

April 26, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Luly E. Massaro, Commission Clerk
Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
89 Jefferson Boulevard
Warwick, RI 02888

**RE: Docket No. 2509 – Storm Contingency Fund
January 26, 2023 Storm Summary Report**

Dear Ms. Massaro:

In accordance with Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”) Order No. 15360 (August 19, 1997) and paragraph 4(a) of the Joint Proposal and Settlement in Lieu of Comments Submitted by The Narragansett Electric Company¹ and the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (the “Settlement”) approved by the PUC in Docket No. 2509, I have attached one original and eight copies of Rhode Island Energy’s summary report on the planning and restoration activities associated with the January 26, 2023 storm, which likely will qualify for inclusion in the Company’s Storm Contingency Fund. Paragraph 4(b) of the Settlement requires the Company to file with the PUC within 90 days after the storm a report providing a description of the storm along with a summary of the extent of the damage to the Company’s system, including the number of outages and length of outages.

The Company will file with the PUC a supplemental report detailing the incremental restoration costs caused by the January 26, 2023 storm once the Company accumulates the total costs and completes a final accounting of storm costs.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact me at 401-578-2700.

Very truly yours,



Celia B. O'Brien

Attachment

cc: Docket No. 2509 Service List
Docket No. D-11-94 Service List

¹ The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a Rhode Island Energy (“Rhode Island Energy” or the “Company”).

Rhode Island Energy

The Narragansett Electric Company

Report on January 26, 2023 Storm, Damage Assessment and Service Restoration

April 26, 2023

Docket No. 2509

Submitted to:
Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission

Submitted by:



Rhode Island Energy™

a PPL company

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**REPORT ON BEHALF OF
THE NARRAGANSETT ELECTRIC COMPANY D/B/A RHODE ISLAND ENERGY
ON THE JANUARY 26, 2023 STORM DAMAGE ASSESSMENT AND SERVICE
RESTORATION EFFORTS**

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a Rhode Island Energy (“Rhode Island Energy” or the “Company”) presents the following report on the planning and restoration activities associated with the January 26, 2023 storm (the “Storm”), which impacted Rhode Island and other states in the northeast. For pre-planning purposes, the Company classified the Storm as a Rhode Island Energy Type 4 emergency event, meaning that the Company estimated that restoration activities generally would be accomplished within a 24-hour period and the event typically would result in up to 7 percent of customers interrupted at peak. The Storm was projected to bring hazardous and strong wind gusts, especially along the coasts, which potentially could cause damage to the Company’s electric infrastructure. The Storm interrupted power to 2,486 (approximately 1,332 at peak) of the Company’s customers. Overall, 0.5 percent of the Company’s customers in Rhode Island experienced outages, with 24 of the 38 communities served in Rhode Island impacted.

The Company began monitoring the Storm on the morning of Tuesday, January 24, 2023, as initial weather forecasts identified a potentially strong winter system approaching from the west. The event was expected to impact much of New England, but considerable uncertainty remained in determining the precipitation mix between heavy wet snow and rain. The Company continued to review the weather forecasts and prepare for the possibility that the Storm would damage the Company’s electric distribution system.

The Company began preparing for the Storm on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, at 9:30 a.m., by conducting an Operations Planning Call, during which the Company reviewed the weather forecast and began preparing for the possibility that the Storm would impact the Company’s electric distribution system. The Company held a second Operations Planning Call on the morning of January 25, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. As part of its response to the Storm, the Company opened the Storm Room in Providence at approximately 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 25, 2023.

The Company followed its Emergency Response Plan and mobilized employees and contractors for the restoration using a damage forecast based on its experience in previous storms. As part of its preparation efforts, the Company also utilized contractors from outside the Company’s service territory to help with restoration. Using its own crews and contractor resources, the Company restored power to 100 percent of its customers impacted in approximately 30.5 hours from the time of the first customer outage. From the time of peak customers impacted, the Company restored 95 percent of the outages in 11 hours. Power was restored to the final customer impacted by the Storm on Thursday, January 26, 2023, at approximately 8:48 p.m.

The Company is grateful for the support of customers, employees, state and local officials, and public safety officials, who experienced the effects of the Storm and were an integral part of the Company’s restoration efforts.

II. INCIDENT ANTICIPATION

A. Determination of Incident Classification

As set forth in the Company’s Emergency Response Plan, factors considered in initially establishing or revising the expected incident classification level included the following:

- Expected number of customers without service;
- Expected duration of the restoration event;
- Recommendations of the State Planning Section Chief, Transmission and Distribution Control Centers, and other key staff;
- Current operational situation (such as number of outages, resources, and supplies);
- Current weather conditions;
- Damage appraisals;
- Forecasted weather conditions;
- Restoration priorities;
- Forecasted resource requirements; and
- Forecasted scheduling and pace of restoration work crews.

The Incident Commander is primarily responsible for establishing the projected and actual incident classification level for the Storm. See Table 1 below for Incident Classification Actions.

Table 1. Incident Classification Actions

Action Performed	Date and Time
Incident Commander Named	January 24, 2023; approx. 9:30 a.m.
Initial Event Classification Type – 4	January 24, 2023; approx. 9:30 a.m.

B. Activation of Incident Command System

The Company utilizes the Incident Command System (“ICS”), a component of the National Incident Management System, which is a comprehensive national approach to incident management applicable at all levels of the Company’s Emergency Response Organization (“ERO”) and addresses the operation of Company Emergency Operation Centers (“EOCs”). The ERO required to implement the emergency procedures is activated employing a flexible and standardized management structure. Upon declaration of an emergency, the required EOCs are staffed accordingly. Briefings are conducted with the ERO to maintain situational awareness and relay the specifics of the emergency. See Table 2 below for the Storm ICS Actions.

Table 2. ICS Actions

Actions Performed	Date and Time
Operations Planning Call #1	January 24, 2023; approx. 9:30 a.m.
Operations Planning Call #2	January 25, 2023; approx. 11:00 a.m.
Storm Room opened in Providence	January 25, 2023; approx. 10:00 p.m.
Wires Down Room opened in Providence	January 26, 2023; approx. 6:00 a.m.
Municipal Room opened in Providence	January 26, 2023; approx. 6:00 a.m.

C. Determination of Crew Needs and Pre-Staging

Given the potential magnitude of the Storm and forecast of hazardous winds, the Company secured crews in advance from its contractors of choice and other outside contractors to support restoration efforts as part of its regional preparation for the Storm, consistent with its Emergency Response Plan.

See Appendix B for a daily accounting of resource staffing levels from pre-event through complete restoration. Appendix B indicates the number, type, and location of planned resources and the number, type, and location of actual resources secured. Appendix B also specifies whether the resources are internal, external contractors, or resources acquired through a mutual assistance agreement.

III. THE STORM AND ITS IMPACT

A. Forecast

The Company began monitoring the Storm on the morning of Tuesday, January 24, 2023, as initial weather forecasts identified a newly forming weather pattern that was expected to impact much of New England. Strong to potentially damaging winds across southeastern New England were expected, with a low risk for minor coastal flooding. These initial forecasts also highlighted the challenges of predicting the precipitation mixture of heavy wet snow or rain. This ambiguity would remain in the following reports and contain a meaningful bearing on the specific precipitation that also would correlate to system impacts.

On the morning of January 25, 2023, the forecast remained consistent that strong damaging winds would impact southern Rhode Island late in the evening and into early Thursday, January 26, 2023. Average winds gusts were predicted to be between 30-40 mph along the interior, with maximum gusts in the 45-50 mpg range along the coast. The temperatures were expected to be slightly warmer than previously forecasted, which could result in less heavy wet snow, and provide more rain precipitation.

During the afternoon of January 25, 2023, the forecasts remained consistent but described the snow totals being slightly lower, especially along the coast, because of the changing temperature predictions. Also, the wind advisory was expanded into more of Rhode Island and

southeastern Massachusetts with the strongest winds between late in the evening into early Thursday January 26, 2023. As a result, the Company completed the final plans to prepare for the oncoming weather event with plans to open the Storm Room in Providence later in the evening.

B. Impact

Ultimately, the Storm would be a long duration weather event that resulted in minimal damage to the Company’s electrical system. The Storm brought heavy rain and strong wind gusts to the state. Peak wind gusts were generally in the 35 - 40 mph range, with Providence experiencing a peak gust of 40 mph, with 1.75 inches of rain accumulated. The Town of East Greenwich was affected most heavily with approximately 17 percent of customers impacted by the event. See Table 3 below for the Storm impact.

Table 3. Storm Impact

Total Customers Impacted	2,486
Peak Customers Impacted	1,332
Date and Time of Peak	January 26, 2023; 2:28 a.m.
Date and Time Final Customer Was Restored	January 26, 2023; 8:48 p.m.
Number of Municipalities That Experienced Interruptions	24
Number of Distribution Feeders That Experienced Interruptions	25

Figure 1 below shows the number of customers interrupted and restored, by hour, for the period of January 25-27, 2023.

Figure 1

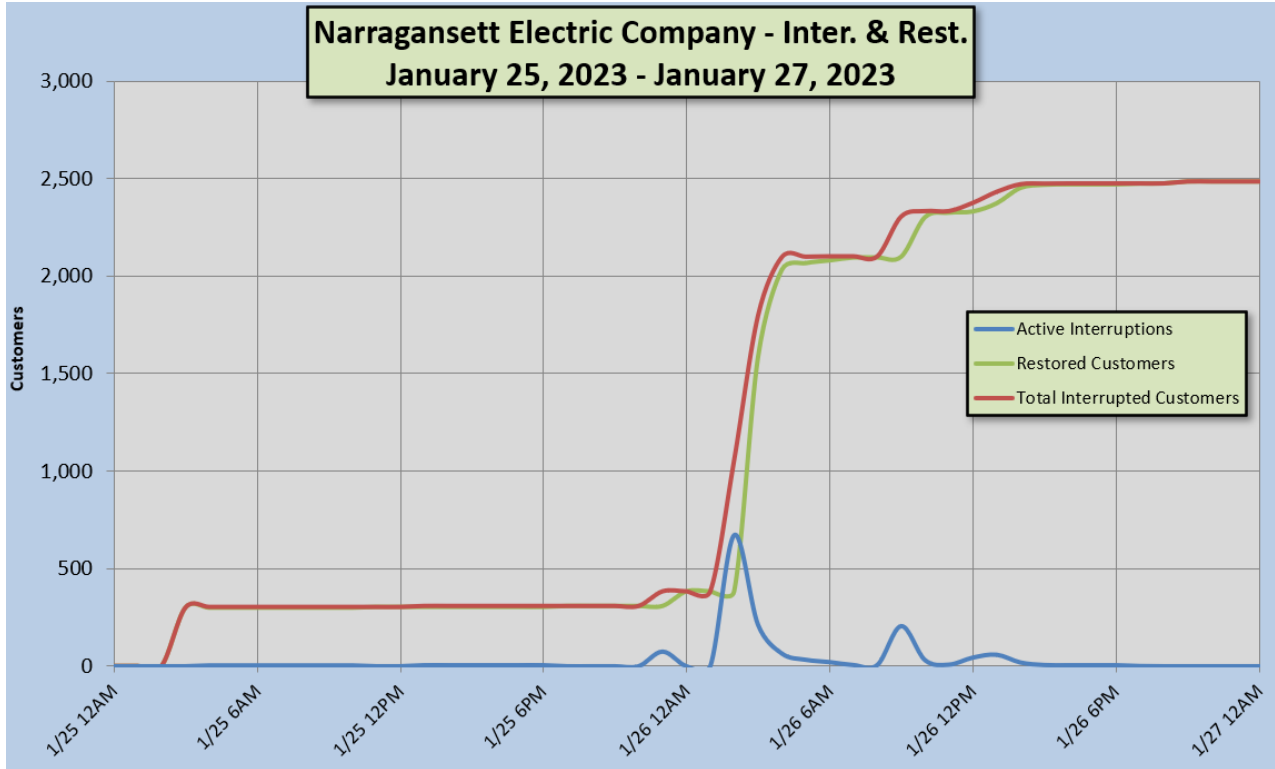


Figure 2 below shows all municipalities that experienced interruptions during the Storm.

Figure 2

Municipality Name	Customers Served	Total Customers Interrupted	Percent of Total
BARRINGTON	6,896	7	0.10%
BRISTOL	10,440	2	0.02%
BURRILLVILLE	2,648	10	0.38%
COVENTRY	14,369	36	0.25%
EAST GREENWICH	6,390	1,088	17.03%
EAST PROVIDENCE	22,437	22	0.10%
EXETER	3,081	67	2.17%
FOSTER	2,055	55	2.68%
HOPKINTON	3,976	89	2.24%
LINCOLN	10,328	15	0.15%
NARRAGANSETT	10,587	38	0.36%
NORTH KINGSTOWN	13,989	159	1.14%
NORTH PROVIDENCE	16,106	8	0.05%
PAWTUCKET	33,912	34	0.10%
PORTSMOUTH	9,329	2	0.02%
PROVIDENCE	74,815	1	0.00%
RICHMOND	3,668	78	2.13%
SCITUATE	4,638	7	0.15%
SMITHFIELD	9,090	13	0.14%

Municipality Name	Customers Served	Total Customers Interrupted	Percent of Total
SOUTH KINGSTOWN	15,099	300	1.99%
TIVERTON	8,317	17	0.20%
WARWICK	40,499	15	0.04%
WEST WARWICK	14,514	74	0.51%
WESTERLY	14,544	5	0.03%

The following sections contain additional details and context regarding the Company’s Storm restoration efforts.

IV. RESTORATION

A. Timing and Priority of Service

The Company implemented the system of prioritization for restoration found in its Emergency Response Plan, focusing first on public safety and then on customer interruptions that maximized restoration when lines were energized. The Company gave priority and consideration to critical facilities and concentrated efforts to restore service to any life support customers the Company was aware of who were impacted by the Storm as quickly as conditions warranted.

See Appendix C for a timeline of the storm progression, including the hour and date that constitutes the start of restoration and the hour and date that constitutes complete restoration. The hourly chronological restoration assessment in this appendix includes the number of customers out (in executable format) for the Company’s Capital and Coastal regions, the total system, and each feeder affected.

See Appendix D for a summary of number of customer outages at peak and customer outage minutes, by cause, for the Company’s Capital and Coastal regions.

See Appendix E for a specific list of all outages, in executable format, that includes detailed information for each outage. Also included in Appendix E is a listing of all outages caused by tree conditions as well as data regarding asset replacements for this event.

B. Restoration Coordination

The Company dispatched crews to respond to outages from the Storm Room in Providence as soon as it opened (see Table 2 above) through the end of the Storm. Consistent with the Emergency Response Plan, the Company activated Police and Fire Coordinators for the Storm.

These employees reported to Storm Room Leads and were responsible for communicating the estimated times of arrival on all police and fire calls, with a standby condition noted. The Company did not deploy Task Force teams for this event and did not utilize any staging sites.

The Company also mobilized the Providence wires-down room, with approximately 54 internal wire-down resources available, including wires-down appraisers, cut and clear restoration resources, and stand-by resources.

C. Personnel Resources

As part of its planning process, the Company prepared for a Type 4 event in Rhode Island based on the weather forecasts, resources, and operational situation. The Company's plan remained consistent throughout the #1 Operations Planning Call on January 24, 2023 as well as the #2 Operations Planning Call.

The Company secured a total of 304 internal and external field crews¹ to restore power to customers in Rhode Island, consisting of approximately 172 external crews and 132 internal crews. The internal and external field crew numbers included transmission and distribution overhead line, forestry, substation, underground, wires down, and damage assessment personnel.

See Appendix B for a daily accounting of resource staffing levels from pre-event through complete restoration.

The Incident Commander for Rhode Island Energy did not request mutual assistance from companies in the North Atlantic Mutual Assistance Group ("NAMAG") to support restoration for this event.

D. Safe Work Practices

Safety is always at the forefront of Company operations, including and especially during activities associated with storm restoration. For each storm event, the Incident Command System structures designate a lead position for a Safety, Health, and Environment Officer. Safety messages are delivered on all calls to heighten awareness during preparation and restoration.

As with any storm, the Company assembled a safety team with area responsibilities, established the reporting hierarchy, and prepared and communicated organization charts. The safety team prepared safety notices and delivered them to all Company employees through corporate communications. Safety personnel were deployed to assist in specific geographic areas and delivered on-site safety orientations to Company workers and contractors prior to the start of each day. During the Storm, safety personnel visited work sites to advise Company personnel and contractors of safety issues and best practices. In addition, prior to the start of each new job, the work was reviewed by assigned crews, with a focus on safe working conditions for the specific job. These safety efforts helped the Company experience no injuries during the Storm.

¹ Crews typically include two or three people, although there may be some one-person crews in damage assessment, wires down, distribution line (troubleshooters), and substation personnel. Transmission crews typically include 6-10 resources.

V. COMMUNICATIONS DURING AND AFTER THE EVENT

A. Communication Regarding Estimated Times of Restoration

The Company posted Estimated Times of Restoration (“ETRs”) on its website during the Storm using Outage Central, which provided real time ETR updates approximately every 15 minutes.

As crews were assigned and reported ETR updates based on their actual findings in the field, the Company uploaded the updated ETRs into Outage Central. The Company continued to update ETRs throughout the restoration process as information became available to the Company.

B. Intra-Company

The Company began preparing for the Storm on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, closely monitoring weather forecasts as the storm approached the northeast region. As the weather forecasts developed, the Company held two Operations Planning Calls to coordinate the need response from staff and personnel. The Company did not conduct Restoration Stage Briefings for this Storm; therefore, this report does not include Appendix A.

C. Public Officials

1. Governor’s Office

During the Storm, the Company’s Regulatory and Government Affairs staff communicated with the Governor’s office. Additionally, the Company also communicated with Rhode Island’s legislative leadership leading up to and during the Storm.

2. Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (“PUC”), Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (“Division”), Office of Energy Resources (“OER”), and Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency (“RIEMA”)

The Company’s Regulatory Liaison contacted the PUC, the Division, the Governor’s office, and OER to provide updates throughout the Storm. See Table 4 below for a listing of updates along with a brief summary of the update provided.

Table 4. Updates to the Division and OER

Date and Time of Update	Summary of Update Content
January 24, 2023; approx. 3:43 p.m.	Initial notification; weather forecast; resource update; Storm Room plans
January 25, 2023; approx. 11:19 a.m.	Weather forecast; update on planning and preparation activities; Storm Room plans
January 26, 2023; approx. 10:45 a.m.	Weather forecast; Customer Outage and Restoration update; Storm Room status

During the event, the Company’s Regulatory and Government Affairs staff provided updates to RIEMA regarding the Company’s storm preparations and restoration efforts. The Company also utilized its RIEMA Liaison to post updates virtually on RIEMA’s WebEOC and support as needed.

3. Municipalities

Based on the anticipated impact from this event, the Company opened the Municipal Room on Thursday, January 26, at 6:00 a.m. The Company was prepared to utilize its Area Community Liaison Coordinators to work with each Rhode Island city or town’s emergency, Department of Public Works, and/or public officials as a dedicated liaison. The Company’s Area Community Liaison Coordinators served as full-time resources supporting impacted communities and enabled direct communications back into the Company’s public information coordinators and operations personnel.

D. Customers

The Company communicated with customers during the Storm through its Customer Contact Center, email, website, and social media. The Company’s Customer Contact Center secured additional staffing to respond to incoming life-support calls for those affected by outages, as well as additional staff to support the high call volume.

See Table 5 below for a detailed listing of each method of communication utilized throughout the Storm.

Table 5. Communication Details

Method of Communication	Purpose of Interaction	Level of Interaction
<u>Report Outage/Outage Follow-up</u>		
Number of Customer Calls Received by Customer Service Rep	Customer reports outage or issue	128
Number of Customer Calls Received by Interactive Voice Response (“IVR”)	Customer reports outage or issue	8
Number of Customer Calls Received by 21 st Century	Customer reports outage or issue	6
Number of Outbound Calls to Life Support Customers, Type 3 Event or greater	Company notification and follow-up with Life Support Customers impacted by an outage	6,292
<u>Automated Outage Updates</u>		
Number of Inbound and Outbound Text Messages	Outage notification, update, or update request from customer	194,414
Number of emails sent	Outage notification, update, or update request from customer	705
Number of outbound calls made	Outage notification, update, or update request from customer	0
<u>Web and Social Media</u>		
Number of customer hits on Company website during preparation for, and response to, the event	Customers seeking information	4,462
Number of Facebook posts	Company preparation for the event, safety information, restoration updates	2
Number of tweets/re-tweets posted on Twitter	Company preparation for the event, safety information, restoration updates	2

E. Media

The Company activated its Public Information Officer (“PIO”), along with additional PIO support staff for the Storm. The Company engaged both traditional and social media channels to distribute Storm and safety-related information. The Company’s Strategic Communications Department received one media request for information related to the Storm in Rhode Island, and no press releases were issued. Feedback and comments from media outlets and social media were received and monitored regularly, and overall sentiment was generally neutral.

VI. TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

The Company did not experience any technology issues that impacted the preparation, response, or restoration efforts during the Storm.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Storm impacted the Company’s electrical system, resulting in power outages to 2,486 of the Company’s customers. The damage was caused primarily by strong wind gusts causing tree limbs to make contact the Company’s wires and equipment. The Company followed its Emergency Response Plan and was fully prepared to respond to the Storm, having secured all necessary resources and outside contractors to aid in the restoration effort required for the forecast predicted, and maintained communications with stakeholders through a variety of channels throughout the Storm.

The Company utilized its own distribution line resources and transmission line crews, contractor distribution line crews, and contractor tree crews to restore power to its customers. Power was restored to 95 percent of customers impacted in 11 hours from the time of peak impact.

The Company restored power to 100 percent of its customers impacted in approximately 30.5 hours from the time of the first customer impacted and in 18.5 hours from the time of peak impact. Power was restored to the final customer impacted by the Storm on Thursday, January 26, 2023, at approximately 8:48 p.m.

Appendix A

There is no Appendix A associated with the
January 26, 2023 90-Day Storm Report

Appendix B

Please see the Excel version of Appendix B.

Appendix C

Please see the Excel version of Appendix C.

Appendix D

Please see the Excel version of Appendix D.

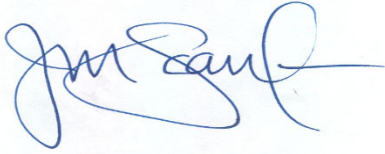
Appendix E

Please see the Excel version of Appendix E.

Certificate of Service

I hereby certify that a copy of the cover letter and any materials accompanying this certificate was electronically transmitted to the individuals listed below.

The paper copies of this filing are being hand delivered to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission and to the Rhode Island Division of Public Utilities and Carriers.



Joanne M. Scanlon

April 26, 2023
Date

**Docket No. 2509 – National Grid – Storm Fund
Service List as of 6/1/2022**

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Docket D-11-94 Review of National Grid's Storm Reports

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