



May/June 2010

LIPA BUSINESS NEWS



www.lipower.org

Message from LIPA

To Our Valued Customers:

In March, Long Island was hit with one of the worst storms in 20 years, which was among the top five storms in the history of Long Island in terms of outages and damage. Our Island experienced pounding rain and hurricane force winds eclipsing 70 m.p.h. resulting in extensive damage to our electric system caused by uprooted trees, toppled utility poles and downed power lines. This storm was responsible for more than 263,000 outages in Nassau and Suffolk Counties and the Far Rockaways in Queens.

We thank you for your understanding, patience and cooperation during our restoration efforts. We realize losing your power is very inconvenient, but rest assured we did everything we could, as fast as we could, to get your lights back on. We have completed our preliminary review of our storm performance and have developed some initial steps to improve upon our performance and improve our communication with customers.

As we have been reviewing our performance, we continue to realize that in order for Long Island to be best prepared in the case of a major storm or hurricane, enhanced coordinated efforts of many different agencies needs to take place. LIPA has participated in discussions with New York State, Nassau and Suffolk County elected officials, emergency management personnel, law enforcement and national emergency response organizations in an effort to be in a better position to respond to a natural disaster.

In July of every year, LIPA and National Grid conduct their Joint Annual Hurricane Preparedness Drill, which is monitored by the New York State Office of Emergency Management and the emergency management offices of Nassau and Suffolk counties. We believe that our collective experiences from this most recent storm will allow us to enhance our preparedness and take into consideration lessons learned from the March 13th Nor'Easter.

Collectively, our greatest defense in an emergency situation is to be prepared. Just as LIPA and National Grid's workforce readies all year long through drills and training classes, we hope that Long Islanders take this opportunity to create their own emergency plan.

In the event of a hurricane, nor'easter or tropical storm impacting Long Island, LIPA's electric customers are encouraged to follow these storm preparation recommendations to help ensure their family's safety and comfort:

- Put together a family hurricane evacuation kit.
- Individuals who rely on life supporting equipment should sign up for LIPA's Critical Care Program
- Individuals with special needs or others requiring more information should contact their local emergency management office.
- Have flashlights, battery-operated radios and extra batteries on hand.
- Know the hurricane risks in your area. Learn the storm surge history and elevation of your area.
- Learn safe transportation routes inland.
- If your residence is in a potential flood or storm surge zone, be prepared to evacuate when officials recommend it.
- Inventory personal property; safely secure all records and valuable documents in a watertight place.

LIPA's Web site, www.lipower.org/stormcenter/safety/hurricane.html, is an excellent source of information that will help you prepare for hurricanes and emergencies.

The hurricane season will be here before you know it. Be smart. Be prepared.

Sincerely,

Kevin S. Law
President & CEO

THE NEW www.lipower.org

Do less searching and more finding. LIPA's redesigned Web site, www.lipower.org, makes it easier to find what you're looking for.

Check out the business analyzer that can give you a customized plan to reduce your energy costs. Explore and enroll in our efficiency, renewable energy, and economic programs. It's all available for free, anytime.

- Manage your account at your convenience, 24/7
- Get eLERT – e-mail notice when each new bill is available online
- Access billing history
- Enroll in DirectPay – worry-free automatic bill payments



TAKE SOME HEAT OFF YOUR SUMMER COSTS

Proper air conditioner maintenance is one of the best ways to cut cooling costs. After all, cooling can account for as much as half of your energy bills in the summer.



A well-maintained system will not only cool your space more effectively, it will reward you with lower operating costs. Every year, have your air conditioning unit(s) inspected by a licensed contractor. You may need to contact your landlord first in some cases. In terms of maintenance, follow this checklist:

- Check air filters and replace if necessary.
- Inspect air intake screens and clean if necessary.
- Check motors, bearings and fans and lubricate as needed.
- Inspect heating and cooling coils and vacuum blowers if necessary.
- Ensure proper refrigerant charge and adjust accordingly*.

If you opt for a service contract for routine inspections and service, make sure you know exactly what parts and services are covered before you sign. Get quotes from several contractors and compare their coverage.

The best way to make sure you don't sweat over summer cooling costs is to do a little air conditioning prep work now. For more energy-saving information and tips, visit us at www.lipower.org/commercial/efficiency.

**Always hire a licensed professional to check your cooling system's refrigerant.*

Get Back to Business After an Outage

It's very important that you report any outage to us at 1-800-490-0075. In many cases, we know when and where outages have occurred, but there are times when you will know before we do. When you call us, please provide us with the telephone number at the location of the outage. If we do not have a current phone number for you, please update it *before* an outage occurs by using our automated services at 1-800-490-0025.

There are a number of reasons why electric service to your building can be interrupted - weather, a car striking an electric pole, a tree branch falling on a wire or even an animal contacting a wire.

We know that time is money and you need to know when your service will be back on. LIPA follows strict procedures for every outage to safely restore your electricity as quickly as possible.

After an outage is reported to LIPA, the information is relayed to our field personnel to diagnose and repair the problem. At that time, we may also be able to give you an estimated restoration time. If you would like to receive additional updates regarding restoration, you can provide us with a contact telephone number. The contact number does not have to be the same as the outage location phone number.

Once a serviceperson makes a determination of the cause of the outage, our computer system can contact you with an update and an estimate for restoration of service.

We'll do our best to restore service as soon as possible. To learn more about electric outages visit us online at the "LIPA Storm Center" at www.lipower.org or call 1-800-490-0025.

A COUPLE OF BILLION REASONS TO LOOK HERE FOR FINANCING

There's a limit to what better cash flow management can do as you expand a small business. When you decide you need capital, where do you turn? For thousands of businesses, the answer is the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).



Through its Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) Program, the SBA partners with private investors to provide venture capital to small businesses – to the tune of \$1.8 billion in 2009. SBICs are licensed and regulated by the SBA, but they are privately owned. The funding is a combination of private capital raised by each SBIC and funds borrowed through the SBA at favorable rates. The incentive for an SBIC is the opportunity to share in the success of the funded small business as it grows and prospers.

From manufacturers to service industries, more than 400 SBICs, including dozens right here in our area, provide debt or equity financing to small businesses. Some may focus on particular fields or industries in which their managers have expertise.

When seeking this type of funding, a small business needs to identify the SBICs that are best suited to its needs and then present a business plan directly to an SBIC. A typical SBIC will receive hundreds of plans each year, so you can get an edge by getting personal. In other words, reach out to an accountant, an attorney, or business colleagues who may be able to help you get a personal referral to the fund manager of the SBIC you are targeting.

For a full listing of SBICs or just more about the program, visit the U.S. Small Business Administration Web site at www.sba.gov/inv.

Safety Spotlight

Every 30 minutes. According to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI), that's how often a worker misses work due to an electric-related injury.

If you opt for a standby generator, running it safely is not optional. Generators should be installed and wired by a licensed electrician and meet all fire underwriter regulations. Have the electrician brief you on all safety aspects of the generator's operation, and review them periodically in case you need to activate the generator.



LIPA's Business Call Center

As a business owner, do you ever have questions about your electric usage, billing or possibly setting up a new account?

That's what our Business Call Center is all about...providing you with the information and answers you need about your LIPA business account while helping you manage your energy costs.

Call LIPA's Business Call Center at 1-800-966-4818.