

## Press information from: BELMONT LIGHT

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For information contact:  
(617) 993-2806

### **Preparing for Summer Power Outages**

(Belmont, MA) – Belmont Light would like to remind its customers that strong wind and rain events, like those that often occur throughout the summer season, may lead to electric power outages. Belmont Light takes many measures to ensure that it is fully prepared to respond to outages, including: having 24-hour, on-call staff coverage and stand-by teams that are always available in case of emergency; maintaining a thorough emergency management plan; employing expert field crews; proactively updating its electrical system year-round; and practicing a comprehensive tree-trimming program that helps keep power lines clear of branches. Customers should complement Belmont Light's efforts by doing their best to prepare for outage events in their own homes.

This reminder comes following a stormy July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend during which Belmont Light crews were busy restoring service to local residents who were left without power in the aftermath of heavy downpours and stiff winds. According to Belmont Light Operations Manager Ed Crisafi, several outages occurred prior to and throughout the holiday weekend, beginning during the evening hours of July 3<sup>rd</sup>, continuing into the following day, and happening again at the end of the weekend.

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Crisafi also explained that the longest outage lasted only about an hour and a half. “We were able to quickly restore power to those affected on Thursday evening, with cleanup efforts occurring during the early morning hours of July 4<sup>th</sup>,” Crisafi reported. He added that, “because our staff was on hand and working so effectively, we were very well prepared when Hurricane Arthur passed to our east later in the day on the 4th.” A separate event related to an underground cable caused outages on Saturday, but all permanent repairs were resolved by Monday evening.

Belmont Light General Manager James Palmer attributed the swift resolution of the outages to the reliability and dedication of town employees. “Once again, our crews, public safety, and public works did a great job,” he stated. “Because of the dedication of our linemen and DPW staff who worked through the holiday to repair service for our customers, we were able to restore power to our customers within a short period of time.”

Palmer went on to say that while weather-related outages are inconvenient, they should be anticipated—especially during hurricane season. Belmont Light customers should be prepared for severe weather during summer months by taking the following precautionary steps:

### **Prior to an Outage**

- Make sure you have enough emergency supplies on hand in case you are without power for an extended period of time.
- Have plenty of fresh batteries and flashlights (don’t use candles during a power outage unless absolutely necessary).

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- Use a portable, battery-powered radio and/or television to be aware of any updates.
- Get a wind-up or battery-powered clock.
- Stock up on nonperishable food and plenty of bottled water.
- Keep cash on hand, ATMs may not work when the power is out.
- Make sure that everyone knows how to manually open and close any electric security or garage doors.
- Protect electric equipment, such as computers, fax machines, televisions, DVD and Blu-ray players, and microwaves, by installing surge suppressors or other power protection (smart strip) devices.
- Have a battery back-up system if your smoke alarms are wired to your home's electrical system.
- Have an emergency plan in place if a member of your household depends on life-support or needs other medical equipment. This may include a back-up power source or transportation to another facility.
- Know how your gas appliances operate. Appliances with electronic ignitions will not work because electricity is needed to ignite the natural gas. Appliances that require fans or other electric devices to run (such as central heating units and gas clothes dryers) won't work.
- If a storm is expected, make sure your cell phone, laptop computers, and tablet devices are charged.
- Avoid using the elevator if a storm is imminent; use the stairs instead.

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## **During an Outage**

- Don't call 911 to ask about the power outage. Check the neighborhood to see if everyone is without power and then call Belmont Light at 617-993-2800 to report the outage.
- Stay indoors, but if you do need to go out, use extreme caution, especially on roads without working traffic signals. Be cautious of any downed power lines – they may be live.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to prevent food spoilage.
- Never use your gas grill or charcoal grill indoors for cooking.
- Shut-off any electronic equipment that was operating when the power went off.
- Shut-off all your major electric appliances to stabilize the electric system when power is restored.
- If the power is still on when you go to bed, shut-off electronic equipment such as computers, televisions, DVD/VCRs, microwaves and fax machines.
- Leave one light on so you know when power is restored.
- Belmont Light crews will be out in force to restore power as quickly and safely as possible which may not be until the storm has passed.

## **When Power is Restored**

- Wait a few minutes before turning on major electric appliances. This will help eliminate problems that could occur if there's a surge in demand immediately after power is restored.

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- If you think that electric power has been restored to your area but your home is still without power, call Belmont Light at 617-993-2800.

### **If You Own a Generator**

- Never plug a generator into any electric outlets. Generators can feed electricity back into the power lines, causing dangerous conditions for our repair crews. You could damage your appliances or your neighbors' appliances.

Should you experience an outage, please call Belmont Light at 617-993-2800.

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