that there are other utilities being taken
13 out by falling trees and isolating on the wires.

14 During the storm, and afterwards, I
15 would say the biggest problem we had was just lack of
16 information. The Skywarn Network, the amateur radio
17 operators, did the best they could to pass the information
18 on to the rest of the communities they were serving. It
19 was a Massachusetts network. We do not have one for New
20 Hampshire, so we had no idea what was going on in the New
21 Hampshire area. But the Skywarn Network was basically
22 covering the Fitchburg area, and so we had an idea of what
23 the magnitude of the storm was listening to the radio at
24 night.

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1 I look at the storm, and a couple of
2 issues have come up. And, first off, I would say, the
3 preparations that we take for a storm is, is we have at
4 least a half dozen flashlights, a generator, battery
5 backup for the sump pump, and a backup propane stove.
6 And, of course, I have amateur radio here, so I have
7 backup communications, and satellite Internet service. I
8 have a feeling there's a lot of these resources available.
9 There's at least a dozen amateur radio operators in
10 Atkinson. They're very easy to find. I do not see the
11 towns making any use of this expertise.

12 The other thing I know is, being the
13 number of outages we've had, means we're at the end of the
14 distribution -- one of the distribution networks in
15 Atkinson, right near the Haverhill line is -- I have my
16 circuit numbers and pole numbers all mapped out all the
17 way to the substation behind of the Westville Hardward.
18 And, I routinely go through, when the rights are out is, I
19 don't have any more pressing things, than go walk, you
20 know, go walk or drive the lines and try to figure out
21 where the dropped fuses are, where the outage is.

22 This brings up one of the issues that
23 I've seen was just basic lack of tactical information of
24 the magnitude of the outage, what the restoration times

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1 were going to be, how to get this information. None of
2 this stuff was up on blogs. I heard finally that PSNH set
3 up a Twitter account and people used that. But I did not
4 see any way of how the information was being organized and
5 how the towns could pass information to the electric
6 company and the electric company back to the town and how
7 everybody can work together.

8 I heard Kingston did a job of organizing
9 where their problems were, coordinated the crews to work
10 their way up the distribution network, and were on in -- I
11 was going to say had their power back on three days sooner
12 than everybody else did in the area. That was -- But I
13 don't have any detailed reports, that's just what I'm
14 getting from hearsay information. There wasn't any of
15 this kind of planning in Atkinson. I don't think the
16 expertise exists. And, I'm really concerned that the way,
17 the economic pressures that are on the utilities, that
18 there seems to be a lack of planning and preparation for
19 these outages, because we're probably going to get more of
20 them, as the trees and stuff are over the wires, and the
21 tree cutting is not done properly. That we're going to
22 get ice storms again, if we're susceptible to them every
23 ten years, we're going to probably get them every five is
24 probably what they should be planning for.

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1 And, you know, the first effort is to
2 make sure that the information is available to the towns
3 of what our distribution network looks like. What the
4 restoration plans are going to be when we do get a massive
5 outage, what needs to be brought up first. There's senior
6 housing, the water system, the schools, the fire
7 department. I was told there was an emergency planning
8 map for Atkinson, but I didn't know about it. They had
9 all the distributions listed. We would have all taken
10 sections of it, walked our area of town, marked down where
11 all the trees were, and hand them back in to the fire
12 department, or whoever was coordinating the information,
13 so we knew where to send the crews out.

14 The other thing I'd be looking for is
15 some indication to say, you know, that we formally
16 de-energize the town, if we've got this kind of problem,
17 so we can go around with termination kits that are
18 prepositioned with the towns, so we can handle the downed
19 wires, downed house feeds, whatever. And, with a simple
20 termination kit, you know, cut the line in a reasonable
21 way, get it out of the road, because we had utilities
22 being damaged by being left in the road with cars running
23 over them.

24 And, let me see. I'm trying to make
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1 sure I catch all my points here. And, then, there's the
2 other issue of fuel. When we do have these massive
3 outages, I know of one gas station between the
4 intersection of Old Route 111 and Route 28 that has a
5 backup generator. That's it. I think it should be a
6 requirement for other gas stations in the area to have
7 backup generators. Not every single one, but at least
8 enough of them so it isn't mass chaos, and we don't have
9 to call the police to deal with the crowd over at that
10 Salem gas station. It was a zoo over there when it came
11 time to get fuel.

12 Which brings up the other problem is
13 taking care of the elderly. You know, I was capable of
14 getting in a car and going down to the gas station and
15 scrapping it out with everybody else to get fuel for my
16 generators. But I have an elderly father that I take care
17 of. I heard there were several deaths in town, because of
18 elderly people not having heat and not being called on.
19 There was no list available or anything to divide up for
20 the neighborhoods to go around and ask. If you're trying
21 to get an elderly person out of a house, you really have
22 to make an effort of it. A phone call will not work.
23 Somebody has to visit, walk in the house, see that there's
24 food, see if there's heat, see if the person is getting

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1 dehydrated or hypothermic. There's a lot of effort to
2 head off these deaths, and I did not see that level of
3 effort and planning made in our town, and I'm sure we have
4 this problem in all of the towns that were affected.

5 There were some other things I'd go
6 over, I'm probably just going to submit them as a written
7 request to the Public Utility Service. But I would go
8 again over the communications as being a major problem.
9 I'd like to see webpages being utilized, Twitter, blogs,
10 anything to provide tactical information that tells us
11 what is going on in our area, our town. And, the same
12 thing, Web forums, to allow towns to feed information back
13 up to the utilities and to the state disaster
14 coordinators, so they know what's going on. We have an
15 Internet, it's designed to be redundant. Ours was up
16 during the whole storm, which I was really surprised, and
17 afterwards. And, if the Internet is not working, there's
18 a backup amateur radio network that can provide that.
19 There's also a backup satellite network that's available
20 for Internet service. That's available. There's no
21 reason why we can't have decent communications.

22 The other thing that should be done is
23 our broadcasters should be encouraged to provide tactical
24 information. Instead, they provided human interest

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1 stories and sensational information. That's not what the
2 people need. We need to know which gas stations are open,
3 we need to know what the impact of the ice storm was. It
4 cut a swath through a certain area and certain towns were
5 affected. Other towns weren't. If you went ten miles
6 south, you could find gas, because they had electricity,
7 they didn't have the ice storm.

8 And, I'll endorse what one of the
9 previous speakers talked about were the trees. Would be
10 more than willing to make a deal with the electric company
11 to take down a couple of our large pine trees that are
12 quite capable of taking out all of the utilities in our
13 neighborhood for a half and half deal. We've been trying
14 to get them out before, we asked nicely, and you just get
15 brushed off.

16 And, that's basically all I have to say
17 at this point. Other than, I really would like to see the
18 planning and preparation done for this. And,
19 particularly, some understanding between the towns and the
20 utilities and the state of who's responsible for what.
21 When you get something this massive, and you get outside
22 crews in, they do not know the area and they don't have
23 service maps, they don't have distribution maps. I
24 personally asked one of the line crews, "Do you have a map
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1 of this area? Do you know where things are at?" And, he
2 said "No, we're just told to go down here, go there", or
3 whatever. So, there was no plan that I could see on
4 Unitil's restoration.

5 And, just to put the icing on the cake,
6 this afternoon's blackout, no information was available on
7 Unitil. Their service line -- Their customer line was
8 busy. Their webpage was not updated. I had to call the
9 Public Utilities Commission up and speak to somebody and
10 say "What's going on in southern New Hampshire today? We
11 have hearing. I have a few questions. And, by the way,
12 you know, what's going on with our electricity?" So, I do
13 not see Unitil having learned their lessons from the storm
14 or providing real-time information needed for their
15 customers.

16 And, I definitely agree there should be
17 some formula applied to the outage rate of customers.
18 Probably I would like to see 10 or 100 times the ISO
19 billing rate, you know what I'm talking about? ISO New
20 England has an LMP map on their webpage. And, I would
21 like to see some kind of factor of 10 or 100 times that
22 rate. When there's an outage, basically bill back to us
23 for what we would be using for electricity as an incentive
24 for the electric companies to keep their service going.

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1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. You covered
3 a lot of important issues there. Let me just say a couple
4 of things in response to some of them. One is, when we
5 did the public statement hearing in Exeter, the Kingston
6 Police Chief spoke at some length about what they did and
7 his folks did during the storm. And, one kind of model
8 practice I think that he spoke to was very useful, and we
9 expect it will be something to try to get all towns doing
10 is, for some reason, during -- in his personal
11 experiences, he's very familiar with how the electric
12 system works, he knows how the, you know, the names of the
13 circuits and numbers, he knows the proper names for the
14 devices. And, so, he could, in his communications to the
15 Company, be very detailed in telling them what to -- what
16 to expect and where the work was necessary, rather than to
17 have to wait for the patrol, the utility patrols to come
18 through and figure out, because there's a big time saving
19 in that. I think that's something we're going to look at
20 as a model practice for the local Emergency Management
21 directors and police and fire chiefs to be able to have
22 that kind of ability in giving out the information.

23 The other thing was Twitter. Now, I
24 really wasn't very familiar with Twitter until the ice
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1 storm, and was using it and seeing how that worked. And,
2 I was just curious. Was any folks here familiar with
3 Twitter and used it, the Twitter up and saw PSNH's?

4 [Show of hands]

5 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Okay.

6 MR. DOUGHTY: It up was this afternoon.
7 They reported the outage this afternoon, and the line
8 number.

9 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Great. Thank you.

10 MR. DOUGHTY: Unutil doesn't use it.

11 CHAIRMAN GETZ: And, the other thing, I
12 don't know, Kathy, did you want to talk about the ham
13 radio network or it was used or how it's generally used in
14 these kind of events?

15 MS. DOUTT: Well, there is an area --

16 [Court reporter interruption]

17 MS. DOUTT: I forgot. I apologize.

18 There are amateur radio emergency services. We use ARES
19 and use AMR radio in our EOC for as long as they could
20 staff it, because they're volunteers. And, I believe we
21 had them for most of the time. We finally closed up the
22 EOC on Christmas Eve, when all the rest of the EOCs we had
23 been told had been closed around the state. Ham radio
24 operators are hugely important to give us that safety net

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1 on the communications side. And, I would recommend, if
2 you're interested, to volunteer to your town to get
3 involved with that safety net for communications, if
4 that's at all of an interest to you. Just giving you a
5 possibility. But they're very useful to us.

6 MR. DOUGHTY: Can I bring up one issue
7 with that?

8 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Please.

9 MR. DOUGHTY: I knew I was going on too
10 long, so I needed to leave this off, but it is important.
11 There is a controversy going on actively with the FCC of
12 broadband over Internet. If that goes -- excuse me,
13 broadband over electric lines. If that goes forward,
14 that's going to degrade significantly our amateur radio
15 network, especially frequencies and services that we use
16 during storms like this. When we lose everything, like
17 Katrina, we have to rely on our low band equipment.

18 MS. DOUTT: Right.

19 MR. DOUGHTY: And, broadband over
20 Internet is going to make those bands unavailable to us.
21 And, we already have an issue with Unitil using data over
22 the electric lines for their electric meters. We do not
23 have any information on what that system is, what it's
24 impact is on our services, what frequencies they're using,
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1 where their interference is. I've been asked to look into
2 it by several of many colleagues from Nashua and other
3 areas, where the radio clubs are. And, that should be a
4 resource that's carefully looked at. If there's any more
5 deployment of data over electric line services, of how
6 they're going to impact the amateur radio network. There
7 are several standards, several different systems being
8 used, so it's very technical, which one has the problems.
9 But we've been warned that there's a couple of these
10 standards out there that have been approved that are very
11 detrimental to the network. And, it particularly gets
12 more of a problem the more rural you get, as the more
13 incentive there is to use this broadband over electric
14 line service. And, that's exactly where we need the long
15 range communications, their HF is just going to be
16 degraded to the point where we can't rely on it.

17 MS. DOUTT: Thank you. So noted, and
18 we'll look into it.

19 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. David Joy.

20 MR. JOY: My name is David joy. I live
21 in Kingston, New Hampshire. As I was thinking back about
22 the ice storm, I was thinking about a friend that I have
23 in central Massachusetts. And, just in a casual
24 conversation, he told me that the town that he lives in is
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1 serviced by National Grid Electric Company. And, that his
2 power was out for a day and a half. And, that was
3 interesting, because so many of the towns that were around
4 his area, which were serviced by Unitil, were out for, you
5 know, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 days. And, I wondered, why would
6 it be that one town serviced by National Grid would
7 receive their power back so quickly, and the many, many
8 others that were serviced by Unitil would take so very,
9 very long to get their power back on?

10 Obviously, as we go forward, you're
11 going to -- you're going to perhaps figure that out. It's
12 my particular opinion that Unitil has not done a very good
13 job restoring power during this ice storm. I don't think
14 they had the materials available. I don't think they had
15 the preparation modes or the manpower available to them.
16 And, I'm not making any kind of complaint towards the
17 people who were actually out in the field doing the work,
18 who I think did a wonderful job, and did the very best
19 that they could, given the circumstances that they were
20 given.

21 But I think there is some blame to be
22 placed here tonight. And, I know that there were some
23 earlier speakers here. And, forgive me for saying this,
24 but for a while here, early on, I thought that I was at a
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1 Unitil cheerleading session. We are here to affix blame.
2 And, some of that blame is to be put onto the Unitil
3 Electric Company. Some of it, perhaps, you folks as well,
4 because you're supposed to be overseeing companies like
5 Unitil Electric, which is a public monopoly. People in
6 this room who have Unitil don't have a choice in their
7 electric provider. I wish we had a whole bunch of them to
8 choose from, but we don't. And, so, it's up to you folks
9 to make sure that Unitil is acting in the best interest of
10 the public. I don't happen to think that they did that
11 during this ice storm.

12 I know, when I called Unitil, I found
13 the people on the -- who answered the phone to be probably
14 as nice as they could be, but they didn't have a lot of
15 information at their fingertips or at their knowledge, and
16 they didn't have enough to say to me when I called in a
17 couple of times. They were, obviously, under an awful lot
18 of stress and duress from the tremendous amounts of calls
19 that were, you know, coming into them. So, obviously,
20 they were short-tempered.

21 One of the calls I found very odd that I
22 made in there, that the person was extremely insistent
23 that I give them my Social Security Number in order to
24 have a conversation with them about my situation. And, I

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1 asked him "Why did you need that?" "Oh, we need that to
2 identify -- you need to be identified that way." I said
3 "You don't even have my Social Security Number, how could
4 you identify --" "Well, we need to get it now, so that we
5 can identify you in the future." There was a minor
6 argument, if you will, about the fact that I'm not going
7 to give my Social Security Number to the Unitil Electric
8 Company for any reason. And, it certainly wasn't
9 necessary for the purposes of that conversation that day.

10 I was without power for seven days,
11 fifteen hours, thirty minutes. But, as my wife says,
12 "who's counting?" And, I think back again to the example
13 there, the National Grid customer in central
14 Massachusetts. Why did Unitil take so long? I'd like to
15 begin to understand that. I'd like to hear from the
16 Public Utilities Commission and others as to just exactly
17 what did Unitil do right and what did they do wrong that
18 led so many people to be without power for so very, very
19 long.

20 Quite frankly, in speaking to let's just
21 identify them as "local officials", whether they're from
22 Kingston or just the surrounding area, people that I spoke
23 to said that they felt that Unitil was "untruthful and
24 evasive" in their conversation, both, I guess, whether it
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1 was on the phone or in some sort of a public forum,
2 regarding the giving of information to them about when
3 power was going to be coming back on, how the restoration
4 process was proceeding. That's unacceptable. If you're
5 going to give an answer, at least say you "don't know",
6 that's probably the best thing you can do. I've learned
7 that from business.

8 I guess the only thing I can sum up
9 things is just to simply say that I hope that you folks,
10 as you go forward, that you're going to serve the best
11 interest of the public, and not necessarily those of the
12 electric companies, which I know some people feel like you
13 guys are there to serve, I don't happen to believe that.
14 But I do hope that you'll serve the best interest of the
15 public, and find out just exactly what happened. And, if
16 there is any recourse or anything that has to be done, so
17 that companies, like Unitil, are forced to take corrective
18 actions, that they be made to do that, and that they be
19 made to do that without any costs to the public. Thank
20 you.

21 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. Susan
22 Hancox.

23 MS. HANCOX: Hi. Thank you. I'm Susan
24 Hancox, from Walker Road, in Atkinson. And, I basically
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1 think, you know, this was an extreme emergency. It was an
2 historic storm. I am worried that we're going to have
3 more historic storms. We have ever reason to believe
4 weather is going to get more extreme, not less extreme.
5 So, I'm really glad there's a process and that you're
6 looking at all of this.

7 And, I think all of the people who were
8 involved did great and came together and did great work.
9 And, I know the Town of Atkinson, I felt really proud to
10 be part of the town and what the police and fire
11 department did. And, I think human beings, on the most
12 part, do really well in emergencies. So, during the
13 emergency, things were going on, other than the
14 communication piece, which has been covered plenty, was
15 going well.

16 What I want to -- What I'm hoping you're
17 going to take a look at as part of this process, I've
18 lived in Atkinson just ten and a half months. And, I came
19 from Groveland, Massachusetts, so, you know, it's not even
20 ten miles away. I have had more instances of power outage
21 in the ten and a half months I've been here, and more
22 hours, not counting the storm, not counting the December
23 storm, more hours of lost power than I had in the 14 years
24 that I lived in Groveland. I moved here in the summer, I
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1 moved in June, and I was stunned that I kept losing power
2 in the summer. And, when I talked to my neighbors, they
3 all said "Oh, yeah. It happens." And, the more I've
4 talked with southern New Hampshire homeowners, the more
5 it's -- it's sort of "This is the way life is here. We
6 just lose power." You don't have reliable power. And, I,
7 like many people here, work from home. And, so, realize
8 that I have had to talk with my clients about "sometimes
9 you're just not going to be able to reach me". Because I
10 have Comcast for my phone service, so -- and it just --
11 there's nothing that the phone tells anybody that I don't
12 have power, and so they didn't even know they couldn't
13 reach -- couldn't reach me.

14 So, I'm hoping you're going to look at
15 things like corporate strategies, corporate structure. I
16 liked the idea about service level agreements. I don't
17 know if there are any high -- executive metrics,
18 particularly with Unitil, since that's my service
19 provider, metrics for what's acceptable. What do they
20 consider as a standard of performance for outages, for
21 either a number of incidents in a year or length of losing
22 power over a year. Unless there are no executive
23 performance levels that are around service, if they're all
24 around finances or something like that, that tells us

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1 something anyway. But, certainly, from my business
2 experience as an executive, we were measured very
3 specifically on things, and that usually tells you quickly
4 where the priorities are in an organization. And, I would
5 just be interested in having some sense of what is
6 considered acceptable, as far as either number of
7 instances or outages.

8 Not to say that this storm might not
9 have been able to be solved sooner, but I think it's easy
10 to hide behind a major storm and miss the pattern that
11 seems to go on. I thought it was kind of interesting that
12 we lost power today, right before the hearing. So, thank
13 you.

14 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Yes, we were struck by
15 that when we were getting into the car to drive over here.
16 And, I'm not sure, in terms of metrics, I mean, there are
17 metrics that are tracked for all utilities overall. There
18 are System Average Interruption Frequency Index and the
19 System Average Interruption Duration Index and the
20 Customer Average Interruption Duration Index, but those
21 are things we track overall. And, I think, like you're
22 saying is, when those numbers are computed, they take out
23 major storms, so you try to get an ongoing feel for each
24 -- how each utility is doing. But I think you're going
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1 another step, I think, in saying "should that" -- "somehow
2 should some of that be reflected in how executive
3 compensation is handled"?

4 MS. HANCOX: Whether it's executive
5 compensation, corporate goals of some sort, do they have
6 goals that are around those metrics that they consider
7 acceptable?

8 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Yes. As far as
9 executive compensation, I'm not aware of that. But, for
10 our purposes at the PUC, if you're -- you know, although
11 those SAIFI, SAIDI, and CAIDIs, all those numbers, they
12 don't really get down with granular level like your house
13 and Mr. Stern's house. And, if you're not getting
14 satisfaction or a good understanding or improvement by
15 working through the utilities, you should be contacting
16 the Public Utilities Commission, so that we're at least
17 aware of it, and, through our Consumer Affairs Division,
18 can track these issues and try to determine, you know,
19 what is the issue and what can be done about it. But I
20 know we have your name and address and Mr. Stern's, and
21 anyone else who wants to speak with us that has a similar
22 kind of issue, then we're happy to take that information.
23 So, thank you.

24 MS. HANCOX: Thank you.

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1 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Catherine Rochford.

2 MS. ROCHFORD: Good evening. Catherine
3 Rochford, and I live in Atkinson, New Hampshire. For a
4 geography point of view, the neighborhood I live in is
5 known as "Hemlock Heights", which is north of 111. It was
6 very frustrating, I know a lot has been said about
7 communication, but, to come back with our Emergency
8 Management Team, saying that PSNH sat in a room with
9 Atkinson and telling them they had no customers in
10 Atkinson. Nothing's more frustrating, when you pay a bill
11 to PSNH every month, and they have no problem sending a
12 bill to your home in Atkinson, for their administration to
13 sit in the room with the Emergency Management Team saying
14 they don't have customers in Atkinson. That was
15 rectified, because the Town did realize we were up there.

16 We were out nine days. I didn't do the
17 count that that gentleman did, but were just an hour or
18 two away from starting our tenth day with no power. So,
19 that's -- I'm just going to keep it sweet. That's one
20 point.

21 The other point, we were out ten days,
22 and we do have one child in the neighborhood that is
23 supposed to be on a priority list for a problem. His
24 family moved him down to his grandparents' house in

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1 Massachusetts, but I don't know how they did the priority
2 list. We were told that 125 goes first, because of the
3 stores, but we had a child in need that had to be
4 relocated, because he couldn't be kept there for ten days.

5 My other point was is the communication
6 from the radio stations, all day Friday we had all the
7 urgent messages. Saturday and Sunday came, we had
8 Christmas music, and little updates here and there.
9 Monday, came back, and we were back into a disaster mode.
10 So, I know that's not in your control, but certain radio
11 stations probably didn't staff up for this. And, all we
12 were getting were Christmas music. Nothing's more
13 frustrating, when you're living with one radio, on a
14 backup generator, and no other form of communication.
15 And, those were my points.

16 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. And, that's
17 one thing I learned during this storm. Mr. Van Dongen,
18 from Emergency Management, made me aware of this, is that
19 how fewer and fewer radio stations actually have staff
20 there. And, they are not there on weekends, it's all
21 automated, and it's really become, you know, less and less
22 availability for those small stations that are getting
23 information out. And, it's an issue. Thank you.

24 MS. ROCHFORD: Okay.

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1 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Okay. That's all of the
2 forms I've received. Oh, do you -- I thought we had you
3 covered, --

4 MR. SCULLY: No.

5 CHAIRMAN GETZ: -- but you had something
6 more? Please.

7 MR. SCULLY: I wasn't expecting to speak
8 then.

9 MR. SCULLY: Good evening. Bill Scully,
10 Unitil, Emergency Manager, Town of Plaistow. I have
11 probably been a critic of Unitil as long as some of the
12 people back there have been employed by Unitil, okay? But
13 Unitil has been working with the Town since the storm.
14 Let's look forward. They have had many good meetings with
15 us, many good action reports. Unitil has understood that
16 the towns were working, and I'm going to use -- under the
17 National Incident Management System, commonly referred to
18 as "NIMS". They understand the towns were working under
19 Unified Command and Incident Control Management. I would
20 -- Unitil, in their after action report, I believe is
21 going to adopt that they also will be working under that
22 form. If all their customer towns are working under the
23 federal mandated NIMS, I think all the utility companies
24 should have to take incident command, some NIMS training,
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1 and understand how we, in the town, are structuring our
2 response so they can interact with us.

3 Now, I know, from Unitil, they said they
4 are going to start to do it. But, I think, from a Public
5 Utility Commission, that should be a consideration for
6 everybody, because all your towns are working under that.

7 Secondly, early on, I had a meeting with
8 Director Pope. I had already submitted these letters to
9 him. He told me he has already submitted them to the
10 Commission. So, I'm going to make it very short. After
11 Hurricane Bob, in 1991, I sent a letter to Director
12 Iverson, who was the State Director at the time, who told
13 me he would forward it to the Public Utility Commission.
14 My complaint was communication from what at that time was
15 Exeter & Hampton, that they weren't talking to the towns,
16 they weren't giving us information. After the ice storm
17 of '97, similar letter sent to Director Iverson, similar
18 response back from him, "I'm taking this concern to the
19 Public Utility Commission." There's 17 years of history
20 where the Town of Plaistow has been asking for
21 communication, better communication. The Public Utility
22 Commission has never got back to the Town of Plaistow.
23 Okay? All during the storm I dealt with a couple of
24 people at the Commission, Randy Kemper, I believe, --
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1 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Knepper.

2 MR. SCULLY: -- and Judy O'Marra.

3 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Jody.

4 MR. SCULLY: Okay, Jody. So, basically,
5 during the storm, they basically told the town "We can't
6 do anything for you, now it's rate setting." You know, we
7 had nice conversations in the logs, but there's just no
8 mandate, nothing could be done at that time. So, I hope
9 that Unitil, and what they have put in their after action
10 report, they've got 133 pages approximately report, said
11 they would work with us, they said they would work better
12 with the point of contact. I, as the Emergency Manager,
13 was having a very hard time getting any information,
14 because their contact person was also running all the
15 crews. So, it may take them six or eight hours to get
16 back to me. In the meantime, I was having residents in
17 Massachusetts, "should I give up my hotel room and come
18 back?", and things like that. I had to give people timely
19 information. So, communication is of the utmost. I'm
20 hoping, you know, that Unitil will go on record with you
21 that they will do it. A single point of contact, whoever
22 is at the EOC, we had too many directions trying to get
23 information. We were asking crews "where are they working
24 at?" At the end, Mrs. Pender's house, which happens to be
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1 at Sunrise Terrace, which had 22 people on that line, I
2 had called that and faxed that in many times, okay? The
3 day she received power -- excuse me.

4 [Pager beeping]

5 MR. SCULLY: Excuse me a minute. The
6 day she received power, the crew chief actually came to
7 the EOC with his work orders. And, I asked -- looked at
8 his work orders and said "that street's not on the list",
9 and they went there. So, what I'm leading to is we need
10 communication during the storm, we have to know where
11 Unitil is going, the Town has a good understanding of
12 who's with power and who's not. These people were coming
13 into the EOC crying, telling us things. They call Unitil,
14 because of work order problems, they were being told they
15 had power. So, we just have to work on this
16 communication. That we have to get a direct line, one
17 point of contact, each town, with the provider. So --
18 and, then, to check work orders and that. We shouldn't --
19 I had police officers running around, stopping crews and
20 asking them where they're going to be working that day.
21 "Who could we get power?" That's how we were getting the
22 information. If we had communication, our citizens would
23 have been much better off. We could give them reliable
24 information.

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1 One of the contacts I made with your
2 Commission during the storm was the bad information that
3 was being put out on the number of customers out in
4 Plaistow. At one time they said "50"; I had 50 streets.
5 That same press release went out for two more days in the
6 newspaper. Okay? I had five to six hundred (600) people
7 at one time. Towards the end, Scott Wade, who was running
8 work crews in this area, him and I agreed on 450 people,
9 but that was the third day that a press release had gone
10 out saying only "50". And, that's what was upsetting the
11 people, you know? So, we need that type. If we had
12 communication, we can handle it. We understand the crews
13 were working hard. No questions. Communication. We know
14 this was a master rebuild. This was not just a damage
15 storm. This was a rebuilding the system. We understood
16 that. But if we just had -- if we could have better
17 timing.

18 And, again, I will conclude that I'm
19 hoping we have learned a lot from this storm, that Unitil
20 will become a partner with the Town. And, that -- then,
21 Selectman Sherman mentioned about "penalties". Maybe some
22 penalties should be in there for -- I mean, there has to
23 be some acceptance of level of service. May it be, what,
24 I don't know. But there has to be some type of incentive,
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1 if you say you're going to do it, if you don't do it,
2 there should be a fine or a penalty. Just so they, before
3 they release information, it's credible.

4 We understand they went into some
5 streets, they thought they had one pole down, they end up
6 with three down. Again, let the town, like one other
7 gentleman spoke, let us give you, listen to us, we have
8 police officers, firefighters, we knew the damage. We had
9 no way to relay it in to you. And, yes, the Unitil
10 report, their after action, they said they're going to
11 establish some forms, which they have started, they're
12 communicating. That would have made it a partnership.

13 The sheltering; we've been asking for
14 schools to have a generator here for over 20 years. Red
15 Cross has gone regional shelter, our people were going to
16 shelters. We had half our phones were up, we had
17 FairPoint customers that were up; Comcast customers that
18 were done. So, why was Comcast down and FairPoint up?
19 There seems to be a weakness somewhere in that Comcast
20 system, because they're on the same poles. So,
21 apparently, Comcast is relying on you providing power in
22 your house, where FairPoint versus Verizon have the
23 battery backups at their facilities. Maybe some effort
24 should be done that Comcast should start putting some
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1 investment in, as FairPoint and Verizon had done in the
2 past to have factory backups. Because that took a lot of
3 people off the Internet and things like that, and we're
4 relying more upon our computers now. You're talking
5 Twitter and all these items, you know, it's the computer.
6 Yes, people are heading for wireless. But I just often
7 wondered why Comcast has no requirement that FairPoint
8 does. Thank you.

9 CHAIRMAN GETZ: Thank you. I mean,
10 there's a very big difference, of course, between -- I
11 mean, we don't regulate cable companies, and we do
12 regulate telephone companies, and they're two very
13 different technologies. But I just want to assure you, I
14 don't know who Director Iverson is or was, and what
15 letters or what he may have told you about what the PUC
16 might do. But let me assure you that, you know, we have
17 heard loud and clear, and it was -- occurred to us even on
18 our own during the ice storm just how important these
19 communications issues are, and we are actively and
20 seriously pursuing all of them.

21 That's all the public statement forms I
22 have. So, I just wanted to say we really appreciate
23 everyone taking the time to come out. This is all very
24 helpful to the effort we're taking with Emergency

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1 Management, to, you know, we can't make sure that you're
2 never going to get a bad ice storm, but we can do the best
3 we can to make sure that the communications and the
4 coordination and planning is a whole lot better than it
5 was last year. And, we're very hopeful and optimistic
6 that we'll get -- there's a lot of good lessons learned
7 out of this process.

8 So, thank you all very much. Good
9 night.

10 (Whereupon the hearing ended at 9:50
11 p.m.)

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