



October 2011

LIPA NEWS



www.lipower.org

Thank you, Long Island

Hundreds of thousands of our customers showed extraordinary patience as we all recovered from the worst natural disaster to impact Long Island in almost three decades.

Irene brought pounding rain and hurricane force winds in excess of 80 mph in some areas, resulting in island-wide damage to our transmission and distribution system caused by uprooted trees, falling branches, toppled utility poles, downed power lines and flooding. This storm was responsible for nearly 523,000 customer outages in Nassau, Suffolk, and the Rockaways in Queens.

Being without electricity for an extended period of time is far more than just an inconvenience and not having the type of access to restoration times that we offer in normal weather events exacerbates the frustration. The unfortunate reality following a storm of Irene's magnitude is that restoring service to everyone requires more time than any of us would like. You can rest assured that throughout the recovery, our foremost concern was restoring power for every customer affected as quickly and safely as possible.

We are committed to continuous improvement and rest assured that we are already taking each and every opportunity to examine what we can do better. We have already completed meetings with municipal officials to assure a uniform process to address tree removal and downed power line coordination as well as solicit recommendations for improvement.

LIPA assembled the largest utility workforce in Long Island's history. More than 7,500 of our employees and contractors from as far away as Michigan, Iowa, Texas, Colorado and Kansas worked 16-hour shifts at all times of the day and night. LIPA and National Grid restoration personnel, complimented by out of state contractors, were successful in restoring power within a 48 hour period to more than half of our customers affected by the devastation of Irene. We appreciate the dedicated efforts of all LIPA and National Grid personnel who worked diligently around the clock to help get power restored –especially the heroic men and women of Local IBEW 1049 in repairing nearly 6,000 damage locations.

Our work to permanently repair damage from this storm will continue over the next few weeks and even months. You will continue to see LIPA crews and contractors out in many communities working to strengthen and enhance the electric system. Our immediate response to Irene involved getting your power on – we will continue the work necessary to help ensure it stays on.

We also want to remind you that we are still in hurricane season. It is never too early, or too late, to start preparing for what you and your family would do in response to another storm. For help getting started, please visit www.lipower.org/stormcenter/safety.html.

We realize losing your power is very inconvenient, especially to those who were out for several days, but rest assured, we did everything we could, as fast as we could, to get your lights back on. We will definitely take away lessons learned to improve upon our performance and communication with our customers for future significant weather events.

There's a Lot You Can Do with "My Account"

From viewing your bills to reporting a power outage, LIPA's online "My Account" service will add convenience to your life – for FREE.

Your bills are now available in the exact format as printed bills and are easy to save or print if necessary. You can get your bills online instead of in the mail with e-LERT and then easily make a payment right on the site. Or enter a meter reading to avoid an estimated bill.

"My Account" will also help you quickly confirm a payment and help you analyze your electricity use, which is important when you're looking to save energy.

You can also easily update your contact information. Having a valid phone number on file allows us to keep you informed about important issues affecting your electric service.

Enroll today in "My Account" and start saving time right away. Just visit www.lipower.org/account at any time.



GET HIGHER PERFORMANCE FROM YOUR HIGH-EFFICIENCY FURNACE

You may have never heard of an electronically commutated motor (ECM) but after a winter with one you'll know exactly what it does. An ECM simply makes your furnace work better, resulting in a more comfortable home and saving you money.

ECMs are quieter than standard motors and use less energy than a 100-watt light bulb. You'll have better air quality in your home and up to \$300 of energy savings in your pocket each year.

Start your savings with a \$200 rebate from LIPA when you have a new furnace with an ECM or equivalent installed by a licensed contractor. The furnace can run on natural gas, oil, or propane. For details, visit www.lipower.org/efficiency or call 1-800-692-2626.

REAP THE BENEFITS OF FREE ENERGY ASSISTANCE

Income-eligible LIPA customers may be able to take advantage of our free Residential Energy Affordability Partnership (REAP) program. REAP can help lower your electric bills, make your home healthier and safer, and direct you to non-LIPA services should you need additional assistance.

REAP starts with a free comprehensive home energy audit that will include inspection of your electric appliances, lighting, and other electric-consuming equipment. We'll provide practical suggestions to lower your energy costs. You may even qualify for FREE energy-saving measures such as compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and insulation.

Qualifications for REAP:

- Must have a LIPA account number
- One to four family dwelling
- Meet the income guidelines below:

Size of Household	Annual Income	Size of Household	Annual Income
1	\$51,989	5	\$80,212
2	\$59,416	6	\$86,153
3	\$66,843	7	\$92,095
4	\$74,270	8	\$98,036

For each additional person, add \$4,494

Call us, toll-free, at 1-800-263-6786 or e-mail us at lipa.reap@csgrp.com

A GREEN THUMB CAN SAVE GREEN

Most people are looking for ways to save energy dollars. Look to nature for help.

Planting trees will enhance not only the beauty of your home, but its energy efficiency. The ideal time is fall when milder temperatures provide a less stressful environment that enables the tree to put down a strong root system to ensure a healthy and beautiful future.



Here are some energy-saving tree tips:

- Plant evergreen trees on the west and/or north sides of your home to provide shelter from cold winter winds.
- Plant deciduous (leaf dropping) trees on the south and/or the west side to provide shade in the summer, while allowing warmth from the sun to enter the house in the winter.

Be sure to take into account the location of electric wires and the eventual height of your tree. There are "wire-friendly" trees that will not reach electric lines and, therefore, help prevent power interruptions to you and your neighbors.

To learn more, visit www.lipower.org, or call us at 1-800-490-0025.

\$50 RECYCLING OFFER EXTENDED THROUGH NOVEMBER 30TH!

We'll give you \$50 to recycle your old, working refrigerator or freezer. For a free pickup call 1-866-761-2722 or visit www.lipower.org/efficiency.

BALANCED BILLING Q&A

Balanced Billing is a very popular program for LIPA customers because it helps prevent the type of seasonal surge in your electric bill caused by summer cooling costs, for example. Below are some of the most common questions we receive about the program from enrolled customers:

How do you determine my monthly payment?

When the Balanced Billing plan year starts we project how much electricity you will use over the next 12 months and simply divide that into 12 payments. For example, a projection of \$1,200 in annual electricity use would result in a \$100 per month payment.

What could cause a change in my monthly payment?

Your payment can change, up or down, when there is a significant change in your electricity use. The initial monthly payment is based on a projection, and you could use more or less electricity than projected. Even with these possible changes, Balanced Billing provides more stability than standard billing with its unpredictable seasonal fluctuations. Plus, your bill will always show you any change *before* it happens.

My bill shows a credit. Why do I still need to pay my bill?

A "Balance in Your Favor" means that you have been billed for more than you have used at that point in the year. The credit is there to avoid increasing your monthly payment when your usage increases, for example in the summer. There will be other times of the year when you have been billed less than you have used. The whole idea behind Balanced Billing is to prevent seasonal fluctuations in your usage from affecting your monthly bill.

The key thing to remember is that a year on Balanced Billing will never cost you any more or less than if you were not on the program. **You will always pay only for what you have actually used.** The key benefit is that your payment is stable throughout the year to help you budget all of your household expenses.

You can also see the current status of your Balanced Billing plan at anytime by using our "My Account" online services at www.lipower.org/account.



DON'T BE FOOLED BY IMPOSTERS

We are out in the communities we serve every day. Imposters sometimes take advantage of that fact and pose as LIPA employees. Before you let anyone into your home, ask for identification. Every LIPA employee carries an ID card with a LIPA logo and color photo.

If you need further verification, please call us at 1-800-490-0025.

HASSLE (AND STAMP) FREE

Enroll in *DirectPay* and you won't have to give your electric bill a second thought.

This free program gives you plenty of time to review each bill and then pays it automatically from your bank account. You'll still receive your bill just as you do now, and it will show you the date the payment will be made. Take care of your electric bills without checks, stamps, and worrying about due dates.

Enroll right now for free at "My Account" on www.lipower.org/account, or call 1-800-490-0025.

ELECTRIC NEWS, ELECTRONICALLY

Stay in the know, on the go with LIPA eNews.

Sign up to get the latest energy news, energy-saving ideas, and more right in your e-mail inbox.

www.lipower.org/residential/enews.html

YOU'RE A FEW MINUTES FROM SAVINGS

You can quickly get customized recommendations on how to save energy and money with LIPA's free online Home Energy Audit. To get started, go to "Tips & Tools" at www.lipower.org/efficiency.