

Cornwall Electric – Major Event Report

April 5, 2023

Introduction

On April 5, 2023 Cornwall Electric experienced a significant weather event, involving freezing rain and lightning. Over 60% of the customer base experienced an outage, and Cornwall's crew worked diligently, with assistance from external partners, to restore power to 90% of customers within 12 hours.

The weight of the ice on the conductor, the trees entangled or dropping/broken into the lines, and the flooding/high water levels in some areas was challenging for crews to restore power. However, the early assessment of damage to deploy crews assisted with the quick response and restoration efforts.

In wrapping up late-evening of April 5, 2023, the feedback provided to the Command Centre allowed this group to implement field-practices and assign runners to allow for field-staff to remain focused on repairs/restoration. Along with providing communication updates to the Command Centre for a continuous update of information to not only media but also directly to our customers and the communities (ie. City – Fire Dept. Emergency Management Team, Townships and Mohawk Council) served by Cornwall Electric to also communicate to the residents that follow these groups.

Prior to the Major Event

1. Did the distributor have any prior warning that the Major Event would occur?

Yes No

Additional Comments:

Cornwall Electric thoroughly monitors Environment Canada notices to proactively identify and prepare for potential emergency outage restoration efforts.

On April 4, Environment Canada issued a freezing rain warning, outlining the potential for a significant storm affecting eastern Ontario.

On April 5, prior to the weather event, CE Management prepared for the event by assessing internal resources, materials, etc. and securing additional external resources. These resources were retained as part of the restoration efforts.

2. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor arrange to have extra employees on duty or on standby prior to the Major Event beginning?

Yes No

Brief description of arrangements, or explain why extra employees were not arranged:

All arrangements for standby/on-call were made before the storm began. CE secured internal resources. Since the majority of the outages occurred during daily-light hours – Assessors were sent out to assess the damage early – to determine the resources required to safely restore power in a timely manner – and determine if sufficient mutual assistance secured.

3. *If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor issue any media announcements to the public warning of possible outages resulting from the pending Major Event?*

Yes No

4. *Did the distributor train its staff on the response plans for this type of a Major Event?*

Yes No

CE has a Business Continuity Plan that is periodically updated and reviewed at the management level.

The plan is designed to assist in the response to natural disasters, accidents, major outages, environmental disasters, municipal emergencies and cyber-attacks. This plan is available to all staff both via CE's corporate intranet, and hard copy. For major outages, this plan covers responsibilities and procedures for all outage restoration and communication efforts, consolidates contact information for internal staff and key external agencies.

In addition to the Business Continuity Plan, CE also has an internal procedures document that outlines roles and responsibilities during a major event. This document is a living document that focuses on direct current assignments for roles and responsibilities during Major Outages that the management team can follow on a daily basis during a major outage.

During the Major Event

1. *Please identify the main contributing Cause of the Major Event as per the table in section 2.1.4.2.5 of the Electricity Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements.*

Loss of Supply

Lightning

- Adverse Weather-Wind
- Adverse Weather-Snow
- Adverse Weather-Freezing rain/Ice storm
- Adverse Environment-Fire
- Adverse Environment-Flooding
- Other

Please provide a brief description of the event (i.e. what happened?).

Just after noon on Wednesday April 5, 2023, Cornwall Electric began to experience outages caused by severe weather affecting much of Southern and Eastern Ontario and Quebec. Severe thunderstorms and freezing rain impacted Cornwall directly, while tornado warnings were issued for other parts of the province.

Large branches fell on power lines as a result of the significant ice accumulation, with the early budding on birch & soft maple trees increasing the ice accumulation. CE's crews worked overnight to restore power to the majority of customers, however the full restoration efforts lasted until April 7, being further encumbered by flooding occurring on April 6.

Throughout the restoration efforts, CE issued numerous updates via its social media and website as well as remained in contact with the City, Townships and Mohawk Council. The website notices also included information for Cornwall residents from local authorities regarding the availability of warming centres.

If selected "Other", please explain:

2. Was the IEEE Standard 1366 used to derive the threshold of the Major Event?

- Yes, used IEEE Standard 1366*
- No, used IEEE Standard 1366 2-day rolling average
- No, used fixed percentage (i.e., 10% of customers affected)

*The OEB preferred option

3. When did the Major Event begin (date and time)?

Wednesday, April 5 at 12:32 pm

4. Did the distributor issue any information about this Major Event, such as estimated times of restoration, to the public during the Major Event?

Yes No

If yes, please provide a brief description of the information. If no, please explain:

Yes, CE provided several updates via social media and CE's website. Please refer to Appendix A for an outline of the posts.

5. How many customers were interrupted during the Major Event?

16,929

What percentage of the distributor's total customer base did the interrupted customers represent?

65.8%

6. How many hours did it take to restore 90% of the customers who were interrupted?

12 hours

Additional Comments:

7. Were there any outages associated with Loss of Supply during the Major Event?

Yes No

If yes, please report on the duration and frequency of the Loss of Supply outages:

8. In responding to the Major Event, did the distributor utilize assistance through a third party mutual assistance agreement with other utilities?

Yes

No

Do not have third party mutual assistance agreements with other utilities

If yes, please provide the name of the utilities who provided assistance:

CNPI, EOP, and other contracted services such as OLC, Spark Power and equipment from T&T (ie: bucket truck).

9. Did the distributor run out of any needed equipment or materials during the Major Event?

Yes No

If yes, please describe the shortages: _____

After the Major Event

1. What actions, if any, will be taken to be prepared for, or mitigate, such Major Events in the future?

No further action is required at this time

Additional staff training

Process improvements

System upgrades

Other


Additional comments:

CE found that its frequent communications via social media and contact with the City, Townships and Mohawk Council were helpful in maintaining customers' awareness of the restoration efforts and other critical information.


CE also found the use of a Command Centre and regular communication for internal updates provided for awareness of the outages and challenges in the field.

Another area CE received positive feedback from customers was on a communications directly with specific groups of affected customers to advise them of the timeframe expected to restore their power. CE individually contacted customers that remained off more than 36-40 hours to advise them of the expected timeframe and Plan to restore power. For this storm, resources were able to be assigned to speak directly with each customer and during the post-storm meeting. Although this was manageable for these restoration efforts it is recognized this may not always be practical. A plan to call blast for larger groups of customers was discussed as part of the post-storm review meeting. Although considered a good practice, it is recognized that depending on the number of customers remaining without power, it may not always be possible to issue individualized communications, but will be a part of the future consideration in the Plan.

Appendix A -


 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 5

Severe Weather Event - We are aware of multiple outages across the City and Cornwall Island. Crews have been dispatched and we are working diligently to restore power safely.


 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 5

Currently we have approximately 10,700 customers without power throughout the service territory. Crews have been deployed and are actively in the field within [The City of Cornwall](#). For more details, please go to our website at: <http://ow.ly/O75I50NBCvL>.


Stay safe!

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 5


Currently, we have approximately 6,110 customers still without power. Crews have been dispatched and are actively working in the field within [The City of Cornwall](#) and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: <http://ow.ly/WCWw50NBj8q>

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 5


Currently, we have approximately 2,500 customers still without power. Crews have been dispatched and are actively working in the field within The City of Cornwall and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: ow.ly/tQuX50NBK88

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 6

Currently, we have approximately 870 customers still without power. Crews have been dispatched and are actively working in the field within @CityofCornwall and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at:


 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 6

Currently, we have approximately 665 customers still without power. Crews have been dispatched and are actively working in the field within [The City of Cornwall](#) and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: <http://ow.ly/lxzC50NC89y>

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 6


As of 1:00 pm on Thursday, there are still 545 customers without power. We will continue working into the evening to make every attempt to restore all power today. However, there will be some isolated customers without power until tomorrow.

The City of Cornwall welcomes residents to the Benson Centre or Civic Complex for a warm location and to charge electronic devices. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://ow.ly/ihft50NCy67>


 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 6

As of 4:00 pm on Thursday, our crews have restored power to over 10,870 customers in less than 24 hours; there are still 551 customers without power; we estimate the remaining isolated customers and a section of Glen Rd to be energized throughout the evening and possibly into tomorrow. For more details, visit us at <http://ow.ly/br8E50NCIQ7>.


Posts from Power Assist on social media:

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 6


Currently, we have approximately 328 customers still without power. Crews have been dispatched and are actively working in the field within the @CityofCornwall and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: [#pwrou t ^pa](http://ow.ly/KXZ150NCUJ1)

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 7


Currently, we have approximately 140 customers still without power. Crews have been dispatched and are continuing restoration efforts within the @CityofCornwall and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: [#pwrou t ^pa](http://ow.ly/6T0G50NCnYy)

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 7


Currently, we have approximately 86 customers still without power. Crews have been dispatched and are continuing restoration efforts within the @CityofCornwall and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: [#pwrou t ^pa](http://ow.ly/6T0G50NCnYy)

 **Cornwall Electric**
Apr 7

Currently, we have approximately 54 customers still without power. Crews are in the field continuing restoration efforts within the @CityofCornwall and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: [#pwrou t ^pa](http://ow.ly/6T0G50NCnYy)

 **Cornwall Electric**
● Apr 7

Currently, we have approximately 45 customers still without power. Crews are in the field continuing restoration efforts within the @CityofCornwall and surrounding areas. For more details, please go to our website at: [#pwrou^pa](https://ow.ly/6T0G50NCnYy)

 **Cornwall Electric**
● Apr 7

All power has now been restored in @CE_electric. If you are still without power please call 1-844-701-WIRE ^pa.

Messages on our website:

Notice to Cornwall Electric Customers Restoration Efforts following Freezing Rain

April 6, 2023 (Cornwall, Ontario) – Following the freezing rain and lightning storms on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, Cornwall Electric experienced significant damage with approximately 11,000 customers without power at its peak. Crews have worked through the night and will continue to work to restore power today.

As of Thursday, at 8:30 am, there are still 665 customers without power, Cornwall Electric's internal crews, along with lines and tree trimming contractors and crews from other local utilities, have joined to assist with the power restoration efforts. We will continue to work into the evening (Thursday) to make every effort to restore all power today.

The safety of our crews and the community remains our number one priority. Please remain clear of any down power lines and report it to our Power Outage line at [1-844-701-WIRE \(9473\)](tel:1-844-701-WIRE).

As a reminder to customers, if there is damage to customers' hydro stacks these repairs to this are the responsibility of the homeowner. Please contact the Electrical Safety Authority ("ESA"). If you have not contacted Cornwall Electric and are still without power, please contact us at our 24/7 call centre at [1-844-701-WIRE \(9473\)](tel:1-844-701-WIRE).

"Our goal is to restore power today if possible and will continue to assess the restoration efforts throughout the day," says Jackie Baird, Regional Manager of Cornwall Electric. "While there may be a few exceptions, it is our objective. On behalf of Cornwall Electric, we thank you for your support during these restoration efforts."

Cornwall Electric ("CE") is a wholly owned subsidiary of FortisOntario Inc. ("FortisOntario"). CE has approximately 25,000 customers. For further information visit www.cornwallelectric.com.

For further information, please contact:

Kristine Carmichael
Director, Corporate &
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kristine.carmichael@FortisOntario.com

Severe Weather Across Service Territory - April 6, 2023 1:00pm Update

Notice to Cornwall Electric Customers - Restoration Efforts following Freezing Rain

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As of 1:00pm on Thursday, there are still 545 customers without power. We will continue to work into the evening (Thursday) to make every effort to restore all power today. The City of Cornwall welcomes residents to the Benson Centre and Civic Complex for anyone who may need access to a warm location and to charge electronic devices.

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For further information, please contact:

Kristine Carmichael

Director, Corporate & Customer Services

Phone: (905) 994-3637

kristine.carmichael@FortisOntario.com

Please continue to monitor when making travel plans. You can find the latest weather alerts [here](#). In the event of an extended outage, its important to be prepared as much as possible for such an emergency in extreme weather conditions. For information on emergency kits go to <http://www.getprepared.gc.ca>.

While the electricity is off, take care when using alternative lighting, cooking and heating equipment. Review the following [link](#) for information and take precautions to make sure everyone stays safe.

If you are experiencing a power outage emergency, **please call our 24 hour Emergency Service at 844.701.9473**

You can follow us on our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) links or come back to this page for any storm related updates.

Stay Safe!

Customer Service

Severe Weather Across Service Territory - Final Update (April 7)

Notice to Cornwall Electric Customers - Restoration Efforts Following Freezing Rain

April 7, 2023 (Cornwall, Ontario) - All power has been restored! If you have not contacted Cornwall Electric and are still without power, please contact us at our 24/7 call centre at 1-844-701-WIRE (9473).

Appendix B- Local News Coverage

[Storm Update: Warming Centres \(cornwallseawaynews.com\)](http://cornwallseawaynews.com)

[Flooding in Cornwall area, reduced visibility follows freezing rain | Cornwall Standard-Freeholder](#)

[Potential 'significant' ice storm for eastern Ontario, western Quebec | CBC News](#)