



**LINDA D. PUGLISI**  
Town Supervisor

# TOWN OF CORTLANDT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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August 7, 2020

Once again a very slow response from Con Edison just like during previous major storms (i.e. Nor'easter of March 2018 and Hurricane Sandy of November 2012). See attached reports and press releases. My criticism of Con Edison is the same today as it was over past years and major storms for their unpreparedness.

The Chairman, President and CEO Mr. John McAvoy has not been on our daily municipal conference calls with Con Edison. "Where is he" was my question on the call today?

The outside crews for mutual aid are called in too late and therefore days of restoration are lost. Con Edison needs to be held accountable for their slow responses. One third of our town 5,500 homes was without power and four days later the majority of them still have no power. The PSC needs to hold once again public hearings and to take action including heavy fines and consider breaking up this conglomerate which has a monopoly on electric and gas services.

Linda Puglisi  
Supervisor, Town of Cortlandt

(attachments)

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March 13, 2018

**RE: Response from Supervisor Linda Puglisi to Con Edison's CEO, Mr. John McAvoy:**

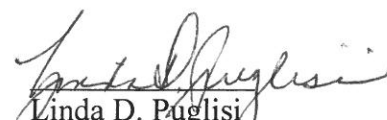
We all know these Nor-Easter storms were severe with high winds followed by large amounts of snowfall. In our area, Northern Westchester County 16" – 20" of heavy wet snow fell during this second storm. Our residents (4,000 in the beginning were not completely restored for 11 days).

However, the major problem with the slow recovery from Con Edison is three fold:

1. The Company does not have enough work crews/personnel to assist with storms of this magnitude.
2. They need to have a supplemental group of workers to augment their permanent workforce (including contractors).
3. They never call in the out-of-state/mutual aid teams/crew/contractors to be on alert and ready to assist.

In Cortlandt, the outside crews (Canada, Ohio, etc.) showed up 7 and 8 days later; poor planning and outrageous. Once they did arrive over a week later then we started to see results.

There are many other issues, as well (i.e. communication of outages). I am requesting a meeting immediately with CEO John McAvoy along with other County representatives and officials to once again tell Con Edison's top managers and CEO our complaints.

  
Linda D. Puglisi  
Town Supervisor

# Hurricane Sandy Update and Next Steps:

## BREAK UP CON EDISON, INC.

From Supervisor Linda Puglisi, Town of Cortlandt, New York 10567

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### Town of Cortlandt Hurricane Sandy Statistics:

1. All homes and areas of the town have finally had their power restored as of Monday, November 12, 2012, two full weeks after Hurricane Sandy hit our region and community on Monday, October 29, 2012. Originally we had 5,000 homes without power (one third of the Town).
2. As I have been stating in my updates it took too long for Con Ed to restore power to our community and for that matter to the region. We all understand the magnitude of this hurricane. It was the largest and most forceful storm that hit our area in many decades. Therefore, in the first few days of the aftermath of this storm we all knew it would be awhile until everyone's power was restored. However, when it became five days, six, seven and then ten days and two weeks before everyone had power restored it became evident that Con Edison, our sole electric company, had not prepared properly, was disorganized and did not have enough crews to service all of the communities in need. Keep in mind we had the trains closed for several days, four schools without power for a week and seventy roads closed for several days due to downed wires and trees.

It was a real disaster not just in Cortlandt but throughout the County. How do I know Con Ed management was not prepared? They did not have the necessary out of state companies to come into our region to assist in an efficient and quicker restoration of power. In the first two days after the storm they only

had one crew (truck) in our Town to service all of these outages (5,000) and downed wires. Only Con Edison can restore the power and take care of the downed wires. It is their poles and wires. The Town crews cannot touch the wires; we have to wait for Con Edison crews. WE are at the mercy of Con Edison!

The department head in Cortlandt for highway and I were on County-wide conference calls held by Con Edison officials twice a day for two weeks including weekends to gather information. Every community in the County (45 in total) also were on these calls so I had to talk fast and ask the key questions. We had a limited time to speak. "How many crews for our town? How long would it take? Where are the needed out of state companies to help? Where is the dry ice for our area (which never was delivered by Con Edison, by the way)? When will the schools' power be restored?" These are just some of the questions Jeff and I raised during these many calls. The information they gave to us was vague to say the least. Even their own Con Ed liaison sitting in our highway garage could not receive the accurate up-to-the minute data that we needed to help our residents. This was managements fault, not the liaison.

3. Here are some of the statistics I have gathered about Con Edison, Inc. since the power has finally been restored in our town.

**Statistics:**

- Number of Areas Con Edison Services:  
3.1 million electric customers  
1.1 million gas customers  
1,825 steam (water) customers  
4,201,825 total customers
- Areas that Con Edison Services:  
5 boroughs of New York City  
Majority of Westchester County  
Rockland County – since 1999 Con Ed has owned Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc. and its subsidiaries.
- Total Number of employees:  
2010 – 15,180  
2011 – 15,016 A reduction of 164 employees to service 4.2 million customers.  
Not all of these employees are workers in the field restoring power for us, or trimming trees and branches around their power lines, or assessing needed repairs or replacements to their utility polls or lines. Many of these employees are in their management.

- The C.E.O. of Con Edison and who also serves as the Chairman and President of this very large company is a Mr. Kevin Burke. His total compensation including straight salary in 2011 was \$10,965,047. (million dollars).
- The C.F.O. and Senior Vice President of Con Edison, Inc. is a Mr. Robert Hoglund who had a total salary/compensation in 2011 of \$2,581,524. (million dollars).

\* In comparison:

- NYSEG (electric company) only services 175,090 customers throughout New York State and only 32,525 in Westchester County.
  - L.I.P.A. (electric company) only serves 1.1 million customers for all of Long Island, New York
4. The outside crews/companies (Pike, etc.) did not get to Cortlandt until one week after Hurricane Sandy. Unacceptable! At their own admission they only had 200 Con Edison crews available for 45 communities in Westchester County (everyone experienced power outages and damage). Obviously, not enough crews for the 250,000 homes/businesses/schools/institutions without power after the hurricane in the County. As in previous hurricanes and tropical storms (Irene, Lee, Floyd and the Halloween snowstorm last year) they did not have enough crews. We told them that during and after these other storms. They did not learn from their mistakes. Therefore, I am insisting that Con Edison now begins planning for the next storm, because another will occur.
- a) They need to go into each municipality and assess/evaluate/survey each area hard hit for necessary improvements.
  - b) Begin the repairs to the sagging wires (there are many) and to the leaning utility poles (there are many). Also, begin immediately the tree cutting/trimming and clearing necessary to free up these lines from felled trees and branches in the future.
  - c) Have the list of outside companies lined up ready to restore power immediately not one or one and a half weeks later after the storm.
  - d) Give these companies data of about each community (street maps, pole locations, names of officials in each community so they are prepared to restore power along with the Con Ed crews from day one!
  - e) Call upon the New York State National Guard to help. Their Southern New York State headquarters is in Cortlandt at Camp Smith and they have been deployed by the Governor to help out hard hit areas including our town.
  - f) Better communication with the towns/villages/cities hit hard by these storms with specific information of where their crews are, how many trucks and workers.

5. In conclusion, I will be filing a complaint to the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC), which hears complaints, sets rates for utility companies and licenses New York State utility companies.

The complaint will include:

- a) **NO** rate increases for the consumers by Con Edison. Do not pass along incompetency onto the impacted consumers by this storm.
- b) **NO** salary increases for the **top** Con Edison officials/managers.
- c) **BREAK-UP** Con Edison. **It is too big!** Divide it up into a separate company for Westchester County electric consumers, one for the New York City boroughs and one for Rockland County.

We can't and shouldn't compete for power restoration services with New York City nor with Rockland County. Three separate companies with three different board of directors and management teams. The monopoly of Con Edison, Inc. needs to be split up and the PSC is the agency that can and must take action and achieve this necessary goal to best serve our area of New York State.

6. A final note: In no way are these comments directed towards the Con Edison workers who risk their lives and work hard for us, but at the poor management of the top officials of Con Edison.
7. Summary: Con Edison, Inc. is **TOO BIG** and needs to be broken up into at least three separate (new) companies!

Linda D. Puglisi  
Supervisor  
Town of Cortlandt, New York 10567  
(November 15, 2012)