

NEWS



A NiSource Company

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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NIPSCO Launches New Online Electric System Outage Information

MERRILLVILLE, Ind. – As the spring and summer storm season approaches, Northern Indiana Public Service Company announces a new feature that will provide customers real-time updates on current electric outages, while providing its customers with helpful information to stay safe and informed when a storm hits or an outage occurs.

“It’s important for our customers to have a solid understanding of what to do when an outage takes place and how the restoration process works, especially after a devastating storm,” said Tim Dehring, NIPSCO senior vice president of energy delivery. “This year, we’re introducing a new on-line tool to help customers get current information on electric outages in their area or across NIPSCO’s service territory in real-time.”

The new electric system outage map is accessible by visiting www.nipSCO.com.

Restoration Process

As a storm approaches, NIPSCO’s Customer Contact Center stands ready to field calls in the event of electric outages. Customers calling NIPSCO to report an outage play an integral part in helping NIPSCO restore power quickly.

Once damage from a major storm is assessed, NIPSCO will do its best to broadly communicate estimated restoration times for each community impacted.

During major outages, NIPSCO works to restore power to critical facilities such as hospitals, lift stations, nursing homes, as well as police and fire stations. At the same time, NIPSCO crews are assessing damage and restoring power to areas where the greatest number of residential customers can be brought online as quickly and safely as possible.

Storm Safety Information

One of the most important safety tips NIPSCO recommends is for customers to monitor the weather and know what type of weather is forecast for the area. Below is a general overview of what NIPSCO does – and what customers should do – before, during and after storms.

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Before the Storm

NIPSCO monitors the weather 24/7 using state-of-the-art mapping technology and forecasting information. When a major storm is forecast, NIPSCO crews are put on alert and prepared to respond. Customers can also prepare for storms by following the customer safety tips below:

- Compile a storm preparedness kit, which should include essential medicines, non-perishable food items and water, flashlights, portable radios, and a manual can opener. Know the location of your emergency supply kit.
- Review your evacuation plan. Have the phone numbers of evacuation destinations with you as well as a road map. You may need to take alternate routes if major roads are closed or clogged.
- Check to see if shrubs or trees need trimming or if you have any weak limbs. Be particularly careful when working near power lines. Also, remove items near the home that could possibly become airborne (toys, trash cans, etc.).

During the Storm

NIPSCO closely monitors the storm and its electric infrastructure. Crews and equipment are mobilized to restore power. Personnel at NIPSCO's call center are answering phones to collect outage reports. Customers should:

- Listen to local radio or TV stations for up-to-date storm information, including knowing what a tornado WATCH and WARNING means.
- Pick a place where family members can gather if a tornado is headed your way. It could be your basement or, if there is no basement, a center hallway, bathroom, or closet on the lowest floor. Keep away from windows.
- Fill your gas tank before a storm arrives, as gas pumps do not work if electricity is out. Automatic teller machines will also be shut off if the power goes, so have cash on hand.

Following the Storm:

NIPSCO crews will work around-the-clock to restore power. During severe storms, it may take several hours after the storm subsides before damage reports can be analyzed and restoration efforts are prioritized. Following storm activity, customers should:

- Immediately report a power outage or any power line hazards by calling NIPSCO at 1-800-4-NIPSCO (1-800-464-7726). Do not touch downed or hanging power lines or anything touching them.

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- Monitor the status of power restoration activities on local radio stations, or at www.nipsco.com.
- Avoid opening the refrigerator or freezer. Food will stay frozen in a fully loaded freezer for 36 to 48 hours if the doors remain closed. If the freezer is half full, the food will generally keep 24 hours.
- Keep candles away from furniture, draperies and other flammable materials. Also, keep children and pets away from open flames.
- Disconnect or turn off appliances that were on when the power outage occurred. Leave a light on so you will know when power is restored.
- If you leave your home while the power is out, double-check that all heat producing appliances, such as stoves, irons and curling irons are unplugged before you leave.
- If there is severe damage and it appears that the outage will last an extended period of time, consider moving to an alternate location.

Editor's Note: Enclosed you'll find a Power Restoration Refresher graphic to accompany this release.

NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the 10 energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With over 712,000 natural gas customers and 457,000 electric customers across the northern third of Indiana, NIPSCO is the largest natural gas distribution company, and the second largest electric distribution company, in the state. NiSource distribution companies serve 3.8 million natural gas and electric customers primarily in seven states. More information about NIPSCO is available at www.nipsco.com.

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