

APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF WITNESS COMMENTS REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING ISSUES ARISING FROM DECEMBER 4, 2002 WINTER STORM DURHAM DECEMBER 19, 2002

Thirty-two people addressed the Commission (Sanford, Kerr, Wilkins) with comments, questions, suggestions and accounts of experiences regarding the utility outages caused by the December 4, 2002 icing event. Speakers included local governmental officials and Duke Power workers, as well as a broad range of utility customers (primarily customers of Duke Power) from Durham, Chapel Hill and the surrounding area. Their comments have been categorized and are provided below in summary fashion.

Page Testimony

Local Government Officials

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Ellen Reckhow, Chairperson Durham County Board of Commissioners

- Critical that 9-day outage experience be used to determine what went well and what can be improved.
- Wants Commission to review and investigate whether storm preparation and response was appropriate. Submitted chart from Duke Power of number of workers in county by day and the number of customers without power.
- Would like power company to make buildings (schools) designated by County as emergency shelters priority power restoration sites. Durham's efforts to care for health and safety of citizens hampered first couple of days because designated shelters had no power. **(Power to Emergency Shelters)**
- Can customer information provided by power company be improved? During outage event, there was a general lack of current information. Would like to see phone centers permit customers to check on status of outage. Would like Duke Power to release daily maps showing restored areas and those expected to be restored in the next 24 hours. **(Communication of status of work)**
- What measures can be taken to reduce outage vulnerability in the future? Explore the option and cost/benefits of underground lines. Consider other preventive maintenance measures. **(Underground lines)**

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**Becky Heron, Commissioner
Durham County Bd. of Commissioners**

- Questioned sufficiency of Duke staffing to meet health and safety needs. **(Sufficient personnel)**
- What community had the earliest response from Duke? **(Prioritization)**
- What are the arrangements with outside utilities and are there contingency plans when nearby utilities have no available crews? **(Contingency Planning)**
- It was reported that Duke determined its number of customer outages by the calls received. Is this the only way Duke determines? Is there no other better technical means to determine how many customers have lost power? **(Modernized utility)**
- Does Duke have plans for more aggressive tree growth control? **(Trees)**
What is the plan going forward for Duke to keep public/local government adequately informed as to status of repair work when there has been a massive outage? **(Communications plan)**

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Bill Bell, Mayor of the City of Durham

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- Concerned that Duke Power unable to bring enough personnel to bear in Durham during the first 2-3 days of the outage event. This caused delay in restoration of power. Understanding the reasons and finding solutions are key to preventing a repeat. **(Sufficient Personnel)**

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- How many maintenance personnel regularly assigned to Durham before ice event on December 4? How many of this number immediately available in Durham on December 4? Had any of them been diverted to other locations? If so, when/why?
- Has the number of available maintenance personnel been affected by corporate restructuring? Has Duke Power added personnel and shifted them in accord with high growth portions of the Duke Power systems?

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- Were there back-up plans to secure crews from other companies in the event Duke's primary crews were unavailable and why was there delay in getting these other crews to Durham? **(Adequate planning for use of non-Duke crews)**
- What is an appropriate expectation for the level of emergency preparedness for power companies?
- When will we deal with placing key portions of electric system underground?

- When will power companies stop fighting local governments' efforts to place lines underground in a very cost-effective manner? **(Work with local governments for underground system; make underground wiring state requirement for new construction)**
- What are the expectations for power company's providing accurate and timely information on progress of repair to local government and emergency management officials? Information provided to Durham was delayed the first two days. Improved over time but was often too general to be of any value. **(Communication plan with local government)**
- Liaisons from the power company should be assigned to the local emergency operation centers.
- 15-16 • There was a problem in getting through to live persons at Duke Power. Suggests using retired Duke employees to man phones and to have additional phone lines available. Lines designated for local government and emergency officials did not work as intended during this outage experience.
- There is a lack of interaction between Duke Power and local governments regarding emergency planning exercises. Has not improved since Hurricane Fran (1996). The Commission should consider requiring this interaction and exchange of information. **(Require companies to participate with local governments in emergency planning)**

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Dr. Ann Denlinger, Superintendent, Durham Public Schools

- Durham Public School officials were in contact with Duke Power officials throughout the event and never experienced any difficulty in contacting officials at Duke Power. The school district was pleased with the direct and immediate information received from Duke Power.

**Former Utility Worker and
Other Public and Representative Officials (*speaking unofficially*)**

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Ed Thomas, resident of Durham, consultant for electric utilities; former Duke and Piedmont electric utility manager; engineer

- Surveyed storm damage in Durham, Orange and Granville; saw no damage that was not caused by trees. Piedmont Electric has a 30-foot right-of-way and trims the trees every 3 years. Duke does not operate on a 3-year cycle. Tree conditions in Duke service area has deteriorated over the years. Chapel Hill and Durham tend not to want trees cut. **(Trees)**

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- Restoration priorities: Murdock Center in Butner is only one mile from a substation and so it should have been part of the “main feeder” priority. He could not understand why power not restored until 5:30 p.m. on Friday, December 6. <see vol 2, page 21> **(Prioritization)**
- Crews are more effective in daylight, but they can accomplish a lot in the dark using modern equipment. Afraid Duke is low on the number of experienced supervisors in terms of local supervisors who know how to make efficient crew assignments. **(Efficient crew assignment)**

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Gary Hicks, Public Works and Operations Director, City of Burlington

- Burlington, unlike Durham, had no problem communicating with its Duke Emergency Operations Center. Speaker met with Duke General Manager in the EOC and Duke laid out the plan of prioritization: Hospitals, water plants, waste-treatment, institutions, residential—in that order. Duke did a tremendous job in Burlington. **(Communications/Prioritization)**

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Drew Sharpe, Emergency Management Coordinator, Alamance County

- Throughout outage event, beginning with storm weather forecasts, Alamance County maintained communications with a Duke Power representative working with the Emergency Operations Center. There was difficulty communicating with residents who were without power and lacked access to radio/television. **(Communications)**
- In addition to the established priorities, Alamance worked with Duke Power to give some priority to getting power back to the 27 schools so that school system could re-open.
- Duke Power advised that designated shelter should be close to feeder substations; this will likely lessen the number of trees and lines down between the substation and the shelter so that power may be restored quicker.

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Aaron Nelson, Executive Director of Chapel Hill Carrboro Chamber of Commerce

- Appreciated the well-informed individuals working Duke’s PowerOn line. Provided good information on the status of power work each time he called. Duke also called radio stations every hour with an update.

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Ted Connor, Vice President, Durham Chamber of Commerce

- Unprecedented damage to electrical distribution system resulting from this storm. Duke and its employees and contractors did a great job in bad weather. Duke takes its service responsibilities seriously; speaker thinks and expects that Duke will listen to the comments and make changes. Duke is diligent in meeting the needs of its customers and the company follows up with excellent service.

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Sherri Zann Rosenthal, Coordinating Attorney, Durham City Attorney's Office

- Duke does and did provide great service, but the fact of acts of heroism following storm may flag problems to look at and fix.
- Posed questions regarding reporting of utility performance measures and the availability of that information to local governments. Questioned what reports routinely filed by utilities with the Commission that may be helpful to local governments in their planning and decision-making. Are there reports available regarding the type of utility distribution configuration and regarding plans to upgrade and keep the distribution system current? Can the system have greater interconnection and redundancy so that damaged parts of the system may be temporarily bypassed, leaving fewer customers without power? **(Information for planning/Government/Commission)**
- Is the Commission considering requiring other additional filings that contain further or new types of information? If so, what is under consideration?
- Speaker wants Commission to provide guidelines on what is reasonable in terms of shared costs for underground system as between state and local government and the utilities.
- Concerned about impact of generators on air quality and would like utility to use renewables. **(Environmental issues)**
- Would like Commission and Duke to help find the resources to permit community centers and schools to operate off the grid with the use of renewables.

Duke Power Company

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E. O. Ferrell, Senior Vice-President of Electric Distribution, Duke Power

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- More than 11,000 Duke Power and Duke Energy employees from as far away as Houston worked long hours in dangerous conditions to restore electricity to 1.4 million Duke Power customers. This number of workers includes contractors, vendors and suppliers. The effort of the workers was heroic.
- Duke received weather forecasts of the storm over Thanksgiving. Duke's emergency plan was activated. The storm team began regular conference calls on December 2. The team was on alert and ready to respond. The telephone call center began to prepare for an increased volume of calls and Duke public relations began contacting "officials" to advise of the impending storm. **(Pre-storm preparations)**

- Duke is a member of the Southeastern Electric Exchange and the Exchange had already planned for a December 2 storm drill. They began planning about the practice of shifting crews from location to location. On December 3, the drill shifted to real event response.
- 23 • Ice accumulation from the storm was $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. Problems with power outages generally begin when amounts exceed $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch. Because this accumulation was generally of equal amounts throughout the entire Duke Power service area, the first problem created for Duke was an inability to move crews from location to location. The Duke resources needed to remain in place in their home bases.
- 24 • On December 4, Duke's storm plan was escalated to highest level. Duke began requesting crews from anywhere in the southeast. Duke crews were left in place because the forecast showed the storm would cover the entire Duke territory.

 - Neighboring utilities would not release crews because, by this time, they too anticipated being hit by the storm and having possible outages. Likewise, companies to our North would not release crews because they were also in the path of this major storm. On Dec 4, the day of storm, could only get 100 crews from Florida.
- 25-28,31 • On Dec 3, Duke Power opened three staging areas—Spartanburg, Greensboro, Charlotte—to receive crews from other companies. Crews came from 17 other states. Ultimately brought in over 5200 people from other states to work with over 3200 Duke personnel. **(Approximately 8400 working on Duke restoration by event's end)**

 - Normally the field forces for Durham/Chapel Hill are just over 100; there were no additional crews for Durham on the first day (Dec 4). By midnight of the second day there were 400 workers in Durham and by Dec 12th, there were just under 1000. The numbers are not as high for Chapel Hill but the rate of ramp up was about the same. As crews became available, Duke poured them in to Raleigh/Durham where damage much more severe than Greensboro or Charlotte. Duke's goal is not to favor one area over the other. **(Promised to later provide slide showing size of crews/ramp up in Charlotte area)**
 - Duke Power had over 1800 right-of-way personnel, 6100 line construction personnel, and 3200 support personnel working during this event. **(Actual restoration efforts)**
- 29 • Duke's southern region (SC) was restored quicker because the damage there was not as severe. The regions within NC had similar restoration rates. By Friday, Dec 13, less than 200 customers still without power. **(Most restoration complete by Dec 13)**

- Normally, Duke has about 200 telephone agents at work. For the storm, Duke had 600 phone agents on the phones and received 1.6 million calls. Provided information through news releases and media updates. Early during the event, could not confidently predict restoration times and dates. Did not have telephone capacity for Spanish language, but interacted with Durham City's Human Resources department to add Spanish to voice response unit by Tuesday (Dec 10).

(Communications; Added Spanish to phone response line)

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- In 1989, following Hurricane Hugo, 700,000 customers had power restored in 18 days—limited to the Charlotte/Hickory area. In 1996, following ice storm concentrated in Winston-Salem/Hendersonville/Hickory area, power restored to 650,000 in 8 days at rate of 81,000 a day. In Hurricane Fran aftermath, 450,000 were restored to power at the rate of 50,000 a day. **For this 2002 event, 1.4 million were restored to power in 9 days at the rate of 152,000 per day.**

- Maintenance/reliability: The Duke system has reliability rating of 99.98%, meaning average customer is without power 2 hours per year. In 2000, system asset management review resulted in 40% increase in tree trimming budget. Duke has increased budget in inspection and reliability areas. **(Reliability measures)**

- Beyond the Governor's Task Force, Duke will do a comprehensive evaluation internally, gather feedback and identify best practices in areas needing improvement.

- Duke will look to improve communications with local/elected officials and with emergency centers because these communications did not function as Duke would have liked. **(Communications)**

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- Pros and Cons for underground lines: 80% of new Duke customers will be served by underground systems; Duke is putting new hook ups underground. **(Underground lines)**

- Most significant con is the cost. Durham (city) and Charlotte are now underground. In 1991, the cost of a complete conversion from overhead to underground would have cost \$15 billion. The entire value of the Duke distribution system is only \$4 billion. Other studies have shown that the cost of conversion could be as much as \$50 billion.

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- "Duke Power is perfectly willing to put facilities underground and we'll work with communities to do that." We will not charge across the customer base; the customers/areas that benefit from the effort must be the customers/areas that pay for the conversion.

Duke Power employees

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Tim Fowler: No favoritism shown in restoration work. He could not get his mother's nor his daughter's power on for several days because he was trying to get to everyone. He was working about 15 hours per day over an 11-day period.

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Phil Ray: comments incorporated under tree maintenance/right-of-way issues.

Brian Hunt: Proud of service Duke provided to Durham. He's lived in Durham 41 years. Workers had to cut their way out to get to work and came in from vacations. He worked 21 hours on the same day he lost his car and a tree fell on his home. He did not tend to his losses, because he was working on power restoration.

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Steve Cruise: Zone Operations Construction Manager for Triangle area. Murdock Center is on a priority list but did not restore power before Friday, December 6, because other priority facilities on the same substation. Water treatment plant in Butner, Umstead Hospital, Polk Youth Center, Butner prison and Butner hospital. Took 2 days to finish the work. On the first day restored water facility and Umstead and maybe the youth center. On the second day, restored the Butner prison and hospital as well as Murdock and these facilities received power within a couple of hours of each other. Duke proceeded in the most efficient manner.

(Prioritization, Murdock)

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Bobby Wingate:

- Went to work on repair of underground system when he was very sick. Out of state crews cannot get here in a day driving at 60 mph. Duke crews worked from 7 to 7 but they worked over if it would result in a lot of customers being restored.
- **He was in charge of underground outages; they take longer to repair. Underground cables were going out over 3-day period.**
- Sees the tree problem as a city problem, not Duke's. Durham and Chapel Hill particular about tree cutting.
- Workers need to work safe hours (not too long); in the past he has been hit by voltage and it took 4 months to recover.
- Restoration efforts hampered/delayed by everyone talking to workers and asking questions while they were in the field.

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Kenny Gooch: People need to be prepared; help neighbors and check on them. He did these things and then reported to work. Conditions of some main roads hampered travel because even with warning and time to prepare the roads had not been cleared. We all need to be prepared. **(Preparedness)**

The comments of the remaining speakers who addressed the Commission are summarized below in collective fashion according to the general nature of their comments. The 15 remaining speakers were: Steve Boccheno, Victoria Peterson, Joe Capowski, Chester Harris, Joel Kostyu, Barbara Connor, Jerry Barbour, Jackie Brown, Deborah Giles, Michael Shiflett, Jennifer Sosensky, John Dagenhart, Muna Mujahid, Caleb Southern and Cheryl Sweeney.

Customers

Hardships

- Costs of hotel, food, emergency supplies, heaters, generators and other living expenses.
- Real estate closing and moving plans could not be changed; moved from one place with no power to another with no power even though second house served by underground system.
- Patients suffered; hyperthermia.
- Loss of life.
- Loss of business revenue—retail locations and home offices.
- Utility workers were away from families through the holidays; worked in excess of 12 hours per day. Could not tend to their personal property damage or home repair because they worked long hours to restore power. The workers and out-of-state crews were ridiculed and harassed by children.
- Storms such as this one leave some people in a financial bind (out of work and incurring unexpected expense). They need utility to be sensitive to the situation and prepared to make special arrangements for bill payment.
- Speaker already suffering financial hardship related to storm was told by Duke that her power was still out because so many trees still down. She paid men to come cut trees so there would be no damage to her meter box.

Planning/Prioritization Issues

- All businesses and stores had power restored ahead of residential areas. There are sick and poor people who cannot always get out or get to malls. Senior citizens with infirmities could not get out to shelters. They were not necessarily sick enough to be in hospital or other care facility. These people need to be on a priority list.
- Disabled/chronically ill persons need to be on a priority list; Duke told caller that these persons were not on priority list in the case of a storm.
- Belief that Durham was behind RTP on restoration priority list.
- Could mobilization of resources have occurred sooner, allowing quicker restoration of power? It appears there was a 24-hour lapse in mobilization.
- Other parts of our country seem to respond more effectively to winter storms.
- Belief that Durham suffered from antiquated planning. Are there technological advances to be explored that would reduce negative impact of storms in the future?
- Request for thorough assessment of how priorities are set.

- Duke Power short on material and supplies, i.e., substituted #25 transformer for what had been a #50. Need for power company to follow up in the field to reduce future outage due to substituted/temporary materials.
- Prevention/Maintenance: What, if any, program of preventive maintenance has Duke prepared and implemented? Years have passed since speaker last saw Duke workers inspecting lines.

Sufficient crew/lineman staffing

- Speaker indicated crew started leaving a home they had just reached at 6:40 p.m. When questioned, crew responded that they usually worked 15-18 hours shifts, but Duke would only allow them to work 12-hour shift in this storm repair effort.
- Was Duke downsizing its maintenance and repair crews around the time of this storm and could this have contributed to the “chaos?” Is Duke short on experienced workers?
- Are there enough workers to assure adequate response for public health and safety?
- What was the percentage of Duke crews responding to this event versus the percentage of responders that were contractors or from other utilities?
- A majority of speakers had nothing but praise for the work and professionalism of utility crews and linemen they encountered. All appreciated the heroic efforts and difficult work in less than good working conditions.
- Speaker was told she had to assess the damage at her home and tell Duke what clip was connected to wires. She did this, but is not an electrician and thinks Duke should have done the assessment.

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Infrastructure for 21st century

- 21st century distribution system should be mainly underground.
- Physical changes to system should be required to make us less vulnerable to storms.
- Loop distribution system may be preferable to a radial system. Loop system has greater interconnection features that could allow for re-routing in order to maintain service during disaster events.
- Citizens need to be educated; citizen involvement needed as opposed to hiring consultants. We need a diverse group of people from all areas of community serving on a committee to study underground systems and the way to fund conversion. We need to understand the current state-of-the-art for techniques of burying underground utilities.
- Conversion to underground requires conversion in each house; customers could have to pay up to \$1000 for electrical work to switch their homes over to underground system.

- Speaker would like to see underground systems in place. During his three years in New York, he experienced no power outages. Most of the rest of his life has been spent in the Durham/Chapel Hill area where he has experienced some level of power outage about every year. Expense and time of repair may be higher and longer, but that should be balanced against the likelihood of an outage with underground wiring.

Tree maintenance and right-of-way issues

- Unprecedented structural tree damage in this storm, especially to white oaks.
- Much damage to electrical distribution system caused by trees that were 30 feet or more from the right-of-way.
- Suggest site-appropriate tree planting guidelines and practices.
- Need to study tree-trimming options and public needs to be involved for educational purposes.
- In the summer, speaker called City of Durham and Duke regarding falling tree branches and sighting of sparks from electric wires in the branches. Duke finally came out but did nothing; when speaker finally contacted Duke, she was told to call again when she saw sparks again. Speaker then continued pursuing the City; city crew came but could not complete trimming job because City had only one truck and the arm on the truck was broken.
- Trees add to the beauty and well-being of life; they make our area attractive to residents and businesses. These are factors to consider when looking at tree maintenance and pruning.

Communication/Provision of Information

- Would like Duke to provide maps of service areas/power grid; update regularly to inform as to areas without power and those restored to power.
- Duke and local government should educate the people as to the division of responsibilities for tree maintenance between residents, government and power company. People should be taught the difference between different utility lines such as power, phone, cable.
- During first few days of outage, very little information supplied. Little on the radio and phones at Duke Power were not being answered due to the volume of calls.
- It was inappropriate and insensitive to define Duke Power's goal as restoration of 90% by a certain day and then to proclaim the goal was met when others remained without power; the goal should have been 100%.
- Problematic to communicate with those out of power because they had no radio, tv/cable; area for study/improvement.

- A person out of power should not be told he is low priority because of his location; he pays his power bill like everyone else regardless of location.
- It was insensitive of Duke Power to state that rate hike to cover storm-related expenses being considered when power to everyone had not yet been restored.
- Duke employee was testy with caller trying to determine whether power had been restored or some time table when she could expect service. Told her she did not need this information which she was seeking in order to make plans after having been without power for 6 days.
- While speaker's power was out, her electric bill came due. She tried to speak with someone at Duke who could make arrangements with her to maintain service. Due to storm, she had additional expenses and could not pay the bill on time. Received no return phone calls; could never be routed to anyone who could help. In middle of storm crisis, the Duke employees on the phone could only tell her to pay on time or have power disconnected once it was restored. Received response to her needs only after she called the Mayor's office.
- Duke called and got through on speaker's answering machine. Left message that her power must have been on since the answering machine was working, but left no contact information. Her power had not been restored. Her phone service had not been disrupted by the storm.

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Cooperation: Utilities and Government

- Power company should cooperate with local government to plan and be aware of locations designated for emergency shelter. These designated sites should be high priority for power restoration so that the greatest number of people may be served.
- Perhaps power company could supply generators to shelters.
- Utility and government should work together to determine appropriate locations for shelters; close to feeder substations.
- Need good chain of communications plan between government and emergency officials and the utilities.
- Northeast Durham needs a designated shelter.
- Tree trimming program should be studied and planned together.

Shelter operation issues

- If representing that food is being provided, recognize that a number of people are on special diets and dietary restrictions; provide appropriate foods to the extent possible; choice.
- Special needs shelters were available and helpful for those using certain medical equipment; however, the existence of the special needs shelter needs to be better publicized/communicated.

Public Responsibility

- Public should consider having \$30 sump pump on hand to pump water out of basement. Also a \$60 power inverter will operate many appliances, perhaps including a gas furnace.
- Public should be prepared with batteries and candles.

Miscellaneous

- While not the subject of much complaint or discussion, testimony at the meeting did reveal that some in the Durham area were without phone service for as long as six days. **(Telephones)**
- Speaker indicated that she called Duke, the Mayor of Durham and the "Commission." The Mayor's office aided in her contacting the utility but she did not receive a return call from the Commission. <It is unclear from the context whether "Commission" referred to the Utilities Commission or the County Board of Commissioners.>

**SUMMARY OF WITNESS COMMENTS
REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING ISSUES
ARISING FROM DECEMBER 4, 2002 WINTER STORM
Raleigh
January 2, 2003**

Twenty-six individuals addressed the Commission (Sanford, Kerr, Joyner and Wilkins) with comments, questions, suggestions and accounts of experiences regarding the utility outages caused by the December 4, 2002 icing event. Speakers included local governmental officials and Progress Energy employees, as well as a broad range of utility customers (primarily customers of Progress Energy) from Wake County and counties adjacent to Wake. Their comments have been categorized and are provided below in summary fashion.

Page Testimony

Power Company Officials*

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- ElectriCities had 177,833 outages; 44,376 of the outages were in eastern NC and were fully restored by 12/7/02. The remaining outages were restored by 12/11/03.
- ElectriCities matched repair workers from cities unaffected by the storm with those that lost power. 14 cities assisted other cities. Some cities that rendered assistance were from Georgia and Virginia. 27 cities fully repaired their own outages.

Vol 1,
8 **Bryant Brooks, External Affairs Manager,
Dominion North Carolina Power**

- Dominion's basic response to the storm was a matter of restoring power in one concentrated area: Roanoke Valley. Introduced Director of Operations to explain the effort.

8-9 **Joe Woomer, Director of Operations,
Dominion North Carolina Power**

- In preparation for the storm, Dominion deployed three contingents in central Virginia area and moved its contractor work force into central Virginia. Also, obtained pre-commitment assistance from utilities in northern states.
- 80% of Roanoke Valley lost power following the storm and the crews in central Virginia moved to Roanoke Valley to begin restoration work. After 48 hours, only 2000 customers remained without power. Dominion began to release crews to CP&L on 12/6; on Saturday, 12/7, released more crews to CP&L and Duke Power.

Vol 1,
13-18 **Fred Day, Executive Vice President,
Progress Energy (f/k/a CP&L and often referenced herein as CP&L)**

- Mr. Day's area of responsibility: transmission distribution systems and customer service

* Representatives of Duke Power were in attendance but did not wish to address the Commission. They did make themselves available after the meeting to individuals with questions.

- Worst ice storm ever in “this” area; a half million people in CP&L’s central and northern service territories lost power.
- 5000 people plus (from field operations, customer service and storm management) focused on getting power restored as quickly and safely as possible. The employees did an excellent job and made a tireless effort even though many left their own families without power to participate in the restoration efforts.
- CP&L redefines its storm plans every year based on storm experience. Their goal is to do storm recovery better every time.
- Explained three key parts of handout provided to audience: first part is weather forecast and conditions; second part is mobilization effort; third part is restoration results by day.
- CP&L has over 500 linemen and 55 field service workers that are company employees and the company uses contract crews.

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Joanne Griffin, Field Services Representative, Progress Energy

- She was impressed by the teamwork she saw from her peers and higher management. Linemen worked long hours in treacherous conditions. Thanked the community for being supportive of her and also offered thanks on behalf of her co-workers.

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Mitchell Locklear, Progress Energy Employee, Garner Operation Center

- The night of the storm, he reported to the operation center and was dispatched to Holly Springs. He and his co-workers stayed on the job until it was complete. Started with a substation, removed the trees, restored the power, and prepared to leave. At that moment more trees fell and they had to start over. This was the pattern, but they stayed with it until restoration complete.
- His wife and baby were at home without power for about two days before his own neighborhood restored to power.
- Thanked the public for support. The cups of coffee meant a whole lot.

Public Officials

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Bill McNeal, Superintendent, Wake County Public School System

- Having closed the school system on Thursday and Friday, his main goal was to be able to open all 125 school buildings on Monday, 12/9. His team worked the entire weekend on that goal. The team included a team from CP&L. He and the school districts were very, very pleased with CP&L. They remained online with the school system as the schools without

power were identified and they worked quickly to get power to those schools. On Monday, school opened and only one remained out of power. It was in a wooded area where many trees had fallen. **(Communication/Cooperation)**

- He came to say a word of appreciation to the hard-working members of CP&L.
- Four Wake schools were used as shelters: Enloe, Sanderson, Cary and Garner.
- Thinks it was appropriate for schools to open when residences were without power to give children a safe, warm environment during the day.

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John Rukavina, Public Safety Director, Wake County

- Manages emergency medical service, fire, rescue, criminal investigation and emergency management services for Wake County.
- Very early Thursday, 12/5, Wake opened the emergency operation center and before morning's end, a CP&L representative joined them in the EOC to help provide information. It was the first time in speaker's 30-year career that a local utility was able to be that kind of resource and he found it very helpful. Whenever Wake had a question, the CP&L representative provided the information or told them how long it would take to get it. The CP&L representative remained side-by-side throughout with the Wake officials in the EOC.

(Communication, Information)

- The presence of the CP&L official in the EOC allowed Wake to determine where to deploy county resources in terms of the people in greatest need. The information from CP&L allowed the county to know the areas faced with immediate danger and those that were out of danger.
- CP&L has also been very cooperative with efforts to look at storm events for areas of future improvement. CP&L will work with county to evaluate all agencies in terms of emergency operations related to this storm. **(Cooperation between local government and utility)**
- CP&L has worked consistently with Wake County in developing and practicing emergency response plans and in responding to emergencies when they occur.
- County is interested in enhancing electronic information exchange with CP&L.
- For emergency response and preparedness, Wake works with its 13 municipalities and with Orange and Durham Counties.

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John Byrne, Mayor of Fuquay-Varina

- He was very involved in the restoration effort and knows the town officials worked very closely with CP&L. He was aware of CP&L's work and could see the progress of the work almost hourly, though some in Fuquay remained without power as long as 7 days.

- After the 9/11/01 attacks in New York and DC, as part of emergency preparedness, he met with Wake County emergency preparedness, CP&L, and the fire and police departments. This created a partnership and helped him understand the process throughout the ice event outage. This type of coordination is needed and should be encouraged.

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Andy Wilkinson, Village Manager, Pinehurst

- For 15 years, he has enjoyed excellent relationship with CP&L.
- CP&L has always been pro-active and accessible before, during and after storms, and even when there are no problems. CP&L works with all public agencies and willingly participates in critiques after major events. The company is sensitive to the elderly population and responsive to the needs of medical facilities. CP&L also pro-active in right-of-way management. They began an aggressive clearing program in a historic district without public complaint about the tree work.
- CP&L inherited an antiquated system in Pinehurst and invested to greatly improve it.
- During this ice storm, some power was restored within 3 hours of the early morning outage. Schools were able to open in Pinehurst on Friday, 12/6.
- Some recurrences of power outages around Christmas Day when the dinner turkeys were in the oven. CP&L's automated systems took the calls and power was promptly restored. CP&L called the callers back as many as three times to make sure the turkeys were all right.

(Cooperation/Customer Service)

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Dick Sears, Mayor of Holly Springs

- Holly Springs' power went out around 1 a.m. on Thursday 12/5. By 8:30, CP&L called him and explained the restoration status. For the next two days, the company continued to inform him of the status in terms of progress on the power grid. **(Communication/Cooperation)**
- Most in Holly Springs had power restored within 12 and 15 hours. A shelter was opened with the help of the Red Cross for the few without power on the second day of outage. The shelter was needed for only one night.
- Lessons learned from this ice event: (A) communicate, (B) keep the people informed as to status, (C) build relationships with other communities (Holly Springs stayed in contact with Fuquay-Varina and Apex), and (D) have a written plan, especially as to interactions with the utilities. He's already talked to CP&L about sitting with the Holly Springs officials to work on such a plan.
- Was pleased with CP&L's performance.

The comments of the remaining 15 speakers who addressed the Commission are summarized below collectively according to the general nature of their comments. The remaining speakers were: Megan Henderson, Kenneth Underwood, Leah Elkins, Linda Malone, Mike Sykes, Bob Holst, Emily Will, Jimmy May, Luther Carrington, Sheila Ogle, Andrew Givens, Teresa Wells, Sonny Watts, Robert Johnson and John Mattox. While some of the speakers reside in Duke Power's service territory, most of them are Progress Energy ("CP&L") customers.

Customers

Hardships

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 - Many without power for nine days in Durham area. Lost a lot of food.
 - Speaker complained that damage occurred to his car because CP&L worker was working on a line that was across a street. The line had an insulator that bounced on the car causing damage. Only luck kept it from crashing through the windshield and injuring the speaker's wife. Speaker provided pictures and stated that it would have been difficult to have seen the wire. There was no flagman, warning or barrier. The CP&L worker told him that speaker's homeowners insurance would pay for the car damage. Speaker believes it was CP&L's fault and that the company should take care of the damage. He should not have to face higher premiums or pay any deductible.
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 - Customer's father was an at-home hospice patient on oxygen. He did have back-up oxygen and a generator. On Thursday, 12/5, CP&L told the family that his father would be on a priority list and power should be restored by noon on Friday. Power was not restored and every time they called CP&L, they were given a time as to when restoration could be expected. Around 11 p.m. on Saturday, speaker found a lineman and told him he would need to take his father to the hospital unless power would be restored soon. The worker said he would come in a few minutes to take a look; speaker waited two hours and no one came. The next day, speaker moved his father in a room with gas logs, even though he was using oxygen. Speaker called CP&L and was told the power was back on. In fact, the power had not been restored and when informed of same, the CP&L phone worker told him the breakers had tripped. The speaker works for an electrical company and knew the breakers had not tripped; instead, a transformer had tripped. He repeated his plea that someone just come and look. Speaker later found another lineman, explained the situation, and asked him to come take a look. The lineman promised power would be restored by noon. It was not. At 7 p.m., everyone had power except his father's house and one other. The lines were up and a transformer needed to be reset, but speaker could get no one to come out. He got on the road and flagged a lineman down begging for help. This lineman promised to come in 10 minutes and he did. After examining the situation, he told the speaker that a big mistake had been made. CP&L

had recorded the power as being on, though, it had not been restored. Power could have been restored by merely resetting the tripped transformer. Speaker's father's condition went downhill following the ice storm and he died on 12/20.

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Planning/Prioritization Issues

- Duke Power customer from the Durham area complained that Duke had a "pecking" order system for restoration of power. Left home to get kerosene at 7:35 am, Thursday, 12/5. Got through the line and on the return trip at around 10:15, saw eight power trucks going into the Treyburn Golf Course. By 8 p.m., Treyburn customers had power restored. Speaker's power was returned 9 days later. Even with Duke Power using help from other states, it took 9 days to get his power restored.
- It had been stated that prioritization was emergency type facilities first, then the city, followed by the county. Treyburn is neither emergency-related nor within the city. It is a complex of rich and politically powerful people.
- Power company field workers not at fault, but Duke management to blame for not being prepared and taking so long to restore power.
- Power was soon restored in speaker's complex except for one small section. One line needed to be connected to a pole only a few feet from the workers, but they left the complex before completing the restoration job at the complex. Speaker followed the workers' truck to Northgate Mall, where the workers hooked up a stoplight. As a result, the powerless section of the complex remained without power for an additional day. This did not make sense to the speaker.
- Hundreds of people in the Durham area sat in the cold and in the dark on more night because someone at Northgate Mall wanted a traffic light restored to move the cars along. Are traffic lights more important than people in Duke's view?
- Speaker from Durham called Duke and was told by a supervisor that everything was on and everybody was restored. When speaker indicated that she was still without power, the supervisor responded that its records showed that nobody lived on speaker's road.
- The problem in speaker's area (Durham) took two hours maximum to repair. She saw a power truck from Michigan and asked for help on the ninth day of outage. The worker returned with another worker from Illinois and began the restoration work. Then a Duke truck pulled up and

the man inside told the field workers to drop everything and follow him. The Michigan worker refused to leave until power restored in the speaker's area. He told the speaker that nine days outage was ridiculous. The Duke employee gave them a "nasty look" and sped away.

- Does CP&L constantly look at its system and the power grid to see what needs to be improved and/or repaired?
- Speaker lives in Carrboro and is a Duke Power customer. Believes that Duke does not follow set schedule of prioritization but picks and chooses who gets power restored. Her area is predominantly low and moderate income and many are on fixed incomes. The entrance way to her area had power but it was pitch dark when she crossed the railroad tracks. On the other side were more affluent residents and their power was restored on 12/7. She and area public officials (mayor, manager) contacted and received different answers from Duke. On Monday, 12/9, she called Duke and was told her area was scheduled for power restoration on 12/14; that would have been one week after 90% of those around her had power restored. Power was actually restored earlier on Wednesday, 12/11, after she had complained to elected officials and WTVD came and reported the story. She was told that her neighborhood had also been the last restored following Hurricane Fran. Why must her neighborhood always be last?
- CP&L and hospice organizations should get together and put hospice patients on some sort of priority list. Power should go to children and the elderly first—not to the big houses on golf courses.

Crews/linemen and staffing

- Speaker saw Progress Energy workers, men and women, working around the clock throughout the outage.
- The field workers were heroes working long hours in bad conditions. Progress Energy should be honored to have such employees and they should be held in the same esteem as fireman, police and the military.
- Michigan worker told speaker that though he had come from Michigan to help (Duke), he was not allowed to work more than 40 hours per week. Once his 40 hours were met, he had to wait out the rest of the week while people remained without power.
- During emergency work, power companies often release out-of-state crews before everyone's power is restored. This is wrong; the effort should remain all-out until everyone is restored to power.

- Speaker questioned whether CP&L has enough linemen for both NC and SC and asks the Commission to look at the issue.

Communication/Provision of Information

- Duke only communicated to caller that Duke would restore power as soon as it could. Over nine-day outage period, this was all Duke would say. By day seven, his complex restored except for the center where he lived. On day eight, he called Duke and the company indicated that it did not know he was there. Caller indicated he would call his elected officials and on day nine the power was restored.
- Speaker from Durham called Duke and was told by a supervisor that everything was on and everybody was restored. When speaker indicated that she was still without power, the supervisor responded that its records showed that nobody lived on speaker's road.
- Speaker called Duke on Tuesday after all those around her had power restored by Monday (12/9). Duke responded that power would be restored by Wednesday midnight. On Thursday, the area was still without power. A Duke supervisor then indicated that power would be on by midnight Saturday. The power was restored on Friday, nine days after the outage and seven days after everyone around the speaker had been restored. This speaker lost a lot of food due to this delay that seems to have been unnecessary.
- CP&L customer thanked the company for a phenomenal job. She lives in Cary and her power was restored on 12/6, the same day she called to report the outage. CP&L's automated phone message stated that the company was doing all it could to restore the power and asked that callers leave their phone numbers so that someone could contact them later. She was away from home when the power was restored but CP&L left a message on her answering machine. The message indicated that the company believed her power was restored and asked that she call again if the belief was mistaken.
- Power companies need to educate the public that they have choices available to them other than receiving power through the wires from the streets. They are public utilities and this education is in the public's interest.
- Speaker dissatisfied with Progress Energy customer service. The company was unable to get answers to his questions and he did not think they were trained in dealing with irate customers.
- During the outage and restoration effort, Speaker received late evening phone call from Progress Energy regarding a billing problem. This spoke volumes about notable customer service at Progress Energy.

Maintenance/Inspection of System

- Speaker is a retired lineman with 26 years of experience and lives in the Nash County/Franklin County area. He believes some lost power primarily because electric poles had rotted prior to the storm. Preventive maintenance could have prevented some of the outages. Even when lines go down, it takes much longer to restore power when the poles also go down or break.
- Lines could stand to be upgraded.
- While CP&L workers did a good job, some of the work would have been unnecessary if CP&L had engaged in ongoing maintenance and upgrading following the previous emergencies of Hurricanes Fran and Floyd. Bell South came in after those storms and rebuilt their systems. Bell South's lines consequently did not go down when limbs fell on them, but CP&L's did.
- CP&L spends too much money on advertising its name change and entering non-electrical businesses such as natural gas and the internet. This money should be used to put up new and better lines.
- The system has been strained by Hurricanes Fran and Floyd and now this ice storm. It should be looked at and possibly rebuilt, because after this assault it is no longer reliable.

Trees

- Speaker thinks that CP&L's tree maintenance needs improvement.

Infrastructure for 21st Century

- Speaker questions spending millions on underground wiring when technology has moved on to wireless. People can weather power outages by installing rooftop wireless panels and using batteries.
- Move into the 21st century and hook up wireless electricity.
- We should use solar energy rather than waste it by not collecting it.

Public Responsibility/Preparedness

- Speaker never lost power though his electric system did go down. He had rooftop wireless electric panels with batteries that worked faultlessly throughout electric outage. These can be used in lieu of hooking to the electric distribution system or they can be used in addition to the traditional system. Customers are billed similarly in method and amount as they would be by the electric company. People can take care of their own power problem this way but are unaware of this choice. Duke Power has this capability.

Utility Regulation

- Speaker advocates separation of electric generation business from the electric distribution business. Customer service and delivery of quality service are most closely associated with the distribution side of the business. In the 1990s, the companies needed to cut costs in order

to be competitive in the generation market. This led to cost-cutting actions on the distribution side such as the reduction of the number of employees and linemen. Distribution has been sacrificed to a degree in order to be competitive in generation. The public would be better served if distribution were regulated separately and regulation reflected performance during disasters.

Local Government Issues

- Wake County was requiring inspection before CP&L could restore power. This caused delay.

Other counties waived this requirement and left it up to the power companies.

**SUMMARY OF WITNESS COMMENTS
REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING ISSUES
ARISING FROM DECEMBER 4, 2002 WINTER STORM
Salisbury
January 7, 2003**

Twenty-two individuals addressed the Commission (Ervin and Conder) with comments, questions, suggestions and accounts of experiences regarding the utility outages caused by the December 4, 2002 icing event. Speakers included local governmental officials and Duke Power employees, as well as a broad range of utility customers (primarily customers of Duke Power) from Rowan and Stanley counties. Their comments have been categorized and are provided below in summary fashion.

Page Testimony

Public Officials

12 **Steve Blount, Chairman of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners**

- Power at his home was out 4 days following this storm but that is the only time it has been out in four years. Thinks Duke is a very reliable provider of electricity.
- Thanked Duke for its efforts to restore power.

14 **Matt Bernhardt, Assistant City Manager for Utilities, City of Salisbury and Salisbury Rowan Utilities Department**

- Representing the Mayor, City Council and the City Manager at this meeting.
- Salisbury has had a long, very positive relationship with Duke. The city staff and Duke's staff interact well together in all situations such as the recent storm.
- During this storm, Duke stayed in constant communication with the City and was always available to answer questions.
- The City identified needs such as safety priorities and communicated them to Duke. Duke promptly restored power to these identified priorities.

16 **Tim Russell, County Manager, Rowan County**

- Thanked Duke and the electric cooperatives for all they did to help Rowan recover from the storm. Also thanked Landis Power & Light (municipal-owned).
- In anticipation of the storm, Duke had contacted the county about creating contingency plans and setting up staging areas.
- County had healthcare providers in need, but each time a facility was identified to Duke (using a special phone number), the company responded to get power restored.

19 **Wayne Ashworth, Director of Emergency Services, Rowan County**

- Rowan had 70,000 persons affected by the power outages and Rowan declared a state of emergency to enable continued provision of essential services.

- Prior to the storm, the county was in close contact with many agencies and with Duke through the county's primary contact, the Duke District Manager.
- Established procedure was followed to get accurate and complete information to the citizens. Efforts were considerably hampered because both local radio stations were off-the-air for a day. They had no power or generators.
- Both Duke and Landis Power were proactive in keeping the county informed and in promptly restoring service. The utilities were very cooperative in handling the priority sites.
- Speaker's own power was off and when he complained, the Duke District Manager told him that he did not have power either. Duke stuck to the priority lists.
- The experience in Rowan was positive and Rowan is grateful.

22 **Aaron Deese, Director of Emergency Management, Stanley County**

- Stanley County has 5 electricity providers: cooperatives and Duke. They all did a fantastic job in the recovery effort following the storm.
- There is a need for better information from the companies in the future. When Duke released status and outage information, Stanley's numbers were folded into to Salisbury's because Stanley is served by the Salisbury district. Stanley needs the information on the outages specific to Stanley to determine whether a shelter needs to be opened and where it should be. Also, the citizens of Stanley are interested in this information and it would be helpful if it were provided to them through the news media. This problem applies to the cooperatives too. [See Duke's response at 27; will plan to provide information by county in the future.]

37 **Will Crabtree, Director of Business Operations, Kannapolis City Schools**

- Read letter from the system's superintendent, Dr. Jo Anne Byerly. The letter stated that Duke worked very cooperatively with the schools, giving them priority status for restoration. The goal for the schools and Duke was to be able to open the schools on Monday, December 9. Duke met the goal and had power restored by Sunday night. The Kannapolis schools missed only two days as a result of the December 4 storm. The superintendent commends Duke on its effort, commitment and hard work.

57 **Jim Christy, Assistant Superintendent, Rowan-Salisbury Schools**

- (On behalf of Dr. Doby, Superintendent) Thanked Duke and Landis and their employees for their response and assistance. Duke kept in touch throughout as the schools identified the schools without power. 31 of 36 schools lost power. Duke informed them around the clock as power was restored. This communication allowed the schools to move frozen food around to prevent

spoilage. All schools were restored to power by Monday, December 9 and the system re-opened on Tuesday.

70 **F.E. Eisenhower, Town Administrator, Town of Landis**

- Landis has its own power cooperative that is very small. The workers knew the system and that allowed them to restore power quicker. Outside workers were not necessary.
- Landis has an aggressive tree-trimming program but, unless the rights-of-way are 50 feet, it will not stop the outages from a storm like the December 4 storm.

Power Company Officials

9 **Alice Garland, Electricities**

- See summary of Ms. Garland's statement at the meeting in Raleigh, 1/2/03.

25-32 **E.O Ferrell, Senior Vice President of Electric Distribution, Duke Power Company**

- See summaries of E.O. Ferrell's statements at Durham meeting on 12/19/02 and at Greensboro meeting on 1/8/03.

Duke Power Company Employees

38 **Brenda Lowder, Senior Associate Engineer**

- She has worked for Duke for 16 years. Duke employees went into storm mode after learning of the storm forecasted. On December 3 and 4, they began preparing for the worst. They put their personal lives and families on hold to serve Duke and the community. She missed nearly all the family activities surrounding preparations for celebration of the Christmas season.
- She reported to work at 3:30 a.m. on December 5, after hearing the trees fall around her home all night. For the next ten days, she walked the circuits and assessed damage. During this time, safety was a priority both for the public and for the Duke crews.
- For every customer who questioned her about Duke's efforts and the timing of restoration, many more kept the crews going by offering thanks and coffee.
- She was proud to be a part of Duke and to serve the community following the storm.

47 **John Lowe, Lineman**

- Speaker has 16 years of experience and has worked many storms for Duke and other utilities.
- For this storm, Duke used the right people and made the right decisions. It was the best storm outage restoration he has ever worked.
- Individual customers and certain areas were bypassed and left in the dark even though the crews had been in the area. He made his decisions based on getting the most customers

restored as quickly as possible. If he could work 30 minutes and restore power to 10 homes versus working 30 minutes to restore one home, he would bypass the one home and restore the ten homes first. These decisions had nothing to do with wealth or power of the customers.

- Speaker does not know that Duke is doing any more or less tree-trimming than in the past, but, in this storm, it appeared that many of the offending trees were outside Duke's right-of-way.
- Underground is not the state-of-the-art way to go. It results in other utility lines being cut all the time; for Duke it happens on a daily basis. It takes much longer to locate an outage problem and longer to repair it.
- Thankful to the customers who came out to offer coffee and doughnuts to the workers. Some customers hindered the work by coming out to complain, to question the work and decisions made, and to curse at the workers.

58

Brian Morris, Line Clearance Process Specialist, Arborist

- Hurricane Hugo left behind more fallen trees and did more damage to the electrical facilities, but this ice event covered a much larger area and made restoration even more challenging for Duke.
- In this storm, he saw the well-maintained rights-of-way, some trimmed within the last year. However, pines that would never be trimmed by Duke, because they were outside the rights-of-way, fell into the rights-of-way. Many of these pines were uprooted and others were snapped along the trunks.
- Weather events like this ice storm have a cleansing effect on the trees, eliminating trees with defects.
- White oaks are hardwoods that are very strong. Prior to this storm the drought affected them and caused many leaves to remain on the trees into December. Ice on these leaves added weight to the trees and brought down the limbs.
- Tree-trimming or line clearance has improved over the 25 years he has been with the company. The budget for clearance doubled over the last 4 years. Hot spotting or trimming individual problem areas is no longer the method of tree-trimming. Duke systematically trims the rights-of-way according to schedule. The work is audited and assessed to make sure all circuits receive attention and that the clearance work is being done correctly.
- In 1997, Duke received the National Arbor Day Foundation tree line USA award. Before recognizing Duke, the Foundation reviewed Duke's specifications for clearance work, the company's customer communication and education programs, and Duke's worker training programs.

- Asked customers to watch where they plant trees and to choose trees that are compatible with the electric system in terms of growth. Willow oaks that are not going to be pruned need to be 50 feet away from the power lines. Also, asked customers to cooperate with the tree-trimming crews when they come out. The crews know what needs to be cut even if it seems they are cutting too much.

The comments of the remaining 9 speakers who addressed the Commission are summarized below collectively, according to the general nature of their comments. The remaining speakers were: PamaLee Hilton, Andy Hinson, Bill Russell, Tommy Robinette, Charles Buckey, Mike Klutz, Deedee Wright, Ben Martin and Donald Beck.

Customers

Hardships

- Loss of food, increase in gas bills, debris clean-up expense.
- 51 • 7200 volts of electricity came into speaker's home in Spencer, destroying the electrical system in his home; he remains without power since December 5. Duke sent him a letter but has not come to his home to look at the situation before denying his claim. His insurance company has contracted with electrical engineers to examine the situation and its cause.
- 54 • Speaker indicates 3 electricians have been out looking at the electrical problem in Spencer and all 3 have said that the power surge was caused by something the power company did. When the surge came through the homes, it destroyed thermostats, refrigerators, hot water heaters and other appliances. The surge burned and melted the fuses. The customers are having to put in new service. One of the customers had his floor tremble and fire came through the electrical outlets in the home. Duke has denied the claim. So far, this has cost one speaker \$4000.

Trees/Rights-of-Way

- Speaker would like Duke to manage rights-of-way better. On her property, Duke comes in every so often and cuts the trees back. She asks they do this throughout the county to avoid the lengthy outages experienced in this storm.
- The storm outages would not have been as bad if Duke had continued trimming trees on a 2 and 3-year schedule. They have changed over the years to a 3 to 4 to 7-year schedule.
- After the storm, Duke's contractor cut a tree on speaker's property and left the limbs. On the main road, the contractor cleaned up its trimming debris and used a chipper. When he called Duke to complain, the first response was that the customer had to clean it up because it was caused by the storm. He continues to wait to hear back from a Duke supervisor.

- Speaker, who had worked for power company for over 41 years, believes that there are not enough tree-trimming crews today.

Infrastructure for the 21st Century

- Speaker very appreciative of the effort put forth by Duke and its employees, but does not understand why the employees risk their lives dealing with 50-year old technology, traveling the highways, and climbing poles. We should be moving to underground systems and the Utilities Commission should be offering the companies guidance. The companies are monopolies guided by business interests, but the Commission should be protecting the public's interest. The technology should have advanced from where it was 50-60 years ago.
- Speaker has lived in six other states and NC is a good state. However, his power was out six days in this storm and was out 14 days following Hurricane Hugo. He does not ever remember his power being out in the other states. Other states have underground power lines. He recommends that we put lines underground and accept that it will be expensive to do so.
- Speaker wants to know that something is being done to provide or create better protection for lines and transformers in future storms and emergency events.
- Speaker with lineman experience advocates phasing out lines and using "phasing sticks." Has seen "gang-operated switches" that allow for a whole line being restored quicker with one flip of a switch.

Communications/Customer Service

- Nonspecific information provided by Duke to those who called the 800 number did nothing but make customers angry and frustrated. The information available from that number was not current. No matter when the speaker called she continued to receive a message that said over 750,000 customers are still out of power and that power should be restored by December 11. Yet, Duke was unable to provide information about where 10,000 people were working. Duke had to know more about the progress of its workers but the information was not made available.
- Speaker suggests a monthly or quarterly Duke newsletter to inform customers what the company is doing post storm.
- Speaker is on a tap line with 5 other customers and this made her a low priority; yet, her bill is not based on being on a line with only 5 customers.
- Duke communications was just about as bad as the power outage situation. Speaker gave the names and work locations of two workers who were rude on the phone. The speaker did call a number of times hoping for updated information which was not to be had.

Sufficiency of Crews/Workers

- Speaker, who had worked for power company over 41 years, went out looking over the four days his home was without power, and he did not see many Duke trucks around scouting the area. Questions the number of Duke employees now assigned to the Salisbury location. He still sees vegetation and growth in the lines that needs to be cut away, but no one cuts it any more as they did in the past. He thinks more linemen, more service people and more tree crews are needed.

Miscellaneous

- Speaker thanks the Charlotte television stations and the The Salisbury Post for their presence and interest. Notes that the other “local” media have apparently lost interest.

**SUMMARY OF WITNESS COMMENTS
REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING ISSUES
ARISING FROM DECEMBER 4, 2002 WINTER STORM
Greensboro
January 8, 2003**

Twenty-nine individuals addressed the Commission (Ervin and Wilkins) with comments, questions, suggestions and accounts of experiences regarding the utility outages caused by the December 4, 2002 icing event. Speakers included local governmental officials and Duke Power employees, as well as a broad range of utility customers (primarily customers of Duke Power) from Guilford, Alamance, Randolph and Davidson counties. Their comments have been categorized and are provided below in summary fashion.

Page Testimony

Public Officials

8 **Roger Cotton, County Manager, Guilford County**

- Read resolution regarding ice storm that was to be presented to County Commissioners. Resolution resolved that the Board of Commissioners expresses appreciation and gratitude to Duke Power and its employees for their tireless effort to restore power to citizens and businesses in Guilford County and other affected communities.

11 **Charlie Porter, Director of Emergency Services, Guilford County**

- Complimented and commended Duke Power for job well done.

Al Stewart, Captain, Greensboro Police Department

- The police department plans for catastrophic events and, in the course of that work, it holds regular meetings with outside agencies such as Duke Power and other utilities. Duke always attends these meetings and offers anything it can to assist. **(Cooperation Utility/Government)**
- Duke Power liaison called him the day before the storm, gave him numbers to contact, and kept in touch through the night and the next day. The City sent a person to Duke Power to assist in coordination of efforts. Considers their work with Duke Power simply outstanding. He never called Duke without getting an immediate response.
- It was fortunate that City had rehearsed for large scale emergencies.

40 **John Wright, Associate Superintendent for Administrative Services,
Guilford County Schools**

- The School System maintains a good relationship with Duke Power and maintained contact with Duke from Friday, 12/6/02 until power was restored. Speaker contacted Duke on 12/6 after school system had done its own assessment.

- 50% of Guilford's 100 schools were without power following the storm and most of these were served by Duke Power.
- The schools were able to re-open on Tuesday, 12/10/02, due largely to the efforts of Duke Power and its employees.
- There was some food loss due to single-phase restoration when three-phase service was needed and there was some loss caused by equipment not restarting on its own. Without the hard work by Duke Power, the food loss would have been much greater.
- Speaker observed a lot of damage caused by trees. The Guilford System will review its trimming policies and suggests that the utilities may want to do the same.

Duke Power Company

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E. O. Ferrell, Senior Vice President of Electric Distribution, Duke Power

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- This was the worst storm faced by Duke Power in its 98-year history. Almost 70% (1.4 million) of Duke's customers lost power during this storm. Duke's entire service area was impacted. Speaker has been with Duke for 32 years and he has never been prouder of the company's employees or more appreciative of the employees' families and the Duke customers, in terms of their working and coping with the problems created by the storm.
- Duke involved over 11,000 people in the restoration effort. 5200 workers came from 18 states outside of Duke's territory. Crews from the other states were able to come rather quickly because of agreements with the other investor-owned utilities from Texas through the southeast and up to Baltimore, Md. These utilities, including Duke, are members of the Southeastern Electric Exchange. **(Sufficiency of crews)**
- Generally, Duke would move crews from locations not expected to be hit by the storm, but it was not possible with this storm. No part of Duke's territory was clear of the expected storm path and the outages ultimately covered Duke's entire area. Other states south and north of NC were all in the predicted path of the storm and were therefore reluctant to release crews to NC. This delayed crew deployment to some degree. Still, Duke was able to restore power at a rate of 150,000 customers per day.
- After Hurricane Hugo, the total outage was 700,000 customers and Duke restored power at a rate of 40,000 per day over 18 days.
- Following the ice storm of 1996, power was restored over nine days at a rate of 80,000 customers per day.
- Duke answered over 1.6 million phone calls as a result of the storm outages. **(Communications)**

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- The order of priority for restoration following a major outage event starts with critical customers: hospitals, water and sewer treatment plants, and police and fire facilities. Power on backbone feeders is restored next, followed by tap lines. Individual services at the end of the tap lines are restored last. This means that last customers restored to power are those who have an individual problem at the end of a tap line. **(Prioritization)**
- Duke's workers were out restoring power at the same time their own homes had no power.
- Duke suffered a fatality through one of its crew members borrowed from Florida Power & Light. Two Duke line technicians rescued an elderly couple from a burning home in Greensboro.
- Speaker thanked local and state fire, police and emergency workers for their cooperation and assistance following the storm.
- Duke takes its responsibility to its service territory customers very seriously.
- Underground is not a cure-all. It has pluses and minuses. **(Underground lines)**
- The outage experience with underground is 55 to 60 percent of the overhead outages.
- Underground takes longer to repair because the problem is harder to find. Finding underground problems requires specialized work force and specialized equipment. Overhead problem detection much easier and can often be done by untrained customers, thus speeding the repair process. Repair of an underground problem also requires digging.
- The industry estimates the cost of an overhead to underground conversion as ranging from \$500,000 to \$3 million per mile depending on the type of line. For Duke, these conversion figures would mean a total cost of around \$52 billion, when Duke's entire distribution system is valued at \$4 billion.
- 80% of Duke's new construction customers are being connected to underground lines. The City of Greensboro's downtown is served by underground lines.
- Duke is comfortable with underground and will install it but it thinks that those receiving underground service should pay the cost of conversion. It is very expensive. Duke does not want to burden the shareholder with this cost. Each home would also have to undergo a conversion that could cost \$200 to \$300 per home.

Duke Power employees

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Don Coble: lineman for 31 years and the business manager of Local 962 IBEW

- Thinks Duke did all it could to get all the crews in that it could and to restore power as quickly as possible. Believes this despite the fact that the union's relationship with the company is not the best. There were recent layoffs at Duke, but they did not impact time of restoration during this outage event. The layoffs happened after the storm and no linemen were laid off.

(Sufficiency of linemen)

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- Duke employees were not limited to 12-hour days. They had discretion to stay longer if they thought they could return a large number to power.

- As a union leader, he is not happy about the layoffs, the contract that expired around October has not been re-negotiated, and the employees have not received a raise he believes is deserved. Still, he can say that Duke did a tremendous job in the recovery effort following the storm.

- Duke is not perfect and, since the storm, the union and management have discussed shortcomings and how to improve for the next emergency outage. **(Plans to improve)**

28-32

- Underground is not a Savior. The cable gets damaged by new construction. It takes much longer to repair. Underground faults are harder to find. With overhead, even customers and non-linemen can identify where the problem is, but, for underground, special equipment is required just to locate the problem. This equipment is expensive and requires specialized training to operate. **(Underground)**

- Once an underground problem is found, getting to it is another problem. There are other utilities in the ground and they often want 24-48 hour notice to come out and locate so the electric utility can dig. In an emergency, Duke will have to dig without waiting, but often this results in other cable being cut and loss of other utility service.

- Underground cable has to be replaced; it does not last forever. Overhead lines stay forever until something tears it down. **(Underground maintenance)**

- Trees must be cut if we want to keep power. **(Trees)**

Phil Ray: Duke Power employee and certified arborist

- See summary of comments from Durham meeting, 12/19/02

- Putting existing overhead lines underground means having a place to put the lines. There will be many obstacles in existing sites such as sidewalks, fences, trees, various walls, other utilities, etc.
- Speaker has seen more damage done to trees from digging around their roots than he has seen from pruning tree limbs. Placing lines underground may result in massive tree death down the road. **(Trees)**

103

Gregg Fields: Lineman

- His shift was starting when the storm came in on Wednesday, 12/4. His shift is from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- During the restoration effort, it was cold, wet and often dark. Difficult walking in back yards in the dark, watching for down lines, dogs, and boards with nails. Worst enemy for linemen was locked fences. They had to knock on doors at 3 a.m. to get people to open their gates.
- Trees and low hanging lines obstructed travel. Often cut off by a tree and then had to cut their way back out because a tree had fallen behind them too. It was scary walking in wooded area at night looking for a down line and hearing the trees fall and crack all around them.
- Some of the customers curse, badger and even threaten them.
- Duke employees are not the first to have power restored and they can relate to the hardship of being without power for several days.

ElectriCities

76

Bill Crabtree, Communication Specialist, ElectriCities

- ElectriCities is composed of 72 cities that provide electricity. All 72 cities participate in the Emergency Assistance Program, through which the cities come to each other's aid when there are massive outages. The receiving cities pay the salaries of the sending city staff. The cities' staff train together so they are familiar with the procedures of the different cities and will not need a lot of oversight or guidance in order to perform repair work. The cities have been developing joint standards and they participate in joint purchasing programs.
- During this ice event, the cities had a total outage of 177,833 customers.
- Linemen tend to live in or near the area they will service during an outage. This helps facilitate recovery and the speed of recovery. The eastern cities had fewer outages and were restored by 12/7/02. The west had 125,000 outages and were restored by 12/10/02.

- 27 cities restored their own outages and 17 cities sent crews to help other cities in need. Some of the sending cities were in Georgia and Virginia. Five cities sent crews to help CP&L with their restoration efforts.

79

Sam Parcell, Director of Electric Operations, City of Lexington

- Lexington serves 18,000 customers, has 494 miles of line, 9 substations, and 2 delivery points from Duke.
- Lexington fairly successful in constructing and rebuilding system projects so that they are strengthened to withstand the type of storms experienced in the area. Lexington's lines did not come down due to ice load but almost exclusively due to falling trees and tree limbs.
- Lexington does an annual pole and circuit inspection to make improvements and eliminate problems before storms arrive.
- Lexington increased tree-trimming budget from \$150,000 to \$575,000 and the associated effort lessened the impact of this ice storm. If customers had agreed to more tree-trimming there would have been even fewer outages related to this storm.
- Lexington spends \$2 million per year on system maintenance.
- Prior to storm's arrival, Lexington contacted its construction and tree-trimming contractors to be sure they could be available for emergency work. Its own employees were on-call with 2-way radios so they could respond immediately to a call to work. Housing arrangements for workers were already made before the storm arrived.
- With contractors and borrowed workers, Lexington ended up with about 100 workers on the restoration effort.

Organization

45

**Tom Duckwall, Coordinator for Deep River Project,
T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society**

- In 15 counties affected by the ice storm, a combined total of 70 discharges of sewage from treatment plants and pump stations, totaling 22 million gallons, occurred. One spill was at High Point's east side plant where 1.65 million gallons spilled into the Richmond Creek which flows in the Deep River. High Point had already planned a plant upgrade for the current fiscal year, which will include backup generators for the plant. Speaker commends this action noting that it is not a cheap solution.
- Raleigh had backup power but had not tested it. The backup failed after the outages caused by the ice storm and a 9 million gallon spill resulted.

- Orange County's backup power was fully operational and the raw sewage spill was limited to under 300 gallons.
- Wants Secretary of Natural Resources, William Ross, and Chair of the NC Utilities Commission, Jo Anne Sanford, to consider both a broader requirement for backup power at waste treatment plants and the use of underground power lines and/or steel utility poles. When all the multiple effects of sewage spill are taken into account, the costs of these changes to infrastructure may prove justified.
- Wants task force to consider pursuing state and federal aid for solutions to end and curb sewage spills.
- Commends task force for its efforts to improve communications with Spanish-speaking residents and points out that there are other non-English language speakers represented in Greensboro and the surrounding areas.
- Submitted materials for the record.

The comments of the remaining 18 speakers who addressed the Commission are summarized below collectively, according to the general nature of their comments. The remaining speakers were: Frederick Sharpless, Janice Little, Wayne Abraham, Mark Barton, Phyllis Hammett, Margaret Prymuszewski, Hollis Cahoon, Rae and Paul Keane, Dennis Kohut, Sheila Steele, Christina Setzer, Aaron West, Juan Bernacchi, Chris Irvine, Barbara Williams, Sandra Small and Frank Westmoreland.

Customers

Hardships

- 2 deaths in Guilford County: one man died in his home from lack of heat and a woman died from CO poisoning. The woman's daughter critically ill from the CO poisoning.
- Loss of food, hotel lodging costs.

62-67

Communications/Repair Service

- Duke restored power to speaker's neighborhood, but the out-of-state crew indicated a problem with the neutral line that ran to the speaker's home. Still, the speakers were left with the belief that power had been properly restored. However, the speakers soon learned that though power had been restored, the problem with the neutral line, which the crew had seemingly repaired, was serious. An electrician indicated they could burn their home down by running appliances. Phone operators at Duke were rude to the wife and would not accept that she understood the problem. They listened to the husband. They gave the couple conflicting and inaccurate information, such as stating the problem was in the home when the speaker knew different. Duke indicated it had left a note of the problem on the speakers' door, when another operator indicated Duke had not yet been to the home. The speakers

were without power for 6 more days after power had been restored to the 26 homes in the area.

- Duke employee indicated that the out-of-state crews had caused a waste of time because they did not repair the broken line properly. The line had to be replaced completely.
- 83
- Speaker had several very sick people staying in her home because she had not lost power following the storm. She also had not lost phone service. Her neighbor had an oak tree to fall and cause a BellSouth pole with lines attached to break. On Thursday morning, a Duke employee from Duke's Hilltop Road facility, who was driving a Mount Airy truck, came to inspect. He told the speaker that he would be turning the power off until BellSouth came out to replace the pole. She begged the man not to turn the power off, but he promised that if she could get BellSouth to do the work before 11 p.m. when his shift would end, he would come back and restore the power. After several calls, BellSouth was able to replace the pole by 5 p.m. When the speaker called Duke's 800 number, the person on the phone was not able to help her and was not helpful. She was asked for the lineman's name, badge number, and cell number, but she did not have this information. No one was sent to just turn the power back on; she stayed in the cold that night believing the man would return as he had promised. She and her family remained without power for the next four days.
 - Speaker resolved the situation by calling a local number for Duke. The people at the 800 number were no help and they would argue with the caller. "I don't care who told you that, it will be another week." This caused the caller to become more upset.
 - More competition would drive better service. Duke not likely to be responsive to the complaints as long as the customers are captive.
 - Speaker found Duke's customer service unresponsive and unsympathetic to his situation even though he was not giving them a hard time.
- 100
- Power restored to speaker's neighborhood of 81 people but a fire started immediately because a line was on the ground. Fire Department responded but Duke would not come even though there was a crew working a block away. The Duke dispatchers would not send the crew over to help. The fix required only 30 minutes to put the line up and flip a transformer. Power then remained out for another 4 ½ days and 81 people had to leave their homes and find other places to stay. The neighborhood has many children and the wire was left dragging on the ground. Duke showed the customers in his neighborhood no respect.

- Speaker has been in her home with underground wiring for less than three years but her power is constantly going out. She was one of the first homes in the area, but all of the newer homes have power when hers is out and/or she is the last restored. She has been told she is on a separate transformer and Duke has promised to come look at the situation. She pays the same rate as the others and does not think this situation is fair. Even the street light in front of her home will be on, but her house and about 4 others (out of an area with approximately 200 homes) will be without power. Before she moved, she had lived in the same house with underground wiring for 25 years and rarely lost power.
- Speaker does not understand how a number of crews will work in her area and restore power to most of the homes, but leave without restoring her power.

Line/System Maintenance

- The number and length of outages have increased over the 18 years speaker's residence has been served by CP&L and the 10 years his business has been serviced by Duke. He thinks the reason is that the system is being maintained for failure rather than success. Preventive maintenance is not a priority; crews generally come out only when there is a power outage and will not come on receipt of complaints about problems with the lines, such as a line being completely covered by vegetation and tree limbs. **(Preventive Maintenance)**
- Last outage speaker (Duke customer) experienced prior to this ice event was the failure of a 60-year old insulator that the lineman said had turned to dust. **(Equipment, physical plant)**
- The system is getting older every year and we need to examine what we can do to decrease the frequency rate of outages. Maintenance should come before the storms, not after. Hurricanes and ice storms will continue to affect the southeast and to call these events unprecedented is ridiculous. We must plan for and manage them. **(Planning/Prevention)**
- Speaker's residence served by CP&L. Twenty years ago the area in Randolph County experienced very few outages. Over the years, the population grew and the outage frequency increased so much that most people have had to acquire backup power supplies, i.e., generators. Speaker thinks a rate increase to cover maintenance and updating would be preferable to the dollars spent on acquiring and installing back up systems such as generators necessary to run farm operations.
- Glad that Duke would not be passing storm costs on to customers because Duke had the responsibility of maintaining the system, e.g., Duke should have replaced rotting poles that had been tagged as much as a year earlier for replacement.

- Speaker would accept rate increase to cover better maintenance and tree trimming.
- Speaker thinks Duke Power is lousy. She lives in the county (not the city) and Duke has done no maintenance on her road for two years.

Planning/Prioritization of Repair

- Duke needs to give special consideration to the people on its medical alert system.
- Speaker's power went out on Wednesday night in Level Cross, Randolph County. Duke came on Tuesday for the first time just to assess the situation. Speaker thinks that is too long to wait for an assessment. The crew indicated the power would be restored by Thursday, but it was not. According to the speaker, restoration was delayed because the crew was pulled off the job to service a more prominent area.

Sufficiency of Crews/Linemen

- It has been reported in the Greensboro paper that Duke has not added linemen in 10 years. The number of customers in the service area has certainly increased in 10 years.
- More people should work for the power company each year so that adequate pre-storm maintenance can be performed.
- In downtown Greensboro area near Greensboro College, people did not see power trucks in the area before Saturday, 12/7/02.
- The 1960s ice storm seemed worse to the speaker, but there were no complaints then because everyone could see workers all over the area. Speaker lives in Greensboro and, while days passed before she saw workers in Greensboro, she did see 20 or so trucks in Alamance County concentrated in one area. Questions the distribution/deployment pattern of the workers. Also thinks that the hard feelings toward Duke would not have been as bad if people had just seen the workers out working on the system sooner.
- Speaker's friends reported seeing linemen sitting around for two hours straight without working; therefore she questions whether all workers were productive or used efficiently.

Infrastructure for 21st Century

- Speaker understood that out-of-state workers commented that the Duke system serving Greensboro was substandard. Wants the Commission to investigate this charge.
- Speaker's area never lost power following the storm. Her power is delivered by underground lines.
- Speaker favors underground system that is not susceptible to falling trees. Does not expect it to be buried in short order; expects that it could be buried over 20-year period. Believes cost would be justified when all the costs of a major outage are considered and weighed against

the likelihood that we will continue to experience storm-related outages. What we are doing now does not work.

- Insulators that Duke uses in the area are a technology from the 1950s and are not used in modern settings, such as where lines are underground.
- Underground system is preferable to cutting all the trees.
- Speaker enjoys underground lines in her subdivision, but her power goes out with some frequency (every time there is a big wind) because the transformer serving her area is surrounded by trees. Wants Duke to determine a way to move or better protect the transformer.
- Speaker in favor of underground lines. Her power goes out when there are big storms whether in the winter or spring. Her second home in Basking Ridge, New Jersey has underground lines and gets a lot of snow, but she seems to have more power outages here in Greensboro.
- That phone service remained throughout the storm aftermath supports moving to underground electrical system. Phone lines are mostly underground.
- Speaker worked storm damage for Duke over thirty years ago. Believes underground is not desirable because it will cost individual customers a lot of money. He now has underground service and has had three power outages as opposed to one power outage when he received all overhead service.
- Speaker likes underground service and has designed it for new developments, but moving an existing system underground is near impossible with all the tree clearing that will come with the job.
- Speaker indicates that the costs to consumers in terms of lost food, hotel expense, alternative power supply sources, etc. may justify the cost of placing lines underground.
- Speaker suggests that where digging is already occurring for renovation and road construction, the power company should come in and take advantage of that digging to begin placing overhead lines underground. This will greatly reduce the expense of digging.
- Underground costs may not appear so prohibitive next to overhead costs if there had been better maintenance of the overhead system. Overhead costs appear low because the spending for maintenance has been artificially low.
- The State should be a part of moving toward underground system. Government, power companies, and customers should share in the costs.

Trees (Right-of-Way)

- Speaker's business has called Duke for years regarding vegetation/tree growth around pole and transformer. Duke will only respond if the power is already out. He has seen linemen out working on other outages and asked them to come remove the vines, but they respond they cannot do it without a ticket. Tickets are not issued unless one is out of power. Since 1999, speaker's business location has been out of power for several days on three occasions and a number of times for an hour or so. The outage has been due to a combination of the vegetative growth and rain storms. Two days ago, for the first time in 12 years, a tree service came out to cut away the vines and tree limbs.
- In Greensboro, the overhead lines have been moved to back property lines and many residences have fences in their backyards. The public does not want the power company coming into backyards to cut trees, because fences and utility buildings are in the rights-of-way and would have to be moved and later restored. This is expensive.
- Duke should put more of its budget (time and money) into tree maintenance and keeping the system in top shape rather than just responding to problems or emergencies.

Miscellaneous

- When calling Duke Power to report an outage, it helps to give all the information you can. Each pole has a number and often by looking for the damage, caller may be able to pinpoint the damage as between certain pole numbers. This would be helpful to Duke's restoration effort.
- Speaker appreciated the information provided by the media. Suggests that community needs to organize to be sure that those without power are getting the messages, especially about shelter openings.
- Speaker commended the City of Greensboro, the City Police and Duke Power for their handling of the situation.
- Speaker asked who is responsible for clean-up in the aftermath of storm. The debris by the roadside poses a hazard. Also, how is the clean-up effort prioritized?
- Speaker commended the Utilities Commission for good customer service. Was not pleased with the Governor's office nor Duke Power.

**SUMMARY OF WITNESS COMMENTS
REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING ISSUES
ARISING FROM DECEMBER 4, 2002 WINTER STORM
Charlotte
January 9, 2003**

Nineteen individuals addressed the Commission (Conder and Ervin) with comments, questions, suggestions and accounts of experiences regarding the utility outages caused by the December 4, 2002 icing event. Speakers included local governmental officials and Duke Power employees, as well as a broad range of utility customers (primarily customers of Duke Power) from Mecklenburg, Gaston and Catawba counties. Their comments have been categorized and are provided below in summary fashion.

Page Testimony
 Duke Power Company*

7-19 **E. O. Ferrell, Senior Vice President of Electric Distribution, Duke Power**

- See summaries of E.O. Ferrell's statements at Durham meeting on 12/19/02 and at Greensboro meeting on 1/8/03. Additional points summarized herein.
- Through the first day or two of the storm, the only Duke crews that could be dispatched from their home areas to assist in the restoration area were from Nantahala, NC and Hendersonville, NC. The other Duke crews could not be moved because the storm had affected their home service areas. **(Sufficiency of linemen)**
- Duke has a regular cycle for tree-trimming. City trees are trimmed every four to five years. County trees, where the rights-of-way are greater, are trimmed every six to seven to eight years. **(Trees)**
- Duke tracks the performance of its circuits and if it is noted that there are tree-related outages, the tree-troubled circuits are moved up on the tree-trimming priority cycle.
- This storm cost Duke an estimated \$100 million, but there will not be a rate increase to cover it.

Duke Power employees

42 **Henry Wallace: Arborist, Duke Power**

- For over 20 years, he has specialized in managing vegetation and tree issues.
- Over the last 4 years, Duke's funding for line clearance increased 92%. Duke has more tree crews than it has ever had on the system on a daily basis. The tree crews handle issues such as plant maintenance and vegetation clearing. In 1999, the tree crews were covering around 3500 miles per year and now they are covering about 6500 miles per year. These increases translate into increased reliability of the system.

* Representatives from ElectriCities, Energy United, and Union Power Cooperative were present but made no statement or presentation.

- In this storm, Duke saw whole pine trees breaking off from outside of the rights-of-way into the rights-of-way. White oaks and will oaks caused problems. Strong, large hardwoods were breaking and in many cases the leaves were still on the limbs making them even heavier due to the ice accumulation.
- The public has not supported a high level of pruning in the urban community. Duke does directional pruning, i.e., pruning at the limb junction. Duke tries to maintain a consistent pruning cycle so that half of the tree is not being pruned away each time the tree is on the cycle.
- Speaker believes that it is important to educate the customers about the tree-trimming process and that customers receive advance notice prior to pruning activity affecting them.

59

David Phillips, Lineman

- Duke linemen started preparing on Tuesday, December 3. They packed clothing for 5-10 days. On Wednesday, the day started with rain and the linemen prepared trucks for storm response to handle outage repairs. Speaker was part of a west zone team. There was only one outage on Wednesday due to a broken pole and power was restored the same day.
(Preparation)
- Late Wednesday night speaker's power at his home went out; the next morning he was up getting ready for work in the dark. His work group reported to a substation and began working down the main line starting with a circuit. Before the day's end, his group had all circuits out of that substation back on. Repairing circuits did not restore power down the line but this is the order of restoration work.
- The next day speaker stayed in the same area but was pulled off to another substation where a circuit that supported two nursing facilities and the Presbyterian Hospitals was still down in spite of ongoing restoration efforts. **(Prioritization)**
- Workers were set up on a 12-hour shift, but that did not mean they worked only 12 hours. One day his group worked 20 straight hours. After working through to the second weekend with the work nearly completed, the decision was made to let half of the workers off on Saturday and the other half off on Sunday. By Monday, December 16, they were back to the regular work schedule, though they were still doing storm clean-up.

- Speaker has 20 years of emergency restoration experience and he has worked most storm outages during that time. He thinks the effort for the December 4, 2002 storm ran as smooth if not smoother than all of the others. This includes working winter storms in Detroit and Hurricane Andrew damage in Florida during the early 1990s.

65

Tom Smith, Retiree

- Speaker retired from Duke after 35 years. Duke called him during this restoration effort and asked him to help with scouting. He spent about 70 hours working the Gastonia area following up to make sure all lines were back up. It was evident to him that in the 3 years since his retirement, Duke had remained committed to going the extra mile to insure customer service. Policies had been put in place for survey teams to do this follow-up work.
- Speaker now lives on fixed income and would hate to see rate increases that would be necessary to finance an underground conversion.

67

Barry Kirkman, Lineman

- Speaker has worked for Duke for 25 years. He has worked Hurricanes Andrew and Hugo and ice storms in the north. He thinks the restoration effort for this December storm went just as well as the others he has worked. The days are shorter in December causing them to get an early start every day. It hurt the linemen to leave people out of power each night, but they did all they could do as quickly as they could. Safety concerns caused them to cut off work sooner with the arrival of darkness.

70

Stephen Wilkes, Distribution Lineman

- Speaker has worked for Duke over 17 years. During the storm recovery efforts, he worked out of Matthews and he worked the Matthews, Indian Trail, Stallings and Charlotte areas only. He worked from 5 a.m. to 8 or 10 p.m. for eight straight days.
- Speaker proud of his work with Duke. Co-workers worked long hours and everyone wanted to push on and get the job done. Thanked the customers who were kind to offer thanks, food, and drink. Thanked the out-of-state crews who were necessary to the effort. Thanked those who were at the office, who manned the radio, stocked the warehouse, and kept trucks equipped and repaired. It was a total team effort.

Public Officials

21

Pat McCrory, Mayor, City of Charlotte

- He is a 23-year employee of Duke Power.
- His power was out for 5 days following the storm.

- Charlotte and Mecklenburg are very proud of their emergency response team that went into action immediately following the ice storm. The utilities are a part of the team along with the Red Cross, the police and fire departments, and the county health department. The team worked together coordinating resources and communications. Regular press conferences to get information to the public were held every three hours during the first two days after the storm hit. Radio was very important to this effort and TV was also an outlet.
- The team coordinated working out traffic intersection issues, down lines, tree-trimming, and debris clean-up.
- The mayor worked with the chair of the board of commissioners to make emergency declarations and to get assistance from the Governor's office. The Governor's office helped tremendously.
- Through the emergency response team, areas for improvement were identified. Local government needs to develop a way to prioritize emergency power needs and find a way to communicate that to the utilities. Charlotte had communications lines down, police stations out of power, and the county health center which distributes food stamps was also powerless. After the 2d day of the event, the team realized that government needed to prioritize and convey the priority to the utilities. Ultimately, the fire and police chiefs, along with the emergency manager got together in one room and set the priorities.
- Communications with the international community is another area for improvement. Charlotte has a large Latino population that is not accustomed to cold weather and many have not been in the area long enough to have mastered English. There was a coordinated effort to communicate with this population through Spanish radio.
- A third area for improvement is in education of the public about how to survive power outages.
- Thanked all the people who helped with power restoration and debris clean-up in Charlotte and thanked the people of Charlotte for their patience, care and generosity. He is not aware of any price gouging in Charlotte during this crisis event.

27

Dan Ramirez, Vice-Chair, Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners

- We need to think more about the international community in the midst of these emergency situations. These non-natives take two blows: the event or storm itself and the inability to process and understand it in the aftermath because of the language barrier. He is proud of the way the community opened its arms to all to help.

- The impact in the international community is usually great because many tend to live in older neighborhoods where the power system is older and most vulnerable to severe weather events.
- Commended the work of Duke power employees.
- Communications with the international community could be improved. It would help to have one number to call. However, the purely or heavily automated systems do not work well for those with language barriers for whom English is not their first language.

30

Wayne Broome, Director of Emergency Management Office, City of Charlotte

- After this ice event and several other emergency situations of recent years, he is looking at development of a severe weather management team, including the national weather service. This should improve communications and insure that when Charlotte calls for assistance, a live person, rather than an automated menu, will be at the other end to answer questions.
- In communicating with Duke following weather-related outages, speaker requests a Duke representative to join his emergency command center. Over the years Duke has always met the request. Duke would be part of the severe weather team he is developing.
- Charlotte wants to improve the communications issues with the international community. For this event, technology was assisted with communications. Charlotte is currently looking at an expansion of technology as a way to improve communications with the international community.
- Charlotte and Mecklenburg County will be implementing CERT, a FEMA program to involve citizens and communities in working and helping each other through emergencies such as those caused by severe weather events.

35

David Kraus, City Manager, City of Mount Holly

- The storm clean-up and power restoration effort required much cooperation. With large trees down and power lines entangled with them, coordination between police, fire, the Gaston County Emergency Operations Center and Duke was needed. Duke was helpful and notified Mt. Holly officials immediately when the storm happened. Duke kept in touch throughout. When the city realized that sewage was not being treated because of power outage, Duke was consulted and electricity was restored to the sewer plant within hours. The police and fire stations and nursing homes also had power restored almost immediately. These places were part of Duke's prioritization plan.

- Next, grocery stores and restaurants had power restored and this helped those in need of food.
- Duke helped remove trees and clear lines that were down.
- Mt. Holly thanks all who helped in the recovery and is grateful it was not overlooked even though it is a relatively small city.

53

**Phil Berman, Executive Director for Building Services,
Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District**

- The Charlotte-Mecklenburg system is the largest in NC, serving over 110,00- students in 147 schools and several additional sites. The system has a plan for system-wide emergency events. Weather forecasts on Wednesday, December 4, alerted the system to the possibility that the plan would need to be implemented. On Thursday, December 5, his team mobilized in the command center where an emergency power source was available.
- 75 of the 147 schools were without power at one time and 45 of the schools had blocked access ways, either on public roads leading to the schools or on access ways on school property.
- Power outages at the schools presented certain safety and security risks, such as fire safety issues. The schools faced potential equipment damage from the outage and from the sudden restoration of power without proper preparation. Structural damage, food spoilage, debris clean-up, and the restarting of electrical systems and HVAC all had to be addressed.
- For emergency response operations, the school system has a liaison with the utility providers. The level of cooperation and teamwork from Duke was excellent and it was critical to the schools' successful response effort. Duke promptly established a 5-member team dedicated to coordinating power restoration to the schools. School officials maintained 24-hour contact with Duke. Duke assigned one primary contact person in addition to the account representative. School electricians worked closely with Duke. This coordination was key to knowing exactly when power was restored at each facility. Having this timing knowledge allowed the electricians and HVAC technicians to protect equipment by knowing when to restart/reset equipment.
- The teamwork with Duke allowed the schools to communicate credibly to personnel regarding school closure decisions.

Organizations

69

Ron Smith, Vice President of Corporate Services, Carolina's Healthcare System

- Carolina's Healthcare lost power to 85 facilities in Mecklenburg County. Their staff worked with Duke staff to restore power according to priorities that Carolina's Healthcare had set. Power was restored to all bedded facilities by Saturday, December 7. Thanked Duke for its work in promptly and systematically restoring power to all of their facilities by Wednesday, December 11.

The comments of the remaining 18 speakers who addressed the Commission are summarized below collectively, according to the general nature of their comments. The remaining speakers were: Robert Vollinger, Dan Kincaid, Tony Aberson, Terry Alston, Thomas Templeton, Gary Sunter and Ms. Driscoll.

Customers

Hardships

- Closure of businesses/loss of revenue, loss of food, hotel and lodging costs, people out of work, loss of productivity.

Infrastructure for 21st Century

- Speaker would like power lines buried underground and thinks that if Duke can continue spending millions to build new power plants across the U.S., and to upgrade a power plant in California, and to build a Canadian pipeline, it can afford to bury some power lines. She pointed out Duke's earnings and revenue figures for 2000 and noted that Duke admitted to a \$12.75 million accounting error. Duke should use some of its money to at least bury lines in the areas most often hit.
- Speaker thanked BellSouth whose service has never failed her on the six occasions she lost electricity and suggested that BellSouth could share its secret with Duke.
- Speaker states that underground service is less likely to be disrupted by storms and motor vehicle accidents.
- Underground distribution is the norm in other countries and use of underground lines is growing in the US.
- Municipal-owned utilities are much more aggressive in converting to underground than are investor-owned utilities. The state of California has been active in moving to underground distribution.

- Since overhead distribution will remain in some form for some time to come, standards are needed regarding the diameter of poles, the strength of poles, the placement of poles and the type of materials used.
- Underground distribution has more visual appeal—something that will be good for the state's economy as it becomes more reliant on service and tourism industries. Moving unsightly lines and numerous poles will require involvement of electric utilities, telephone utilities and the Department of Transportation.
- The Utilities Commission is urged to make a funding recommendation along with its report concerning underground cable. Investor-owned utilities and the cooperatives will continue to resist use of their funds for this purpose. There are other ways to fund this project. FEMA is providing \$6.2 million to bury 88 miles of power lines in certain beach cities. A recommendation will provide our counties and the 525 municipalities belonging to the NC League of Municipalities a focused method of funding a conversion from overhead to underground lines.
- Horizontal directional drilling should allow us to take advantage of opportunities to put power lines underground at low cost and with minimal disruption.
- Speaker wants Commission to look into the viability of some distributed generation where the power generation source is close to the facility being supplied with electricity. This could be used for traffic lights and at other larger facilities depending on viability. It could be helpful particularly in emergency situations. This could be an alternative to burying cable and could alleviate the problems with overhead lines.
- Speaker thinks the Commission meetings have not focused on ways to avoid similar outages in the future. Underground may or may not be the answer but alternatives that are less vulnerable to outage should be explored. Commission should independently study the costs associated with conversion and not accept Duke's word regarding the costs. The costs associated with outages are not just Duke's but individuals and businesses that lose revenues during power outages.
- Speaker advises that low-ground voltage works underground but that high voltage lines should not be underground for safety reasons related to restoration. High voltage lines are safer when overhead.

Sufficiency of crews/linemen

- Speaker finds it unacceptable that a company the size of Duke would have consumers wait more than two days for restoration of power. Suggests Duke hire or contract with several hundred more people and have them ready to work sudden power outage situations. She also suggests that Duke purchase more trucks to accommodate a growing customer-base.

Communications/Customer Service

- Speaker states she is not a happy camper. She has been frozen out of her home three times in six years. Her power goes out with every major storm. Others, who do not pay extra for the security of always having power, have not lost power once. Speaker wants that same surety. Over the years, she asked Duke for help in moving her line or burying it and Duke has always responded that any such action is impossible and would bankrupt the company. She has the names of the Duke officials she has spoken with about this.
- Speaker thinks that Duke was ill-prepared and should reduce customers' bills for the unnecessary lengthy outages following the storm.

Trees/Rights-of-way

- Speaker loses her power frequently and following every major storm. The problem is the 10-foot alley right-of-way registered in her deed, which Duke has failed to maintain. It is completely grown up and trucks cannot get in it at all.

Planning/Prioritization

- Speaker urged Duke and the City to devise and execute a solid contingency plan. It is unacceptable to say the south is not prepared to handle inclement weather conditions.
- Speaker, an experienced power worker who contracts with Duke, indicates that hospitals are not an essential priority customer during storm outages because they usually have enough backup generation on site. The essential customer would be areas of distress like the Latino communities that had huge trees down and lots of people in the area.

Miscellaneous

- Speaker asks whether Duke is going to absorb the restoration costs following this storm. [Duke will absorb; see response at page 89.]
- During outages, people should put their dogs up and out of the way of linemen coming through to work and spot damage. If people put them up for meter readers, they should remember to put them up for storm repair workers.

**SUMMARY OF WITNESS COMMENTS
REGIONAL PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING ISSUES
ARISING FROM DECEMBER 4, 2002 WINTER STORM
Henderson
January 14, 2003**

Thirty-four individuals addressed the Commission (Joyner and Kerr) with comments, questions, suggestions and accounts of experiences regarding the utility outages caused by the December 4, 2002 icing event. Speakers included local governmental officials and Progress Energy employees, as well as utility customers (primarily customers of Progress Energy but also of Duke) from Vance, Granville and Warren counties. Their comments have been categorized and are provided below in summary fashion.

Page Testimony

8-15 **Fred Day, Executive Vice President,
Progress Energy (f/k/a CP&L and often referenced herein as CP&L)**

- Mr. Day's area of responsibility: transmission distribution systems and customer service.
- Worst ice storm ever in "this" area; a half million people in CP&L's central and northern service territories lost power.
- 5000 people plus (from field operations, customer service and storm management) focused on getting power restored as quickly and safely as possible. The employees did an excellent job and made a tireless effort to participate in the restoration efforts, even though many left their own families without power.
- CP&L redefines its storm plans every year based on storm experience. The goal is to do storm recovery better every time.
- Explained three key parts of handout provided to audience: first part is weather forecast and conditions; second part is mobilization effort; third part is restoration results by day.
- CP&L's restoration priorities: facilities related to public health, such as hospitals, nursing homes, shelters, fire and police are restored first; next, the main distribution lines and the primary lines are restored. The goal in resource allocation is to restore power to the most people as soon as possible.

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- Progress Energy uses an automated phone system to receive outage reports, because in a major outage situation, it is the best way to receive all the calls. Otherwise, there are not enough lines to handle all the calls. It is the best way for customers to communicate outages.
- When main feeder lines are restored, it is more difficult to determine and accurately communicate through the automated phone system whether smaller tap lines are back on. Progress Energy is always working to improve communications in this regard. Hearing the shortcomings and bad experiences of the customers is helpful to the company's efforts to improve.

Progress Energy Employees

48 **Don Williams, Field Service Representative**

- Has worked for the company for 26 years. It is his job to provide support for line crews and out-of-town crews working major events such as the December 4 storm.
- Commends the people of Henderson/Vance area. They were out of power for lengthy times, but were always nice to the crews. One neighborhood was grilling food outside and neighbors brought some to the crews. The out-of-town workers asked if the people “here” were always so nice. It inspired the workers to work longer than normal to restore power to “these good people.”

53 **Ryan Drake, Lineman**

- Thanked the public for their kindness and support. It was a frustrating, battle zone type of operation, but the people were very kind and kept them supplied with food.

Public Officials

15 **Robert G. Young, Jr., Mayor, City of Henderson**

- Commends Progress Energy for an outstanding job in storm recovery work. Progress Energy kept the Mayor and the emergency management team informed throughout the ordeal as to status, how many people were working, and the problems encountered.
- He has received word of more compliments than complaints regarding storm recovery, which indicates that Progress Energy’s performance exceeded expectations.
- In Henderson, over 600 poles, 700 transformers and 7000 spans of wiring had to be replaced. It was all accomplished in 8 to 10 days. The Mayor’s scouting of the situation had led him to believe the recovery could take a month because the devastation was vast. However, Progress Energy brought in 800 or 900 people and completed the recovery in short order.

18 **Terry Garrison, Commissioner, Vance County Board of Commissioners**

- Progress Energy responded, as it did for Hurricane Fran, with a swift effort of response and a large number of workers and trucks coming to Vance County.
- Commends Progress Energy for its effort to restore service to Vance County.

19 **Jerry Ayscue, County Manager, Vance County**

- The storm damage was extensive and unprecedented in Vance County. Communications were diminished by the storm and this hampered the work of emergency personnel. The emergency response was directly related to the progressive efforts of Progress Energy to restore electrical power. Reconstruction by Sprint was also related to the efforts of Progress Energy.

- Progress Energy was an integral part of the emergency management process, and both Progress Energy and Sprint were exceptionally helpful in providing information and collaborating with public officials.
- Vance County applauds the efforts of its public utilities in restoring service and is extremely pleased with the response the area received under such dire circumstances. The response was excellent.

23 **Gloria Jefferson White, Member of Vance County Board of Education**

- Commends Progress Energy on its efforts.
- Her one complaint concerns communications. When calling the Progress Energy outage number, she never received the same information twice. The answer seemed to vary with whomever took the call. She was specifically referring to the forecast times for restoration. Also, the company promised to notify callers if the estimated times changed but this did not happen. Communications were frustrating, but the efforts of Progress Energy to restore power were commendable.

24 **Margaret Ellis, Chair of Vance County Board of Education**

- Speaking as an individual customer. It was a learning experience for her. The radio station was on the air because it had a generator. She works with one of the stations so she was able to get some additional information that the public could not get at first. After she was able to comprehend the extent of the damage, she understood why power was slow to be restored and thinks the utilities did a good job. She thanks them and appreciates their efforts.

26 **Brian Short, Director 911 Emergency Management, City of Henderson**

- Power company workers deserve praise and gratitude, not complaints. The storm destroyed half of the state's power infrastructure, which had taken years to build. Amazingly, the workers essentially rebuilt half of the system in just 10 days.
- Speaker witnessed citizens in a restaurant complaining to workers, who had taken a break to eat. The workers took the criticism without much rejoinder. When the complainers left, speaker could see that the workers had a look of despair as if their efforts were not appreciated. He went over and thanked the workers.

29 **Tom Williams, Superintendent, Granville County Schools**

- Came to express appreciation to the three utilities (Progress Energy, Duke Power and Wake Cooperative) serving the schools in the district. 13 of 14 schools had power returned by Sunday, 12/8. There was very little loss of food due to the prompt restoration of service. The

last school had power restored on Monday, 12/9 and the system was able to open on Tuesday, 12/10. This is the first day that road conditions would have allowed them to open.

- Cautioned against a common cause solution for a special cause effect.

Organizations

Greg Griggs, President, Henderson/Vance Chamber of Commerce

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- Commends Progress Energy and its employees for the tremendous effort to restore power. Hospital and a food distribution center were restored in a matter of hours. The large majority of retail businesses were back on within 48 hours.
- In neighborhoods, the work often took a long time, but the workers stuck with it. Many of them were from Florida and were not accustomed to the cold or to ice. Nevertheless, they persevered and performed well. Many workers did not break for lunch, but people took lunch to them in the field. Speaker does not know that anyone could have done it better or faster.

87

James Green, President, Local Chapter of NAACP

- The impact of a major storm such as the December 4 storm has a disproportionate impact on the economically disadvantaged. These are the people who can least afford to be without power. They do not have economic resources to go out of town or to hotels. They cannot afford alternative sources of power and heat, and they cannot afford to dine out or replace lost food. The impact of this storm was particularly hard in Vance County which had one of the highest unemployment rates in the state at the time of the storm. Speaker indicates that Vance County has a disproportionate number of people living in substandard housing.

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Allen Kimball, Director of Economic Development, Warren County

- He was very pleased with CP&L's super response to the storm. They did a super job considering the number of employees available to them. Perhaps their service has slipped a bit in terms of the number of people they now have available to them following corporate downsizings.
- All except two businesses in the area were restored to power within 48 hours.
- Suggests that there is room for improvement in the communications area. He listened to the explanation of CP&L priorities but, after listening, he still was not quite certain of what the priorities were. It would have been nice to have had a clearer understanding.
- Overall, CP&L did an outstanding job.

The comments of the remaining 21 speakers who addressed the Commission are summarized below collectively, according to the general nature of their comments. The remaining speakers were: Evelyne Hester, George Dickie, Robert Duke, Patricia Newsome, Randy Umstead, Ralph Ellington, Billie Ayscue, Joanne Carpenter, Kathleen Erikson, Bill Edwards, Lonnie Wright, Richard Henderson, Phillip Chappell, Tracey Taylor, John Catlett, Duane Townes, Ginny Dudek, Andrea Harris, Dwayne Nykamp, Pat Braim and Robert Fuller.

Customers

Hardships

- Caring for toddlers and infants without power for an extended time; exhausted finances getting food and water for children.
- Speaker's power bill went up substantially, though her power had been out 8 days. No one at CP&L could explain nor give her a break though she had exhausted her funds to cope with the power outage. [Mr. Day said the company would follow up.]
- Loss of food; expense of dining out.
- Speaker's power bill increased substantially though he only had power for 3 weeks during the billing cycle.
- It was frustrating to see the CP&L trucks at the hotels, though they have to have a place to rest, when speaker's family could find no place to stay because there were no vacancies. It was also frustrating to see the trucks at eating establishments, because she did not have food at home. Speaker admits her patience wore thin near the end of 8 days without power. Speaker would rather the trucks be hidden from view in these situations.
- Speaker's yard damaged by CP&L and he has not been able to have anyone address the problem. The phone operators have told him on several occasions that someone would call, but that has not happened yet. [Mr. Day addressed the speaker, took his contact information and promised to look into the matter.]
- Speaker's December Duke Power bill was estimated and was the highest ever.

Communications/Customer Service

- It was suggested that, in large scale outage or emergency situations, customers need a number to call that connects them to local people in the area, who understand the local concerns and the local customers. Automated answering systems that connect people to non-local operators, after having had to go through multiple layers of menus, is very frustrating.
- Suggested that power companies publicize the general priority schedule during a situation of massive outages so that the public can better understand what is occurring and get a better self-understanding of how long outages will continue.

- Customers need some kind of idea as to when they can expect power restoration. When they do not have any type of reliable information, they remain in anticipation and this leads to them calling the power company over and over. If speaker had known that it would be eight days before the company would restore his power, instead of being told “tonight at 9”, he could have made better plans.
- Speaker believes that his power should have been restored in 4 days rather than 8, but he could not get anyone to understand that a breaker reset was all that was needed. Instead, he was told that his power had already been restored when he knew that it had not. He could get no one to listen to him. Further, speaker received automated phone call from the power company that indicated his power had been on since 6 p.m. He called the number left on the message at 8 p.m. The person who answered argued with him telling him that he had power when he did not. When the truck finally came out to check, the worker agreed the breaker was out. Better communications would help such situations.
- Speaker gives Progress Energy’s communications an F grade though she rates the field workers as A+. She had no problem with being out of power for 8 days; she was out longer with Hurricane Fran and viewed 8 ½ days as an improvement. However, she has to keep a water supply for her farm animals and she could have planned better if the phone operators had not given her bad information. The operators, per their own admission, read from a script and basically always told her the power would be back on the next day, though it in fact took 8 ½ days to restore her power.
- Speaker’s power was out 8 days. She called Progress Energy twice every day and the phone operators were sympathetic. However, they would ultimately give her four different deadlines as to when she could expect her power to be restored and none of the time frames were met. The operators did not have the correct information as to what was happening in the field.
- Speaker does not like the automated phone system; it was frustrating to speak to a computer.
- One neighborhood of 200 people had no line damage. They walked the lines and they were fine. Yet, they remained out of power for 8 days because they could get no one out to switch their power back on. Furthermore, they resented having to speak with an operator in Florida about their Granville County situation. This location issue likely led to the poor communications. Speaker submitted a petition of over a hundred names and indicated that the entire area was in agreement except for those with employment ties to CP&L.

- Speaker resented speaking to operators in Florida who could not understand his problem. He tried going to the CP&L office but could not get any one to talk with him. He thinks there should at least be a number for Henderson residents to call and leave a message for someone in the local area.
- Speaker from Warrenton felt neglected because she lived off the main road. There were about 20 trucks working her area. Crews would promise to come and check on her road, but no one did. The phone operators always told her the power would be back on the next day, but it did not come back on as indicated. Furthermore, a phone operator argued with her stating that she had power when she did not. She had a hard time getting anyone out to her house even after the others receiving power from her line had power restored on Monday. Finally, on Thursday someone came out and all that was needed was replacement of a fuse.
- Speaker near downtown Henderson kept receiving an automated message that his power had been restored but it had not been restored. Power to those around him was restored early on, while his power was out for six days. Another speaker complained that she kept receiving false phone messages that her power had been restored and the phone operators also caused her hopes to be dashed by telling her she could expect her power the next day, then the next day and so on. Her power was out eight days.
- Speaker's utility pole in her back yard is leaning and out-of-state crews propped it up with a piece of pine that will rot quickly because it is sitting in water. Duke told the crews that they would come out to correct the situation right away. On January 6, the speaker called because the problem remained. Duke could not provide a time frame as to when they might come out to rectify the situation.
- Automated phone systems are not effective for the elderly population. Many still have rotary phones and even when they have push buttons they are not able to follow a menu that never gets them to a person they to whom they can speak. Speaker encourages Commission to look at incentives to encourage utility providers to locate their call service centers in the state where the service is provided. We need to look at better ways of serving the elderly and meeting their special needs. Speaker further suggests that the utilities should consider staffing service call centers with people from the local area being serviced so that operators will understand the geography and other matters unique to a caller's situation.

Planning/Prioritization

- Speaker upset that he lived near the heart of the city and watched trucks pass by everyday and restore power to those all around him while his power remained out for 6 days. Feels his area/street was a low priority for CP&L. He is appreciative of the work effort but feels no need to commend the company for a service he pays to receive.
- Speaker thinks that power companies should find some way to move areas with large elderly populations up on the priority list as much as is feasible.

Trees/ Rights-of-way

- Consumers are often attached to trees for sentimental or other reasons and do not want the utilities to trim them. Speaker suggests cutting them now while this storm situation is fresh on the public's mind. Perhaps, they will not strongly object to the trimming now.
- Duke Power customer brought pictures of her yard showing the Duke Power easement. It is poorly maintained and full of poison ivy. Out-of-state workers (two crews) who finally came to restore her power said they had never seen power lines so poorly maintained any place in the nation.
- Speaker's neighbor had complained to Duke for 10 years of a rotting pole that is in a swampy area in the Jordan Lake flood plain. When the out-of-state workers had to replace the pole, they had to be pulled out of the mud and did a lot of damage to the neighbor's yard. If Duke had tended to this problem at any point over the course of 10 years (for example, the past summer during the drought) this would not have happened.
- Speaker from southern Durham County near RTP is a Duke Power customer and the power in her area is out frequently for extended periods. She thinks there is an underlying, pre-existing problem, not related to the ice storm. The problem is that Duke does not maintain the lines and the rights-of way.

Sufficiency of Linemen

- Speakers ask that we step into the shoes of the linemen and ask if we could have done the job as well, with little thanks but lots of complaints and criticisms. Speakers very appreciative of the tireless efforts of the power company workers.
- Duke Power does not have enough people working on line maintenance and tree-trimming.

Infrastructure for the 21st Century

- Speaker's house is served by underground lines; yet, his power was out nine days when everyone around him had power. Underground not necessarily better.
- Speaker advocated underground lines for those areas that are frequently losing power and have overhead lines that are considered high-risk because of their location, etc.

Miscellaneous

- Speaker asks the Commission to consider having any surplus from utility regulation applied to a fund to assist the elderly, the disabled and pre-school aged children to have and/or be able to afford heat in the winter.
- Speaker against deregulation of utilities and thinks that service would not have been as good during storm ordeal if customers received power from non-NC corporations.
- Speaker encourages Commission to look at incentives to encourage utility providers to locate their call service centers in the state where the service is provided.
- Especially when serving the elderly, all utilities should consider having a physical presence in the local service areas where people can pay their bills.

Commission Meeting

- Speaker complained that the Commission hearing started with the elected officials first. The result was that these public officials did not stay around to hear the comments, concerns and praises of the people. Also, these public officials and what they have to say is not any more important than what the other people have to say.