

Hunterdon Freeholders: JCP&L Failures Are NJBPU's Responsibility

Hunterdon County's Freeholders have released a letter sent today to the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) calling for accountability equally from both Jersey Central Power & Light (JCP&L) and the BPU for the utility's failure to live up to the BPU's 2018 Order on Reliability and Security, and the state agency's failure to monitor JCP&L's performance.

Freeholder Board Deputy Director Sue Soloway stated, "It has been eight years since Hurricane Sandy and over two years since the July 2018 BPU Order, and in this latest storm Hunterdon County residents have seen very little in reliability or security from JCP&L, and the BPU must own up to its' responsibility for this failure."

"The July 2018 BPU Order was supposed to fix many of the communications problems that occurred during the March 2018 windstorm – it is the BPU's job to oversee implementation and performance by the utility. It seems they are not doing their job."

"When it came right down to it, JCP&L's system did not work," Soloway said.

The Hunterdon Freeholders' letter called attention to the breakdown of JCP&L's online reporting mechanism that hindered the county's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and 9-1-1 communications center's ability to coordinate with the utility on downed power lines, blocked roadways, and outages.

"Our residents could not be more appreciative of the long hours of hard work being put in by power company crews from New Jersey, those who have come here from many other states, and the private contractors, all of whom are making a great effort, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, to help restore power. They are the heroes, not the problem.

But residents in Hunterdon County, and throughout the state, are rightfully angry and frustrated by the continued failure of the power infrastructure, in storm after storm, and the lack of reasonable communications from the utility. The public is demanding accountability equally from both JCP&L and the BPU," Soloway concluded.

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