

Docket No. 20-08-03 – Investigation into Electric Distribution Companies' Preparation
for and Response to Tropical Storm Isaias

April 28, 2021 Final Decision

PURA Discussions re: Topics of Interest to Municipalities

Line Crews and Damage Assessors

The Authority's Final Decision did not substantively revise the discussion in the Draft Decision concerning the Electric Distribution Companies' use of line crews and damage assessors.

Liaison and Make Safe Program

While the Authority's Final Decision did not substantively revise the discussion in the Draft Decision concerning the liaison program, the Final Decision does include more information about the experiences of Bethel, New Fairfield, Newtown and Ridgefield (the "Four Towns"). The Final Decision includes a discussion about Eversource's failure to prioritize the restoration of critical town facilities and priority locations such as the Bethel police station, a resident in New Fairfield with a medical condition, an over-55 residential community and senior living centers in Ridgefield. Final Decision at 68.

The Final Decision includes the following: "The clearest example showing the deficiency in Eversource's response to town critical facilities with back-up power occurred at the town of Bethel's police station. The town reported an outage at its police station multiple times per day through the assigned Eversource's Liaison... Eversource visited the location with a damage assessor who determined that the facility was operating properly on an emergency generator, and Eversource determined that the facility had the ability to operate on generator power sufficiently for multiple days... What Eversource had not considered when it made this decision was that Bethel had great difficulty on multiple occasions obtaining fuel because its oil supplier had power, telephone, and internet outages from the storm... The facility nearly ran out of fuel on multiple occasions... Importantly, it is not within Eversource's discretion to second guess the restoration priority of a town critical facility that is on a generator; this is entirely in the purview of the municipality." Final Decision at 87.

ROE Reduction

The Authority determined that the performance by Eversource and UI "was deficient, inadequate, and imprudent to varying degrees. As a result, the Authority finds that a reduction in the EDCs' ROE is necessary and appropriate to adequately incentivize improved storm response performance moving forward... The EDCs' customers have a right to expect that performance failures exhibited in response to Tropical Storm Isaias

will not be repeated going forward; indeed customers have a statutory right to expect that the EDC will perform future public service duties in a prudent, efficient, safe, and adequate manner with care for public safety.” Final Decision at 127.

The Authority imposed a 15 basis point ROE reduction for UI and a 90 basis point ROE reduction for Eversource. In reducing Eversource’s ROE the Authority stated that it, “cannot reasonably rely on claims by Eversource in this proceeding that it has or will implement improvements to its emergency response as a basis for reducing the warranted ROE reduction given that many of the same deficiencies identified herein were present in the 2011 Storms Decision.” Final Decision at 128.

Fines and Penalties

The Authority found that as a result of Eversource’s failure to satisfy the performance standards for managing its municipal liaison program, executing its Make Safe responsibilities, communicating critical information to its customers, and meeting its obligation to secure adequate resources in a timely manner to protect the public safety and to provide for the overall public interest that the Authority will consider fines and penalties in a subsequent proceeding in Docket No. 20-08-03. Final Decision at 131.

[http://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/dockcurr.nsf/0/9c3dfa93dc6c03d4852586c50052218a/\\$FILE/200803-042821.pdf](http://www.dpuc.state.ct.us/dockcurr.nsf/0/9c3dfa93dc6c03d4852586c50052218a/$FILE/200803-042821.pdf)