

December 2008 Ice Storm Comments Received

170 comment forms received to date (4/23/09)

Question 16. What could have been done to improve communication to the public regarding the storm damage, emergency response and subsequent restoration efforts?

•	We never saw a police cruiser or officer on our road. Just because we are a class VI road does not mean that we shouldn't be offered the same courtesies/protections as other roads.
•	Better communication between Unitil and local officials.
•	Early information was almost totally lacking. Got better over the first few days. Would prefer more info. faster. PSNH website and Union Leader websites were best info., but only after we got cable back. Without generator and access electronic sources of info, we would have been much less informed.
•	How about knowing what the **&&% % was going on? Direct inquiries brought nearly zero information. No estimates for power restoration. No coordination between agencies representing the public, the power company, the towns affected. I have been through earthquakes (CA), hurricanes (MD), the snowstorm of 1978 and believe that this was so badly mismanaged as to amount to New Hampshire's "Katrina."
•	In view of the magnitude of the storm in our area, PSNH, and TDS did an outstanding job of restoring power. Their communication was very acceptable considering the amount and the uncertainty of the damage .
•	PSNH should have provided truthful estimates of probable restoration dates, instead of issuing blanket percentage estimates by date certain which turned out to be totally erroneous.
•	I found that to reach a live person on the phone was very difficult and when I reached someone they new nothing about my specific area. - After 8 days without power and a home office we needed specifics as to when the power was scheduled to come back on.
•	I feel everyone did the best they could under the conditions. Would have been better without loudmouthed polls sticking their nose into things!
•	The Civil Air Patrol could have provided Geo Referenced photos in the early evening to Public Service in an effort to describe the areas effected
•	Get a better handle on where crews were working, where they were going next. What determined who got power first, and disseminate that detailed street level info via their service reps, newspapers. TV's did no good for those w/ no power. Send street level info about power/line work to town officials so residents could go look at postings at town hall with latest info.For the disabled, have town officials make visits to people they know are disabled and can't get to town hall. Have the towns form a phone call tree (using cell phones) or house visit tree. Not knowing what was going on, in some cases, was almost as bad as having no power. Information dissemination is the key!

•	door to door notification by either state, local or federal officials
•	Everyone needed to hold off making commitments until they extent of the storm was assessed. Once the assessment was complete, the Utility companies should have stated they did not have the resources or materials to restore power earlier than a week or more.
•	Approximate timeline would have been nice for restoration of power. We had no water at all during the outage. Pennichuck refused to put a generator on our system until the 7th day when probably the entire neighborhood had called on their cell phones.
•	The vastness & extent of the statewide devastation should have communicated by all entities to all state residents at the very beginning so we could better deal and make plans for ourselves.
•	Getting more accurate and timely assessments from PSNH so that we could plan better. However there was still no effective means of distributing that information to people like us without television or landline phone due to power loss. City govt should have worked closely with local radio stations.
•	PSNH could have been more accurate in their estimates of when we would get power restored. First it was a week, then a few more days , then maybe tomorrow or the next.....kept going on until 12 days later. I heard rumors that they ran out of transformers and that was what our street needed to be replace. I knew something was wrong when they came by and said they would replace the transformer tomorrow but then didn't hear anymore until our power was restored 4 days after that!
•	It would have been very helpful if Unitil provided information and updates that were truthful instead of lying to its customers.
•	There should have been clearer, more accurate, more frequent information. The utility should have informed the public about the order in which things were being done and the public should have been given accurate information about when power would be restored. Setbacks are inevitable, but those, too, should have been communicated. In short, we were not told much and just needed to wait it out.
•	It was late in the process when the electric companies started to provide schedules of restoration. That should have been provided earlier so people could plan/cope better than wondering if "today" would be the day it was restored. It would also be nice if the crews actually did what they promised when spoken with rather than simply nod as if they would and then simply drive off afterwards without even any false attempt. While I understand the priority of repairing main streets first, it would be good to nice to have them finish the area while there rather than leaving individual home lines untended and leaving the area once the main street portion is completed. As a homeowner, we resorted to private expense to remove a tree limb from the transformer drop line as the power company's linemen couldn't be bothered with it even though they were already servicing the neighborhood.
•	The local radio stations should give out phone numbers to call and updates on the restoration progress much more often than they did. Perhaps every half hour or at least on the hour so we could tune in on the hour or hhalf hour and know

	we'd get an update. WSMN, WZID, etc. They list school cancellations very frequently, why not disaster information?
•	More accurate information on where to get help and information and restoration estimates.
•	We were in the dark and in the cold. The radio stations were playing Christmas music and not giving out any information. We had no water, no heat, no power. I could not get through to Unitil, having tried many times to contact them. It would have been good to know that someone knew we didn't have power, that someone was working on it, and a broad estimate of time to restoration. We had NONE of this. Fortunately, I live near Exeter Hospital and I also work there. Our power was restored when the hospital's was restored, after only two days without power.
•	<p>I've always been told to have a battery operated radio for emergencies, and I do have one. The problem was that the radio didn't broadcast any information! All I heard was music, gossip, and the advice that I could get information from their website. This greatly angered me because of course I could not use my computer to go online.</p> <p>I've been told that water was available at fire station. I live on the other side of town and never go by the station and as a result didn't know about the water. This would have saved me a lot of money.</p> <p>I tried to buy a Portsmouth Herald to get news, but they weren't able to print.</p> <p>I've been told that TV channel 9 had information, but I had no way of accessing it.</p> <p>Perhaps the fire/police in my town should have come door to door with a written information sheet about shelters, water, etc. It would have to be written and left in my door (rather than relying on word of mouth) because so many of us spent as much time as possible away from our dark, cold homes.</p>
•	Without phone, internet, television or electricity, the only way I could stay informed was via the press. I was able to go online at my job in Portsmouth to read the local news. Had I not been able to access the web at work, I would have bought a newspaper. My primary frustration was the lack of information from Unitil. I was never able to get through to their 800 number, despite newspaper articles describing that we were supposed to continue reporting an outage to ensure that they were aware. In the future, I would ask Unitil to improve their customer service telephone system.
•	<p>Unitil I am sorry to say has NO Customer Service - I can understand that the girl was frustrated by the situation but that does not give her the right to hang up on a customer. The fact of the matter is in the entire week we were without power I saw ONE Unitil Truck and finally the people that fixed us were from Tennessee. Amazingly they worked on our street for only about 3 hours!!!!</p> <p>Also we NEVER realized when we lose power we also lose our cable, internet</p>

	<p>and phone because we were with Comcast - this also was unacceptable.</p> <p>We live on a farm with many animals inside and out so we could not leave as we had 3 dogs and 2 cats in the house - by the way one of our dogs caught pneumonia and had to be hospitalized and then put to sleep 2 weeks after the storm.</p> <p>I will reiterate once again - I understand it was a bad storm and I was not upset that the power was out but I am upset that UNITIL had no or at the most 1 crew working in our town.</p> <p>The only people that I can give an A to are the Hampton Police Dept. They tried to help and give us as much info as they had and they even offered that we could bring our pets and sleep in a cell.</p> <p>I still have post traumatic storm syndrome and am terrified that the power is going to go out again because to tell you the truth this electric company never gave a straight answer and could have cared less about us as customers or even just as fellow human beings!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>all local radio stations gave us absolutely NO information nor any status reports of the repairs; they only broadcast Christmas music. we couldn't find any information about shelters or the status of repairs. At the very least, the Seabrook voice alert system in our area should have been utilities to broadcast a daily status report to citizens of the seacoast.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>we tried to call Power Co., unable to get through. did call police, they said it would be out for many days. we should have a disaster kit, but don't, yet. we have a wood stove and wood, we have natural gas cook top, can light with a match. Have town water and gas water heater, so had hot water.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>In the absence of electricity, use of the internet was not possible. Hence, we were dependent on Unitil and the Town of Exeter for updates. The TV updates were too general in nature and gave little information on towns in the Seacoast. Customer Relations at Unitil should have had better information from the field as to what was taking place and what areas were due to be addressed and in what order. All Customer Relations could say was that a work order had been issued. There was no evidence of crews in the area.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Have more people manning telephone lines at all affected utilities to answer questions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>THE POWER WAS OUT! How was I supposed to get any info by TV, internet, phone (house phones are all wireless). To make it worse, there was no info put out by any of these agencies that was either timely or accurate. The small amount of word of mouth info that was received was all conflicting and inaccurate.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Better telephone and email communication from Unitil. We just needed to know when to expect power to be restored, and to know when Unitil thought power</p>

	<p>was restored. Twice Unutil thought we had power when we didn't, and the only way we could get current information to them was to keep calling. What would it have taken for them to call us and say, "Your power is restored."? Because we have a generator, the work crews made erroneous assumptions, and even though we were working on site, the crew did not bother to stop and ask if we had power. They saw lights on, and just left us, thinking we had power when we did not. This delayed our restoration and wasted resources.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Important Note: My location is in the Pickpocket Woods area. Communications from Unutil was either NIL or untruths. They were rude & abrupt when I was able to finally contact them and offered no empathy or answers. My only relief came after seeing a story in the local paper that Exeter Fire Chief Comeau was "all over" Unutil for answers. I then called him and he was my communications and actions savior!!! Unutil told him the "truck were on Pickpocket at that very moment working" when Chief Comeau was actually there himself and saw no indication that ANYTHING at all had been done by Unutil and in fact were NOT even there!! He kept on them and I believe if it weren't for Chief Comeau the power outage on Pickpocket would have lasted much longer than 9 days!!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>It was extremely frustrating to be without power and have the people in authority recommend that we find information at resources that require power to access!!! What is it that you folks fail to comprehend about the fact that if the power is off we do NOT have access to internet or TV, and it is useless for you to direct us there!!!! It is also not helpful to be directed to phone lines at government agencies and utility companies which are totally overwhelmed and never answer.</p> <p>I got my best info by tracking down the linesmen and asking them questions and by going to the local post office and standing in line mail my Christmas packages and having someone come in and shout that we could get showers at the local High School!</p> <p>We've always been told that in an emergency we should tune to our local radio station for news and info. Well, the local radio station was playing nothing but Christmas music any time I tuned in and on battery powered radios you can't run them 24/7 waiting for the possibility of some 2 minute bulletin!!!! Not helpful and not good enough folks!!!!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>I would have liked my town to print flyer - we never knew we could get water to flush toilets.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public posting of information at major intersections/stores/banks/post offices. 2. Info that contains WORKING emergency numbers 3. Info on where to buy generators 4. Info on electricians to install generators 5. Info on borrowing of generators for those who could not go to shelters 6. A neighbor sign up for helping and sharing of resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Communication from Unutil was poor -- telephone information was blatantly false, promising restoration within hours at a location where no utility workers were present to repair downed lines, trees and transformers. A transformer sat in the middle of the street for 7 days. The Exeter Fire Chief told me he was</p>

	<p>likewise annoyed by the lack of communication from Unitil. Phone and cable were restored prior to electric, but were useless without electricity. It's frustrating to be asked about the quality of radio, television and internet communication, when those of us without power had no access to these modes of communication. Officials need to be aware that these methods are not effective when there is no electricity to deliver them; it would have been welcome to have had some physical presence from town or utility officials, patrolling neighborhoods to check in with residents. It was an extremely isolating 9 days, during which time we felt entirely abandoned.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Some kind of time schedule for each town would have been helpful. Trucks came and went and you had no idea when they would return.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Unitil is a disgrace and the State of NH should pull their utility certificates/licenses. They NEVER initiated any community outreach or communications program. The weather is what it is. Proactively communicating to your customer so that they can have a truthful and accurate timeline and thereby plan their own actions is a basic necessity to running any business. The kindergarten management at Unitil should have their NH operating license revoked.</p> <p>By definition, when we are without electric power, we are limited to (car) radio & print media and cell phone for updates as tv, internet, and comcast landlines all require electricity in order to access info</p> <p>1) Increase awareness of state of NH 800 number..have utilities send out magnets or stickers or something with the 800 number, so we can keep that number...AS LONG AS you recognize that merely having access to the number for cell phone calls is useless...UNLESS the state number has someone to talk to and/or to get very localized (neighborhood) ETA info for power restoration. So, provide real time links and updates on that number for local community restoration through an auto attendant and thru links to the proper utility co.</p> <p>2) Most important: set up a functioning communications platform at Unitil. They were absolutely pathetic. The line people work hard but the management ought to be dismissed for having zero platform capabilities. When we called [with our cell] we got voice mail and not a person. When we finally got a person via our cell phone (on the THIRD day!) we were first told that they already knew about our outage and that tone made it clear that we were 'bothering' them by feeding them redundant info. Then, that person had no idea of an ETA to restore. So, after 3 days we moved out of town to a hotel elsewhere. On the 4th day, via cell, we were lied to and told power would be restored that night. We then opted not to drain the pipes because we'd have power back, and we moved back into the house. The next morning the pipes burst in an unheated home. Restoration of power still took two more full days.</p> <p>Again, I don't expect them to control the weather. I do expect them to communicate and give real time updates AND to provide explanations of how</p>

	<p>they allocate manpower / how they prioritize .</p> <p>It isn't very complex to install an emergency management phone system where each community is listed via voice prompt and they tell you crew allocation and restoration timelines and other pertinent info. One general message at the intro and then prompts to report new outages info and another prompt to get updates [and Unitil should actually UPDATE the info several times daily for each town or area]</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Better information from the utilities on actual damages and repairs rather than ambiguous, shifting timetables would make communication from local and state representatives mean something.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>A more automated system could have been in place such as 2-way electric meters (also known as a "Smart Grid").</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Unitil should have gotten the numbers right. It was very frustrating to call one day and be told that 15,00 were still without power. Then call to next day to be told that they worked all night , restored 3,000 and 16,000 were still out. Note: The numbers above are not real. I don't remember the exact numbers that is the way they went each time we called.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>The most frustrating thing during the entire outage was the lack of updates. At one time, Unitil's website indicated that only 50 customers in Exeter were still without power, those 50 customers were probably on Pickpocket Rd. I couldn't understand why Unitil couldn't at least drop off notices in mailboxes to provide status updates. Exeter DPW had road barricades on the road, Unitil could have even attached some sort of update notice to those barricades. Pickpocket Road residents were using the barricades to post their Help notices!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>There must be some way for state & local officials to get word to citizens sitting in the dark. Having the utility company suggest I use my internet during a power outage can only be described as insane.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>More accurate/complete information should have been more readily available. The most frustrating part of the whole incident was not having any idea of what was going on, and getting inaccurate information.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Radio, radio, radio. It's the only thing that was working and could be operated by people not directly effected by the storm (who were trying to survive it themselves). However, unless it addressed All locals specifically and methodically, it wouldn't do the individual much good. And, I might add, as a hard-of-hearing individual who cannot use the radio successfully, I had nowhere to turn for information, but had to rely on word-of-mouth. I never heard about an 800# and don't have a cell with internet capability. Personally, then, flyers/visible police access/town sign board would have been my option.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Being without power for 7 days, I could only get information via a battery powered radio at home. Although I searched, I found it impossible to find any information from our local radio stations. There needs to be a set time (example: every 4 hours) that our local radio stations must play/replay a status report.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>All the public wants is honesty. Unitil could simply have been honest and told us, "we are very sorry for the inconvenience, but we really do NOT KNOW when your power will be restored." Instead, their poorly trained Customer</p>

	<p>Service people were argumentative, rude, and lied day in and day out when we called. They kept telling us "power in your area should be restored no later than tomorrow." This insanity continued for an entire week. Additionally, the ridiculous recording, also containing falacious information, kept saying there were "crews in your area." We did not see a single crew in Hampton Falls for seven (7) days. Also, Unutil's Customer Service people told us on the phone that Hampton Falls was a 'low priority' as only 700 out of 1400 Customers in our town were without power. That number represents 50% of the town! To us, having power in the town we live in is a priority! The last thing a Customer wants to hear is that our concerns are "not a priority!" We own a small business, and could not remain in business if we treated our customers this way. Unutil needs to understand they may NOT operate in the State of New Hampshire with impunity. Finally, we were told by our First Responders here in Hampton Falls, that Unutil unilaterally cut communications with them shortly after the power outage, because Unutil was "tired of getting calls from [the town of Hampton Falls]." In doing do, Unutil turned an ugly situation into a dangerous one, in terms of Public Safety. Just be honest, and communicate, communicate, communicate with your customers. Common sense.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>It would have helped if there was a NH call center set up to answer questions and refer people to needed resouces.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Unutil could have given more information as to what was happening in each of the towns -- for example: there are 6 trucks and 12 people or 20 trucks and 20 people working in Hampton, and 4 people and two trucks working in the 300 block of High Street, where there are 5 poles down, etc.</p> <p>We would have liked to have known where our power should be coming from. We could see lights for 3 or 4 days -- just down the street from us on Ocean Blvd. and in one case, at St. Magnus Condominiums which butts up to our property -- before we got our power back. There was no apparent problem with the wires between the condominiums and our property.</p> <p>We wondered if someone had not remembered to flip a switch and allow us to have electricity or if ours came from a different area. We would have liked to have understood that.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Tell people when they will get power back!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>The utility could have had a phone center that was readily accessible and staffed with knowledgeable personnel.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>We had no contact with Unutil through the entire 10 days we were without power except through a prerecorded message at the utility's telephone answering service. That recorded information was not specific enough to be useful. A daily updated list of specific locations without poser and an accurate schedule of restoration efforts posted in prominent public places would have been useful.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>It should be noted that without electric power, we had no internet or use of NH.gov web site, and no contact with local or state officials at all. That is why I</p>

	<p>rated those areas "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied". But, for the information from the newspapers and radios, I found that the time to get power back was a guess or a hunch at best, and most dates for restoration stated in the newspapers for specific towns was off by 1-2 days. My plan for my family was to ignore these wild guesses or outright lies by the power companies and to expect power back only if and when I directly observed power crews on my street. This was the most accurate method.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Create a thelepho number with updated information based on your zip code and street address. PSNH had zero updted information available, only pre-recorded messages.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Emergencies happen, and people should always be prepared to accept the fact that some emergencies are going to occur no matter what preparations are in place in an attempt to prevent them from happening. However, when an emergency does occur, it is imperative to get accurate and up to date information out to the affected public. Did 9 days without power affect me? Of course it did. However, I was prepared to deal with it. What really ticked me off, though, was all of the inaccurate information I was hearing as to the timeframe in which we could expect power to be restored. Either PSNH grossly underestimated the magnitude of the task at hand, or they were overly optimistic in how fast power could be restored. Either one is unacceptable. As a homeowner, if I am going to be without power for perhaps as long as 1-2 weeks, tell me. Don't try to make me feel good by saying you're hoping to have power back within 3 or 4 days. I want to know the truth, so I can prepare accordingly. That said, my recommendations are to keep the public up to date with conservative, not optimistic, reports about progress and predicted completion times. If efforts could be completed in as little as 4 days, but complications could cause that to extend to 7 or 8 days, state that as well; being sure to emphasize the 7 or 8 days. The fact is, the communications effort was there, in my opinion. The accuracy was sorely lacking. Personally, I try to be as self-sufficient as possible, requiring nothing from any government agencies. But like everyone else, I want to have an accurate idea of when to expect my electricity to return.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Just like what occurred in Maine in their 1998 devastating Ice Storm (with radio station WHOM I think it was), NH should have asked for hourly or very regular daily air-time to provide up-to-date status to citizens. I'm sure PSNH & other utilities would have provided much Info&Personnel to fully keep citizens informed. Everyone has a portable radio... virtually no-one had TV. (I realized the uselessness of our TV Emergency Alert when I happened to view a weekly "Test" shortly after power was restored - only battery operated radios are any good in a catastrophe like the ice storm. (Pls see my union leader "Opinion Essay" of January 26th fro more of my thinking.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>It seems plainly obvious that Exeter DPW and Unitil. were unable to work in harmony. Elec. company was completely unprepared and lacked equipment necessary to restore power. I know they didn't have enough transformers on hand to deal with the outage. DPW was little help removing dangerous trees blocking public right of way. Maybe DPW could get chain saws that work, which would be a big improvement. I have no idea why the public utility and DPW cannot</p>

	find a way to communicate and work in harmony. In my opinion, this is a major problem requiring a resolution.
•	It was a very large storm this I know but I think that if you could let us know what was hit the hardest and told me where that was and how long that it was going to be to get that community hooked up and i could judge for myself how long it would take or maybe give me your best guess on where my community ranks in the emergency and how many communities are ahead of me before my problem can be solved
•	Unitil could give out correct information and outage numbers and complete getting areas up before leaving them. They left people stranded for days when I told them exactly where the line was down every day. Very poor service and no rate payer should pay for their mistake. They should pay and be fined for their error and poor job performance.
•	More customer service reps and a list providing information when utility crews would show up in towns and an estimate when each streets would have power restored.
•	More timely inforamtion, broadcast on a dedicated radio station. (Without power, TV and Internet are much less accessible, but radio can be accessed in cars.)
•	ice storm with 400,000 people out we should automatically plan for the worst. 2-3 weeks or more.
•	Unitil should have been staffed and prepared to give straightforward answers to the public, and to our police and fire officials. Hampton has had to purchase automatic signboards to be placed at major intersections to update the public in case of emergency - the utilities should be required to provide this service. FairPoint, Comcast and Aquarion lived up to their responsibilities.
•	Not much if anything
•	provide specific information on what the issues were in each town with progress update every morning at 8:00 AM
•	1) a continually updated list of which towns in which order the utility companies were attending to and planned on going to each day so you could have a guestimate of when your town and your road/street would be reached. We constantly saw trucks but never knew if they were going to be working on our town (or in our area of town(or if they were just passing through to another location. 2) Some type of communication from our local town officials; there was NO communication from ur town to its residents that we were aware of.
•	Not too much more than what was already done.
•	We were very dismayed to find out that other towns were conducting 'welfare checks' on their citizens. No one from our town checked on us. PSNH were the only ones who came out and checked to see if we had any damage and to let us know where things stood. Where was our local response????
•	Unitil could have had people manning phone lines to tell customer what effort was going on in their neighborhood, when line crews would be in their neighborhood and acknowledge what homes where without power. They could

	<p>have just talked to the people even if they had no answers. Let people know they were doing something. Unitil management had no idea which areas had power and which didn't and you couldn't get anyone to answer the phone to tell them!!. The only information (though not always accurate) readily and constantly available was the newspapers. In emergencies the State should "commandeer" 2 section of the front page of local newspaper where the</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Make it as local as possible. Both by local TV coverage (channel 13 in Newmarket) and written reports prominently displayed in public buildings (town hall, library). Provide web sources for information. Establish neighborhood emergency "phone" trees (with power outages, direct contact may be required). Obviously, channel 9 coverage is of great help too.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>The emergency broadcast system should have been used to provide critical information.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Given an estimated time of repair for each street, area, or some other geographic descriptor so residents could have tailored their plans to meet the estimated time before power was restored (ie going to RI to purchase a generator, setting up temporary housing, etc.).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>I really don't know. If we hadn't had the battery radio and newspapers, for the most part we would have been clueless on what was going on, no internet or TV or 8.5 days (unless we were at work).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>More accurate restoration times and provide better information why restorations were so long, for example "Jeness Road needs a new transformer - expected restoration at least 7 days"</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>door to door visits to see who had power and who did not. calls from power company when homes were expected to have power back.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Give the town officials an HONEST assessment of when they expected storm damage to be repaired ... area by area or street by street. If they knew that information, at least the town officials could dessiminate that info to town residents.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>When I called Unitil, they could not find my phone number in their system or my street on their maps. Staff manning phones were not supplied with updates on where they were actually working or where they were headed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>I could not believe the lack of communication. We called PSNH every day and they either gave us no information or just kept saying 2-3 days. The only information we every got was from the Derry Emergency Service. On day 11, we called after not being able to handle it anymore. The PSNH rep was not there. We called back later and the PSNH rep was still not there. I explained our situation and within 1 hour the lady called me back saying it was a "fuse problem" and within 2 hours, the electric trucks came by and the power came back. I still do not know why a "fuse problem" takes 11 days. I live just outside of Derry and could see people with power 100 feet from us days earlier. To be honest, I think they just didn't care about us.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>PSNH should have been posting information on their web site about when power was going to be restored to specific areas/neighborhoods and roads. They must have had a game plan of when they would get to areas and priorities for power restoration. There was virtually no info on their web site, they failed miserably.</p>

	<p>Folks needed to know how long they were not going to have power to make decisions to stay in the house, to leave, to drain water from pipes, to locate a generator, etc. There was also little or no info provided by PSNH, TV, newspaper about what to do to protect your property and of course know one knew how long they would be out of power.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Since we had no electricity, we did not have TV. We were able to use a radio with batteries and I was very unsatisfied that none of the local stations were providing updated information.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>There was no communication to the public on the magnitude of the problem from Unutil or from the NH Public Utilities Comission.</p> <p>Unutil put pre recorded messages on their customer service line that was never updated.</p> <p>Until was completely unprepared. We did not see 1 truck in Plaistow for the first 4 days.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Town officials-I kept calling the Police Department in Weare, got nothing, had to call Hillsboro for help.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Home visits by local law enforcement. Better communications from the Electric companies. We never once lost our phone service, and they all have our telephone number. We also had no running water until we were able to borrow a generator from someone in Massachusetts, whereas we are on a private well.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>frequent updates to the progress of power restoration. Having cell phones and a battery powered radio we did not have any other way of following what was going on</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>More information directly from utility company</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>To have the actual "state officials and National Guard" really go door to door like they were telling people. Only on day 10 did one member on the National Guard and city employee show up to see if we needed water. At that point if we did not have it, we would have been deceased. Never even knew about cases of water being given out daily. The lost of food and the cost of eating out daily, especially at holiday time WAS ASTRONOMICAL TO OUR FAMILY.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Local Cable coverage to those homes on Generators.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>PSNH should have been doing routine maintenance on tree branches, etc. The Town of Derry didn't open a shelter for its residents, if you had animals, you had no option but to stay in your home because pets were not allowed, Derry did a reverse 911 message to its residents, however, if you had Comcast telephone service, you did not receive the message because Comcast was out. The Town of Derry local access radio station didn't operate at all and properly to get information out to residents. I am on a community well that has NO generator backup which is operated by Pennichuck Water. I was laughed at by Pennichuck when I called and asked when the generator would be put on to run the well for the 100+ homes in my development, I was told "when the electricity comes back on you will have water". I had to drive to Massachusetts to get gas to run a generator, water to drink and food to eat. Derry had water available for families without water, but never got the water out to residents, expected residents to drive</p>

	<p>around town and find out there was bottle water available. This was absolutely ridiculous since many of us couldn't even get out of our driveways. The Town of Derry, the State of New Hampshire and PSNH were totally irresponsible in aiding families without power, water and basic necessities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Accurate restoration efforts would have been extremely helpful. The estimates changed daily and customers did not have accurate information as to when we would receive service.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Some sort of a readable website</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>A news conference from the State Emergency Management Agency with representatives from the public utilities on a daily basis to update people on when power and telephone service would be restored.</p> <p>On the local level, door-to-door health & welfare checks from the Police, Fire, CERT (community emergency response teams) and/or ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) in the hardest hit areas.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Public Service of NH should have provided timeframes so that people could prepare for their daily life, some of their employees were helpful while others were rude. The restoration time was too long considering they were saying on the news that they were prepared prior to the storm with extra crews. I realize the magnitude of the storm but there is no work being done now in regards to tree work and line work to prevent this from happening again. PSNH also did not credit customers for the time they were out. Comcast did credit customers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>They could have provided more detail information about what they were doing to restore power. They could have asked more assistance sooner. They could have accepted FREE assistance for National Grid</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Agencies must find ways to communicate to residents living in rural areas and check on their condition.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>We were Maine residents during the ice storm of 1998 and were without power for nearly a month. Our experiences then were different than the recent NH ice storm in that communications from the Governor's office (Angus King), Central Maine Power (David Flanagan and Mark Ishkanian) and local officials was more frequent, more complete and more localized than we observed in NH. Mark was the CMP spokesperson and was interviewed regularly (at least 3 times each day) with all updates being widely broadcast and reported. David and Angus were on scene and involved - not in their offices - and I couldn't tell you who even heads up PSNH or who the spokesperson was for any of the NH utilities. To recall Maine names 11 years later tells me that CMP did a much better "marketing" job in response to our crisis than was done here in NH. CMP's customer service lines were staffed by real people who responded appropriately - and made callbacks to confirm power restoration. The line crews were visible and polite and eager to help.</p> <p>Maine's citizens were also better prepared - and had shared their special needs with officials in their communities. It seemed to me during the NH ice storm that citizens had a higher expectation that they would be "taken care of" rather than be responsible for themselves. That was NOT the case in Maine. We knew</p>

	<p>to have disaster kits - and planned for power outages with nonperishable food items. Our local emergency preparedness teams engaged in ongoing education so there were no surprises - beyond the fact of how long we would have to subsist without our creature comforts.</p> <p>Most of all, though, I recall Maine citizens being grateful and eager to assist in whatever way they could - unlike the public face of NH residents during this storm. I was embarrassed by the behavior of some of my fellow NH citizens - the impatience, rudeness and hostility are not behaviors I expect to see here in NH.</p> <p>When our Maine ice storm damage was repaired and power restored Gov. King and David Flanagan held a party - and then published a book on the event and its aftermath. The citizens came together to thank those line crews - as we had each day (with coffee, newspapers and handwarmers). I kept a senior citizen's shelter going and had staff people without power for nearly a month. We enjoyed each other's company and celebrated the small victories which marked our return to normalcy.</p> <p>I suggest that the NH PUC look to Maine's experiences and compare what was done 10 years ago and learn what could make a difference here in the future.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Unitil changed their telephone routing after the storm making it near impossible to communicate w/ the company about dangerous situations needing priority evaluation. On their 800 number, they gave callers 3 options; none of which offered a representative. And if you did not choose one of the 3 presented options the line disconnected you. I figured out to press 4 (even though that was not an offered option) and was able to speak to representatives. I communicated this finding to town officials in Bow 4 days into the incident and it was then I learned how furious the Town was because they too were unable to contact Unitil. Trees were blocking roads and resting on power lines on Brown Hill Ave and One Stack Ln. I reported the Brown Hill situation to Unitil on day 2 of the outage. On day 4 they sent a "tree crew" to the Brown Hill Ave location and it turned out to be a single worker in a pickup truck with a chainsaw. He was unable to address the problem and left saying he would have to call in a pole crew. Despite this situation being reported to Unitil, he said he was not told by the Unitil office that trees were resting on power lines. Day 4 into the incident I relayed this story to a co-worker who lived on One Stack Lane. He said multiple trees were down on his street, some blocking the road, and some had pulled power lines off their poles. Power lines were in the street and cars were driving over them. He called Unitil that day and it was the first report Unitil had received about the conditions on One Stack Ln. My co-worker informed me that his street had made the "priority" list since trees were blocking the road. Trees were not removed and power was not restored in either location until 6 days after the outage.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<p>Word or mouth through the agencies earlier as I heard from someone from the fire department a week later. Maybe a daily printed article</p>

	delivered to all homes, similar to newspaper dailies of the local activities, actions, etc.
•	Information on local radio would have nice
•	We would like to have known WHEN and exactly WHERE work was being done on the electric wires in our town (Hampton). We would LOVE to know exactly where our electricity comes from. There were 3 days when the property directly next to ours had electricity and we did not. There were no wires down or trees down between that condo property and ours.
•	Have the information updated correctly. Our town was scheduled to be 95% on several different days.
•	Let local officials know what is going on faster + determine the problems quickly.
•	Taken care of our requests - do the job.
•	PSNH could and should have been more truthful and a lot more courteous.
•	Unitil was the biggest problem, they were not honest about the restoration time lines, their customer service was horrible when/if you could get through, they had no answers.
•	More proactive involvement from PSNH, State of NH, to local officials. Details about line crews, tree clearing, schedules, etc.
•	Most had no TV or computer access. There was no valuable info on the radio. What service are open etc. Helpful info re heating systems, prevent burst pipes etc. Not mentioned. Absolutely no info given at all.
•	Send through postal service.
•	It was the not knowing... My suggestion... 1) PSNH this summer label each meter (when they read it) with some consumer friendly circuit identifier. 2) PSNH add to there web site some generic information about each circuit. 3) In the event of another massive outage provide via a web site some idea of the state of the circuit. The best thing I learned by calling PSNH was I was on a circuit with 700 drops, and that circuit had 37 breaks. It was all in the knowing.
•	detailed inforamtion, updates from PSNH would have been enormously helpful.
•	Better information from Unitil!
•	Unitil - should have someone checking each neighborhood before leaving an aarea to be sure everyone is up and running, its in-humane!
•	None of the means listed above were of any use at all, since the electricity was out (TV, internet, radio, etc.).
•	The communication should have addressed the schedule from restoration by street and neighborhood, not by town. There should have been joint communications by the town, state and Unitil. Unitil sr. management should have held daily joint press conferences with state and local government.
•	Information passed on and accurate.

•	When I called Unutil about the outage, I would have preferred to speak to a person rather than a recording!
•	Better time lines of power restoration.
•	Public officials need to stop blaming and become a part of solution instead of negative and whining all the time.
•	Interactive updates via internet. C'mon. it's 2009. Why did we get one unhelpful update per day? Transparency.
•	Mass text messaging to specific areas with brief updates and info.
•	I feel communication in a post office telling people to get on a list or at the police station at the schools also.
•	Public announcements on traveling vehicles through community streets with estimated return of services
•	Post signs, use UPS/Fedex/USPostal Service to deliver flyers, sit with sign in town square, have police stop traffic and distribute flyers....just do something...
•	Unutil did not have a real person available to talk to - just a message machine which was not updated.
•	Utilities should be obliged to communicate factually on at least a daily basis with designated local officials for each town. Unutil expressly ignored this and all other communication obligations. What they did communicate was usually factually incorrect. Unutil phone system is useless when phone lines are down. When cell phone was used, system disconnected caller unless specific cell phone was designated on the user account. Local officials (Exeter) demonstrated little competence in dispersing information to residents such as recovery status, ways to obtain critical supplies (potable water, gasoline for generators), etc. They also exerted little leadership in representing constituents with regards to demanding information and organized response from Unutil.
•	Flyers delivered to homes in the outage areas. i live in a condo complex and just posting a flyer in our mail house would have been helpful.
•	It is extremely difficult to get in touch with Unutil, the phone is busy for long periods of time. When you finally reached them all you got was a general message like "most" power will be restored by Wednesday. Guess what I wasn't most people. Unutil needs to provide customers/town official with a person who can give customers specific information. ___THIS IS STILL A PROBLEM WE LOST POWER YESTERDAY AND I COULD NOT GET IN TOUCH WITH UNUTIL FOR 30 MINUTES -- THEY NEED TO IMPROVE THIS. In addition, I questions whether they have done enough to maintain their transmission lines. I don't think I need to tell you this but being without electricity for even a short period is difficult for days on end in the winter is stressful. You need to worry about pipes freezing.
•	Don't know or have any thoughts about how to get info to the public during difficult times like this.
•	A summary document form PUC.

•	Accuracy - a meaningful, reasoned prediction/estimate of when power would be restored.
•	Unitil did not keep town officials apprised of their progress or intended progress on restoring power in specific areas of town. Officials had to personally drive around town to find out areas restored.
•	Have a town or state plan concerning damage time of outage (approx.) and centers for help to local citizens.
•	Increased communication w/ local officials.
•	Provide detailed tactical info. - Level of storm damage - What roads are open - Where fuel is available - Calling to supporting neighbors (Phone travel list)
•	A quick visit by local authorities.
•	be honest
•	Give accurate information. Better response time.
•	To be given the facts and truth as to how long it would take to restore electric service.