

Hurricane Sandy Service Reconnection Procedures

The Company has been requested by Board Staff to provide information pertaining to requiring inspections in flood damaged homes before reconnection of electrical service including why such inspections are required. The following responds to this request.

Introduction:

At the outset, it is important to understand that the focus of this requirement is on assuring the safe restoration of electrical service to homes located where flooding has occurred, which JCP&L wants to complete in an expeditious and safe manner working together with local and State officials to do this in an orderly and, again, safe fashion.

Process:

In order to assure a safe restoration of power to areas that have received flood damage, JCP&L works with town and Department of Consumer Affairs (“DCA”) officials to identify areas affected by flooding or structures (building structures) with known structural damage where customers require electrical inspections prior to re-energizing their homes or businesses. This is required to avoid energizing electrical equipment such as breaker panels that may have been damaged by flooding and would not safely operate without repair. Avoiding incidents such as fire and electrocution is the driver behind this process.

Once locations are identified by town or DCA officials, JCP&L will remove all of the meters from these locations prior to energizing the area. If the service entrance cable has been damaged JCP&L will de-energize the service cable.

Customers will then need to have repairs made and receive an inspection of the facilities by town inspector and provide that to JCP&L. JCP&L will then replace the meter with a new one to restore service.

References:

Details regarding this process are found in the “Information and Guidance for Customer Electric Service” document on the Company’s website:

Before initial service to a customer service location is energized, the Company should verify that the installation of the customer’s meter base and associated equipment:

1. has been inspected and approved by the local or state inspection authority, or
2. in any area where there is no local or state inspection authority, has been inspected by a licensed electrician or Company representative.
3. When the Company deems that a hazardous condition exists, it may refuse to energize the customer’s service until the customer complies with these requirements.

4. In addition to complying with the National Electrical Code, the service shall be in accordance with the requirements of the Company and such state and local inspection requirements as may be in force at the time such installation is made.
5. ***Service Restoration - Fire or Flood: If the meter or service entrance equipment has been subjected to fire or flood conditions, an inspection from the above referenced authority, and a release, when applicable, from a Fire Marshall or equivalent is required before service will be re-connected.*** (Emphasis Added).

This is consistent with applicable provisions of the Company's Tariff for service, such as:

5.03 Inspection and Acceptance: The Company may refuse to connect with any Customer's installation or to make additions or alterations to the Company's Service Connection when such installation is not in accordance with the National Electrical Code, or with the Company's requirements, or where a certificate approving such installations has not been issued by an electrical inspection authority certified by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for the area in which the installation is located, or by a City or County Inspection Authority having exclusive authority to make electrical inspection in such area. (See NJAC 14:3-8.3(g) and (h))

7.07 Reconnection of Service or Replacement of Meter: *The Company shall have sole authority to reconnect a service or replace a meter* (Emphasis added). However, upon contacting the Company, a licensed electrician or electrical contractor may be authorized to reconnect a service or reinstall the meter upon completion of his work as provided in Section 7.06. (See Section 4.09)

This information is also disseminated through press releases issued during the storm event, such as:

Service Reconnection (Information recently communicated to customers)

1. As customers complete storm-related repairs to their homes, they will need to have their service reconnected.
2. Recognizing the hardships customers have experienced as a result of the storms, we have waived all fees related to these reconnections.
3. Here are some tips and information to make the reconnection process easier:
 - There are dedicated Service Crews handling reconnection work.
 - Residents should have a licensed electrician make repairs to their homes.
 - If the customer has a functioning electrical service entrance, including the meter – JCP&L will complete the service reconnection.
 - If the meter was removed due to severe damage or flooding – JCP&L will install a new meter after the service is repaired by a qualified electrician and inspected by a state inspector.
 - The inspector will provide certification that the work has been done properly, and will fax the cut-in card to 888-914-9140.
 - The inspector will attach a sticker with the inspection date on the meter pan.

- Customers should have their home address or account number when calling the company to request reconnection.

This approach is also consistent with Board regulations at N.J.A.C. 14:3-8.3(g) and (h), which provide as follows:

g) A utility may refuse to connect a customer to the utility's distribution system if there is any facility or condition on the customer's premises that does not meet the standard terms and conditions of the utility's tariff and all applicable requirements of this chapter and other law.

(h) If, because of its size or character, any facility or condition on the customer's premises is so unusual that it may adversely affect the adequacy of the service furnished to other customers, present or prospective, the utility may set special conditions for connection or may refuse to connect.