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# Press Release

## *RMLD crews assist Norwich, Connecticut, Public Utilities*

**Reading, MA, September 2, 2011** – On Tuesday Reading Municipal Light Department (RMLD) sent two line crews and an engineer to help the Norwich Public Utilities (NPU) restore power to its customers after Hurricane Irene wreaked havoc over the weekend, resulting in many downed trees and wires in Norwich, Connecticut.

About 11,600 NPU customers, or about 50 percent, lost power Sunday as Irene swept through the region. About half of those customers had their power back on by late Sunday night, and almost all had it back by Wednesday, thanks in part to RMLD crews and expertise.

On Wednesday NPU General Manager John Bilda said, “We expected problems, and we had a plan in place to start dealing with them immediately.”

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Part of the plan was to call for mutual aid from other municipal utilities like RMLD whose service territory did not experience the extent of damage experienced in Connecticut and had the staff to help a sister utility.

“We were happy to be able to send our crews once electricity was restored to over 4,000 RMLD customers,” said RMLD General Manager Vinnie Cameron. “They worked with the NPU line crews and the Norwich DPW, fire and police to restore electricity to the Norwich customers under the direction of NPU and RMLD engineers who assessed the situations and directed the crews.”

As of Wednesday night, Connecticut Light and Power, an investor-owned utility, still had 290,000 Connecticut customers without power. In Massachusetts 3,700 NSTAR customers and 23,200 National Grid customers are still experiencing a blackout as of 9 a.m. Friday morning.

Norwich Mayor Peter Nystrom said the city owed a debt to the rapid response and professionalism shown by NPU workers. “They did a phenomenal job,” Nystrom said. “That’s the benefit of having your utility company tied to your municipality. They care.”

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