



July/August 2010

# LIPA NEWS



[www.lipower.org](http://www.lipower.org)

## Message from LIPA

### Communication is Key

As I write this letter, we are in day 3 of the worst heat wave to hit Long Island in years. This is on top of two major weather events that have wreaked havoc on our region; the March Nor'easter and the Great Neck Micro Burst in June. Freaky weather? Climate Change? Is a hurricane next? Whatever your opinion is there is one fact that is undisputed; everyone needs to be prepared for weather events all year long-but especially during the upcoming hurricane season.

In March, Long Island faced its worst storm in 20 years causing outages to over 270,000 customers. The most recent powerful storm was responsible for over 80,000 outages, the majority of them in the Great Neck Peninsula area. Both storms left some customers without power for up to five days. Are you prepared to be without power for that long?

Following the March Nor'easter, I had the opportunity to personally participate in multiple storm hearings and roundtables with officials from both Suffolk and Nassau Counties and was able to ascertain valuable feedback about how LIPA communicated with its customers during the restoration process after the storm. Pursuant to that feedback I am happy to inform you that LIPA has drafted and begun to implement a new and more aggressive communications plan to ensure our customers stay informed during power outages and LIPA's restoration process.

Some of the highlights of this plan include a special phone system that allows LIPA to call customers experiencing outages to update them on their status, as well as a dedicated phone line, where customers can leave their number for a callback from LIPA to receive the latest information on the restoration status of their home or business. Both systems were implemented for last month's storm and proved to be very effective.

Over the next few weeks LIPA will also complete upgrades to its Storm Center Web site that will provide better information and will allow customers to report outages online rather than using a telephone. Furthermore, we are developing future plans to communicate with customers through text messaging and to communicate with smart phones and other personal communication devices.

The past two storms and heat wave serve as a harsh reminder of what kind of impact weather can have on our electrical system. So as LIPA continues to do its part to prepare for significant weather events including hurricanes, we urge our customers to do the same and take the necessary precautions to keep themselves and their families safe. Please log on to [www.lipower.org/stormcenter/safety.html](http://www.lipower.org/stormcenter/safety.html) for safety tips during significant weather events.

I hope you all enjoy the rest of your summer.

Sincerely,

Kevin S. Law

President & CEO

## ANSWERS, 24/7

Did we get your payment? How does your usage this summer compare to last summer? Can you go paperless? We can answer those questions and more, anytime with "My Account" at [www.lipower.org](http://www.lipower.org).

We'll even answer one of those questions right now. You can go paperless by enrolling in eLERT. For each new bill, we'll send you an e-mail letting you know it's ready to be viewed online. No bills in the mail, less clutter in your home.

To make sure we always get your payments on time, try *DirectPay*. This convenient, free option pays your bills automatically from the bank account of your choice. You never have to worry about due dates or running out of stamps.

Enroll in *Balanced Billing* to avoid surprise seasonal bills. You'll have a predictable monthly bill that will help you budget for all of your other expenses.

Try all of these free programs right now, or anytime 24/7, at [www.lipower.org](http://www.lipower.org).



## ARE YOU READY?

There's no such thing as planning too much when it comes to preparing for hurricanes and other severe storms. If basic services, such as water, gas, electricity, or telephones were cut off, would you be ready? Your family's comfort and safety will depend on how much planning you do before an emergency.

Here's a partial checklist for an emergency preparedness plan:

- ✓ Talk to your family about what to do in an emergency. Have a meeting place outside the home.
- ✓ Keep a flashlight handy for each member of your family and a battery-powered radio or TV. Make sure the batteries are charged and have plenty of extras available.
- ✓ Maintain a good supply of food that needs no refrigeration.
- ✓ Keep first aid kits in your car and your home.
- ✓ Keep fuel in your tank and cash in your pocket; gas pumps and ATMs may not work during a power outage.
- ✓ *If someone in your home depends on life-support equipment, LIPA's "Critical Care" program can help in an emergency. Speak with a customer service representative at 1-800-490-0025.*

For additional information about emergency preparedness and for real-time outage data, visit our "Storm Center" at [www.lipower.org](http://www.lipower.org). Most importantly, if your power goes out, call us right away at 1-800-490-0075.



## SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

### Home Generators

Don't risk your life to run your refrigerator. A portable generator can produce high concentrations of carbon monoxide (CO) that rapidly accumulate in a confined space. CO is a toxic byproduct of fuel combustion that can make you ill with flu-like symptoms and cause death in minutes. This is easily preventable. Never run a generator indoors, including in a garage, and well away from windows and vents. Install at least one CO alarm in your home, which is now required by New York State law.

## Has Your Home Had Its Energy Check-Up?

You want to lower your energy costs, but where do you start? A great way is to get a thorough, personalized analysis of your home. You can get that for free with LIPA's online home energy audit - go to "Tips & Tools" at [www.lipower.org/efficiency](http://www.lipower.org/efficiency).



## BE SENSITIVE

You come home, the lights go on, but the digital clock on your microwave is blinking. It's possible that while you were out your power was interrupted for just a fraction of a second. That can be just enough time to interfere with today's increasingly high-tech and sensitive household devices.

Having to reset your clock is inconvenient, but sensitive electronics, even your computer's hard drive, can be damaged by power disturbances.

Protect your expensive equipment with relatively inexpensive devices such as surge suppressors. A basic power strip does not provide protection.

If you have cable TV, look for a suppressor that also provides protection from surges through the cable. The best protection for a computer is through the use of an Uninterruptible Power System (UPS), which provides surge protection and battery backup to briefly power connected equipment during outages.

## The Great, Safe Outdoors

Safety in and out of your home is a year-round concern. Summer is a time when you should pay particular attention to outdoor safety. Here are a few tips:

- Work and garden power tools should be protected with three pronged grounding plugs, unless they are double insulated.
- It is hazardous to use power equipment on wet hedges, grass, shrubs, and any damp areas.
- Never leave a child alone near a pool, even for a second, and keep a telephone and rescue equipment (life preservers and reaching pole) by the pool at all times. Learn CPR!
- Keep all electrical appliances well away from the pool at all times.

For additional information about home safety call 1-800-490-0025 or view "64 Ways to Make Your Home a Safer Place" at [www.lipower.org/residential/safety](http://www.lipower.org/residential/safety).

## Tips for Good Summer Reading

Our meter readers do their best to read your meter in a timely manner to ensure you are billed to an actual reading. We ask that you help them help you by following these tips:

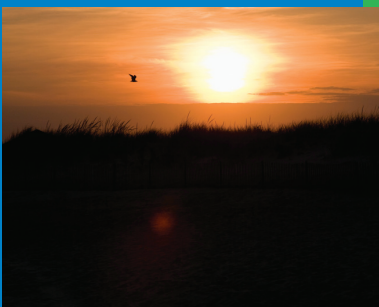
- If your meter is indoors, make arrangements to have someone available to admit our meter reader on the scheduled date.
- Be sure that gates are unlocked two days before and two days after the anticipated date we plan to read the meter.
- Be sure toys, tools, trash or other obstacles that could prevent us from reading your meter are not blocking access to the meter.
- Remember to keep bushes or plants trimmed back so we can safely access the meter.
- Please confine your pets when the meter reader is on your property, and NEVER tie an animal to the meter itself.

You can always confirm your meter reading date by calling us at 1-800-490-0025 a few days before the meter reading date shown on your most recent bill.

## Good for the air – inside and out

A dehumidifier will increase your comfort by removing excess moisture in the air. An ENERGY STAR® qualified unit uses 10-20% less energy than a standard model, and will get you a \$10 rebate from LIPA. Visit [www.lipower.org/efficiency](http://www.lipower.org/efficiency) or call 1-877-654-5472.

## The Climate @ LIPA



*In this new feature, we'll discuss what LIPA is doing to enhance Long Island's climate – not just the air we all breathe, but within the communities we all share.*

We provide tips and tools that can help you be more energy efficient, but LIPA never stops looking within to see what we can do. LIPA operates a fleet of more than 600 hundred vehicles, more than a quarter of which are now "clean energy" models; including hybrids, bio-diesel, and compressed natural gas (CNG).

Our first two hybrid bucket trucks are now in service. These trucks use 35-55% less fuel, saving thousands of dollars in fuel costs every year. In addition to the cost savings, carbon dioxide emissions will be reduced by 10-15 tons per truck annually.

As older vehicles are replaced, we will continue to make our fleet more green to lower both our operating costs and our impact on air quality.