



Summary

On Wednesday, July 26th, the Windsor-Essex region experienced the disruptive force of a severe windstorm, with the southern part of the region bearing the brunt of its impact. Harrow and Kingsville, two communities within this region, were particularly hard-hit by the storm. The situation escalated when reports confirmed a tornado touchdown in Harrow. The intense wind gusts associated with the storm resulted in significant damage, causing utility poles to break, and sending trees and branches crashing onto electrical wires. This, in turn, led to widespread power outages in both Harrow and Kingsville, further compounding the challenges faced by residents and emergency responders alike.

Initial E.L.K.'s Response:

4:15PM	First outage report was received. Reports of possible tornado in parts of Harrow
4:32PM	4 crew members responded to the outages. Crews were split between Harrow and Kingsville
4:40PM	Deer Run arborists were called to help with trees and branches removal around electrical infrastructure
5:00PM	Ontario Mutual Assistance Program (OnMAG) was activated
6:30PM	E.L.K. met with the participants of OnMAG. Following utilities offered to send help next morning: Oakville Hydro Bluewater Hydro London Hydro Entegrus Powerline Lakeland Power Toronto Hydro Essex Powerline
6:44PM	E.L.K. contacted Windsor Power and Light (WPL) to send crews for immediate response
6:46PM	Essex Powerline confirmed and mobilized 2 crews

In both affected communities, E.L.K. faced issues with the power supply from Hydro One, mirroring the challenges experienced during a previous storm in February. The situation was further exacerbated by the fact that E.L.K. was unable to conduct a thorough examination of the issues until the supply from Hydro One was fully restored. This delay in assessing and addressing the problems added to the complexity of the restoration efforts, prolonging the inconvenience and uncertainty faced by residents in Harrow and Kingsville.

On Thursday, July 27th, a coordinated response effort took shape as crews from Bluewater Hydro, Essex Powerline, and Entegrus were dispatched to the storm-ravaged areas of Kingsville and Harrow in the Windsor-Essex region. In Harrow, the line staff from Bluewater Hydro were deployed to address and restore a broken pole line on Erie St., a vital step towards reestablishing power and safety in the community. Meanwhile, in Kingsville, both Entegrus and Essex Powerline

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crews were mobilized to the scene to tackle the challenging task of restoring downed secondary wires, which had suffered extensive damage in multiple locations. This collaborative response aimed to expedite the restoration process and provide much-needed relief to the affected residents in both towns.

Through a concerted effort involving both external and internal resources, a significant milestone was achieved on the evening of Friday, July 28th, as power was successfully restored to all customers in the storm-affected communities of Kingsville and Harrow. This collaborative response, which saw the combined efforts of various utility companies and E.L.K.'s dedicated crews, played a pivotal role in bringing relief to the residents who had endured days of power outages. While the restoration of electricity marked a crucial step toward normalcy, E.L.K. crews remained hard at work, diligently clearing trees and branches from around the electrical infrastructure to ensure the continued reliability and safety of the power supply in the region.

Prior to the Major Event

1. Did the distributor have any prior warning that the Major Event would occur?

Yes, Environment Canada issued a severe thunderstorm warning for the southwestern region of Canada, effective from late afternoon through the evening of July 26th. In addition to the thunderstorm alert, Environment Canada also issued warnings for potential tornadoes, damaging wind gusts, heavy rainfall, and the possibility of hail.

2. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor arrange to have extra employees on duty or on standby prior to the Major Event beginning? If so, please give a brief description of arrangements.

Yes, E.L.K.'s standard on-call personnel promptly addressed the initial power outage reports. After conducting their initial assessments, E.L.K. efficiently divided the crews into two shifts, enabling the restoration work to proceed continuously throughout the day and night. Recognizing the scope of the situation from their initial evaluation, E.L.K. acted immediately to initiate the activation of the Ontario Mutual Assistance Program (OnMAG), reaching out to neighboring utility companies to secure additional assistance.

3. If the distributor did have prior warning, did the distributor issue any media announcements to the public warning of possible outages resulting from the pending Major Event?

Yes, on July 26th at 12:02PM, E.L.K. posted on its Twitter and Facebook page informing customers of an upcoming severe thunderstorm and emphasized the importance of keeping a safe distance from downed powerlines.

4. Did the Distributor train its staff on the response plans to prepare for this type of major event?

There has been no formal training provided to staff to prepare for this type of major event. However, E.L.K. has reviewed its Emergency Preparedness Policy with the staff.

During The Major Event

1. Please identify the main contributing cause of the Major Event as per the table in Section 2.1.4.2.5 of the Electricity Reporting and Record Keeping Requirements. Please provide a brief description of the event.

The Major Event's primary factors contributing to its occurrence were the Loss of Supply, Adverse Weather conditions, and Tree Contacts. According to reports from Environment Canada, wind gusts reached speeds of up to 91km/h, resulting in significant damage to utility poles. The high winds led to the breakage of tree branches from nearby trees, which then fell onto power lines. In certain cases, large trees were uprooted, collapsing onto the power lines and causing extensive damage to the electrical infrastructure.

2. Was the IEEE Standard 1366 used to identify the scope of the Major Event?

Yes, IEEE Standard 1366 was used to identify the scope of the Major Event. As per the calculations, the MED Threshold based on 2018-2022 was 2608. The total number of outage hours incurred by this event was 59,739 including loss off supply. Excluding the loss of Supply, the total number of outage hours incurred were 28,712.

3. When did the Major Event begin?

The Major Event began on July 26th, 2023 at 4:15PM

4. Did the distributor issue any information about this Major Event, such as estimated times of restoration, to the public during the Major Event? If Yes, please provide a brief description of the information. If No, please explain.

Yes, E.L.K. maintained an active presence on its Twitter account, consistently sharing updates on estimated restoration times where available and notifying customers about areas that were currently undergoing restoration efforts. Importantly, the company consistently emphasized the crucial safety measure of maintaining a safe distance from downed power lines to protect the public from potential hazards.

5. How many customers were interrupted during the Major Event? What percentage of the Distributor's total customer base did the interrupted customers represent?

During the Major Event, a total of 5,028 customers experienced interruptions. E.L.K. serves a customer base totaling 12,101 individuals, and the Major Event accounted for approximately 41% of these interruptions, resulting from various factors such as Loss of Supply, Adverse Weather, or Tree Contact.

6. How many hours did it take to restore 90% of the customers who were interrupted?

It took E.L.K. approximately 38 hours to restore power to 90% of customers interrupted.

7. Were there any outages associated with Loss of Supply during the Major Event?

Yes, E.L.K.'s customers in Kingsville and Harrow communities experience outages associated with Loss of Supply. All three feeders from Hydro One serving Harrow and Kingsville were interrupted.

8. In responding to the Major Event, did the Distributor utilize assistance through a third-party mutual assistance agreement with other utilities?

In the earlier part of 2023, E.L.K. joined the Ontario Mutual Assistance Program (OnMAG). As soon as the initial outage call came in, E.L.K. took immediate action, activating OnMAG within one hour to seek assistance from fellow utility providers. During the subsequent meeting with other OnMAG members, several utilities generously offered to dispatch their crews to aid in the restoration efforts. E.L.K. gratefully accepted the offers extended by Bluewater Hydro, Entegrus, and Essex Powerlines, as these utilities were situated in close proximity to E.L.K.'s service area.

9. Did the distributor run out of any needed equipment or materials during the Major Event?

E.L.K. had much of its critical equipment, including poles and transformers, readily available in its inventory. Additionally, the assisting utilities that came to E.L.K.'s aid brought their own materials, contributing significantly to E.L.K.'s ability to maintain its stock levels throughout the Major Event.

After The Major Event

1. What steps, if any, are being taken to be prepared for or mitigate such major events in the future (i.e. staff training, process improvements, system upgrades)?

Before the onset of this Major Event, E.L.K. had a pre-existing plan to implement auto reclosers in communities receiving dual feeds from Hydro One, namely Essex and Harrow. E.L.K. had taken proactive steps by placing an order for these auto reclosers. Once installed, these auto reclosers will enhance E.L.K.'s capability to manage load transfers during instances of Loss of Supply.

Furthermore, E.L.K. is committed to enhancing its tree trimming program, with a focus on completing comprehensive tree clearing initiatives for two entire towns each year. This program encompasses the maintenance of both primary and secondary circuits, ensuring the reliability and resilience of the electrical infrastructure.