

## About October's snowstorm...

The combination of heavy snow and full foliage brought thousands of trees down on our electric lines, interrupting power to 134,000 customers. This natural disaster had the largest impact on O&R's electric system in the Company's history.

Now that our system is back to normal, we'd like to address questions about the storm, our restoration process, and what we plan to do differently in future storms. Here's an excerpt from Company President Bill Longhi's answers to your most frequent questions. The entire Q&A can be found at [oru.com](https://www.oru.com).

## Why did it take a week to fully restore service?

The tree damage was several times greater than during Hurricane Irene, resulting in interruptions to almost half of our 300,000 electric customers. In total, there were over 6,000 separate damage locations in need of repair and many of them required significant reconstruction work. Using our entire 1,100 employee workforce, plus an additional 1,500 personnel from other utilities, we were able to restore full service within one week, which was consistent with other regional utilities.

As in any major storm, our initial recovery focus is on assessment and safety, including devoting resources to support municipal and county needs. We also gave a high priority to restoring power to over 50 schools throughout our area. As these areas were addressed, we focused more resources on overall service restoration, prioritized by size of the outage and extent of the damage. In some cases, up to a dozen separate repairs were required

across multiple municipalities to bring power to a particular area before local and individual service repairs could begin.

## Why did people have so much trouble getting through to O&R?

In 2010, we worked with our telecommunication provider and doubled the number of available customer service phone lines. However, during Hurricane Irene we learned that this larger capacity was still short of what is needed to support record call levels associated with a catastrophic event. As an interim step to relieve congestion, we augmented the normal phone lines by routing additional calls through our own corporate fiber optic telecommunication network. This network also enabled us to send some calls to our sister company, Con Edison.

Meanwhile, we continue to move forward on a high priority basis to develop a far more robust solution that will likely include teaming with multiple companies in the call processing field to provide both electronic and voice

support during these kinds of major events. We plan to have this major upgrade in place in time for the return of foliage in the spring. As part of addressing telephone access issues, we are also focusing on improving our estimated restoration projections, as well as the value and accuracy of our Web and mobile Web applications.

Your questions and concerns play a big role in the evaluation process. We appreciate your understanding and encourage you to take a moment to visit [oru.com](http://oru.com) for more details about what happened during the snowstorm and what we plan on doing in the future.

[oru.com](http://oru.com)



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