

Town of North Castle

Supervisor

Michael J. Schiliro

E-News Update

Dear Neighbors and Friends,

Restoration continues to be an obvious focus today. Crews have been dispatched, mostly out-of-state crews that finally arrived as Con Ed is woefully understaffed for events like this. We did finally complete all of the road closures, we had 73 when the storm started; some can take an entire day. Our Highway Department did an incredible job on this, despite having to wait for Con Ed for many of them due to downed lines.

Here is our real time update:

- **Outages:** Our outages are now at 1,180, or about 23% of our Town, which as you know is unacceptable, but a reality when dealing with Con Ed. So about 1300 were restored yesterday, which is progress. I am still receiving a lot of calls and emails from people asking why they weren't first, or why others were first, etc., with accusations of preferential treatment by us, etc. I'm not sure how many more ways to say this but everyone can't be first, and everyone can't be last. Con Ed prioritizes in conjunction with Town staff as to incident areas, primary feeders, etc. As example without getting too far into the weeds, if you live at the end of a "line", you can't get power unless a feeder or primary line is energized. And often they can't identify the problem near the end of a "line" or "run" (i.e.: near your house) until it's energized. There is complicated engineering involved in all of this.
- **Restoration:** We have numerous restoration crews in Town again today, mostly from out-of-state. The workers on the ground are excellent, and truly care about your plight. (Interestingly, many of the out-of-state crews are from rural areas as I've spoken to many of them as I thank them personally, and they really appreciate your plight being on well and septic.) Regarding Con Ed's restoration estimates, I'll repeat, be cautious about relying on Con Ed's estimated time of restoration! I am literally on my daily Con Ed municipal call as I write this and I just advised them that their on-line map shows North Castle's restoration as of 3pm today, which is simply false! I told them that they will not turn on 1200 North Castle homes (and 1800 New Castle homes) in 3 hours! Now unless I hack their computer system, I can't change their post, thus I can only demand they communicate accurately. Part of my daily message to them is that their communications are abysmal. But, this is why I keep reminding you all to make contingency plans based on what Con Ed is advising you. I know many of you are angry, and for good reason, but I do not run Con Ed, but through

experience have learned how to secure our share of their grossly understaffed crews. And I again suggest that you don't query any of the workers that you see; it will most likely get you more frustrated, and it can also slow their progress.

- **Town's Response:** I must mention how committed and dedicated our employees are in their effort in assisting Con Ed to restore your power. Our police, highway, and water/sewer staff are sleeping very little, and the Town Board truly appreciates their dedication, as we do all of our employees. I'll offer a quick comparison for perspective; we have in my opinion the best highway snow removal operation anywhere, but it's not magic. (Sorry I'm bringing up snow but it's a good example). Our Highway Superintendent Jamie Norris watches the weather doggedly (as does our PD) 7-14 days in advance, and makes sure he has ample material (sand, salt, etc.) months in advance and insures preventative maintenance is completed on all equipment but our excellent mechanic staff many months in advance, often during the warm weather months. Then he plans his staffing during the storm, right down to "brining" the roads prior to a snow storm, estimating when his crew will return to the Annex to sleep (on the floor or cots) based on the storm's severity and snow bands, etc. My point is planning and contingencies are critical, and when it comes to Con Ed, there is a vacuum. Their field staff is excellent, their muni reps and staff are excellent, but they are not given the resources they need to help us. The vacuum exists in the higher levels of management, plain and simple. But my message is the same – how does Con Ed get away with this...because they can. And they know it. And in many ways, their shareholders are more important than their customers. Several of you have raised the fact that they have been issuing hundreds of millions of dollars every quarter to their shareholders, at an increasing rate for 10 years, yet invest pennies on the dollar for infrastructure. This would not be happening if they had competition or were regulated properly.
- **Burying Lines:** This conversation always comes up during storms, so I will address briefly. Buried lines do not always fix the problem, as if the primary feeder line is damaged, it's irrelevant. It can certainly help, but it doesn't guarantee zero outages. And in older Towns like ours, due to a road's narrow width, tree growth, etc., you can't physically bury every line. Also, two years ago at the muni meeting with the Con Ed CEO John McAvoy after the Riley/Quinn storm, I sat in the front row and asked a specific question about this and provided a suggestion. My question was how much does it cost per mile to bury lines, as I had been told previously that it increased from \$1million/mile to \$2M/mile. He advised \$8Million/mile. (Yes, you read that right). So I asked if he could provide the engineer's report supporting that number and he said he could – thankfully I didn't hold my breath. I also suggested that since we will have countless storms

over the next 10-20 years, why not consider what those storm costs would be, then bond that similar amount now and invest in burying lines. Crickets.

STATUS ON ROAD OPENINGS: As of today, finally all of our roads are clear. We had three more crews out all day yesterday (Sunday).

NOTE: The reason this can't take so long, even though it shouldn't, is that the Town cannot independently clear a tree that involves wires – the wires must be removed by Con-Edison personnel. Also, you will see tree debris on the roadsides for many weeks. Our highway department will get to this over time, so it will not disappear quickly. Please be patient.

As of 11 AM Monday, August 10th:

Total Roads impacted: 73

Total Roads that are now passable in North Castle: 73

Roads that are closed in North Castle with wires down: 0

IMPORTANT REQUEST REGARDING CON ED

COMMUNICATIONS IN THE FIELD: If Con Ed field staff communicates to you that they are waiting for the Town for repairs or to call us to report an outage, you are being misinformed. We wait for Con Ed or out-of-state crews to arrive to complete jobs, they don't wait for us. It continues to be a source of frustration for all muni officials.

TEMPORARY OUTAGES: Just a reminder, that it's common during restoration that if you have power, you may temporary lose power; it's called a "deliberate shutdown" or being "De-energized". In the process of restoring certain properties, sometimes they must cut power to a broader area in order to complete, and then restore everyone in that area. If this happens to you, you can call Con Ed and they may be able to confirm, but odds are your power loss is short term.

TOWN POOL IS OPEN: Our filter is working, so we're in business. Remember to bring your own chairs. Also, for non-member residents still without power, up until Wednesday at closing, we will allow you to enter even though you are not a member, just pay our normal guest fee. Please note that due to COVID restrictions the showers are closed.

CHARGING STATION / WATER:

Armonk: We have a 24/7 charging station outside of the Hergenhan Rec Center on Maple Ave and on the Whipoorwill Road East side of the Library. There are a finite number of outlets, bring your own cords and plugs, wear masks, bring disinfectant, etc. Also, we connected a hose in the rear of the building for those with well water who need water to flush, etc. Fortunately, this is a popular item for residents.

North White Plains Community Center: We also have a 24/7

charging station outside of the Center on the beautiful outdoor deck. There are a finite number of outlets, bring your own cords and plugs, wear masks, bring disinfectant, etc. We have also set up a hose as well if needed.

Community Park Drive: The Town has provided a filling station for potable drinking water in Community Park (aka IBM Park) situated on the left side of the access road entrance.

DRY ICE: NORTH CASTLE LOCATION ADDED! Con-Edison has information vans located at the following locations. Dry Ice distribution will begin today, Sunday, August 9th, between 10:30 AM and 9 PM. Police Chief Simonsen was dogged in his pursuit of a dry ice station in North Castle; I formally requested it last night, and it was established this morning.

- The North Castle Community Park, 205 Business Park Drive, in Armonk. Distribution will be from 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. or until supplies run out.
- The Cross-County Shopping Center, 8000 Mall Walk, Yonkers. Distribution will be from 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. or until supplies run out.

Con-Edison Spoiled Food Claim Form:

Con-Edison has expanded their claims policy for customers who have been without power for 48 hours or more since Thursday 8/6 to cover spoiled food, medication, or perishable commercial merchandise. Both forms are located on the Con-Edison [File a Claim](#) page.

REPORTING TELECOM ISSUES – FIOS / ALTICE, ETC.: If you have issues, call your provider directly and get a ticket number. Then email my Executive Assistant Mindy Berard (mberard@northcastleny.com) with that ticket number, your name, address, provider and the number associated with the account and she will pass to the County. County Executive George Latimer has dedicated staff to perform the follow up for you on this. It's a huge help!

NO SHELTER / SOME WIFI:

As you know, our own NC4 (North Castle Citizen Corps Council) always establishes an emergency shelter at a moment's notice. Unfortunately due to Covid, we cannot at this time. **We can offer WIFI at the Herganhan Rec Center.** We do not have outdoor WIFI capabilities at our other buildings.

REPORTING POWER OUTAGES:

Call Con Edison directly: (800) 752-6633 or visit their website at www.coned.com. Every residence should report their own outage directly to Con Edison in order for them to create a ticket.

You can also sign up for Con Edison Text Alerts by [Clicking Here](#). And while on their website, you can find a ["map of outages"](#) and customize right down to North Castle.

EMERGENCIES and HAZARDS:

In case of Emergency call the North Castle Police Department

(NCPD): 273-9500.

Please register for NIXLE to receive Police and Highway Alerts
www.nixle.com.

If you use life-support Equipment – register with Con-Edison by filling out the life support equipment form on the [Con-Edison website](#).

Dangerous conditions still exist like weak limbs, etc. Please be careful!!

CAUTION: Do not drive around Police barriers or yellow Caution Tape once a road is closed. The NCPD closes a road because a hazard exists, and NEVER ATTEMPT TO TOUCH WIRES.

COVID: Don't forget – MASK UP!!! Keep distancing!!! Model Good Behavior and get used to it as it will be around for a while. A quick date update: We remain well below the county average of incident rates per population. We currently have 9 positive cases in Town, and our total since Covid began is 217. We can report these numbers, but that is all that we can and will report, thus please understand and appreciate that due to confidentiality laws, emails to us asking for any further info regarding details will not be responded to.

It's easy to lose focus on Covid with this aggravating storm and power outage, but we can't let our guard down. Also, if you have questions regarding your child's school attendance, you should direct those to your school district.

I along with the Town Board and Town Administrator fully understand the inconvenience and utter frustration. And I'm not just saying that; we do. Our level of frustration has exceeded its boiling point – it's 2020 and after a 3-hour storm, residents still don't have power after 7 days! Granted, this storm packed an incredible punch.

Mike

Michael Schiliro - Supervisor Town of North Castle

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR TOWN INFO: As always, follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



Sign up for emergency alerts via
NIXLE

Michael J. Schiliro | Supervisor | 914-273-3000 | [Website](#)

