



NEW YORK CITY **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
Office of Public Information

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 26, 2006
06-015

SUMMARY OF THE CITY'S RESPONSE TO QUEENS POWER OUTAGES

The City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) coordinated the inter-agency response to the blackout situation in northwest of Queens residents throughout the duration of the Queens power outage. The City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) remains active to monitor the status of the Con Ed network during this week's forecasted heat wave.

The following is summary of City agency and not for profit resources that were deployed to the affected areas in Queens:

Police Department

Over the course of the Northwest Queens power outage deployed thousands of additional personnel in the affected areas. Thousands of police officers and traffic agents blanketed the 114th and 108th Precincts directing traffic and safeguarding people and property. The response included eight mobile response vehicles and 12 commands posts staffed with a Community Affairs Police Officers. Additionally, NYPD light towers were placed at key intersections. The NYPD Aviation Unit provided aerial surveys that provided situational awareness to commanders on the ground. The NYPD worked to identify customers with life sustaining equipment to ensure they have the resources they need.

Fire Department

The FDNY moved its engine and ladder companies into the field for the duration of the outage as well as opening up engine 312 for use as a feeding center. The EMS Mobile Emergency Response Vehicle (MERV) was stationed at Steinway Street and Ditmars Boulevard to provide mass care to neighborhood residents. The Fire Safety Education Unit was also deployed to the area to hand out fire prevention and safety information.

Department of Transportation

DOT has returned all of the nearly 100 affected traffic signals to normal operations as well as installing and removed temporary STOP signs at more than 100 locations.

Department of Sanitation

Sanitation provided enhanced service throughout the affected areas. Since Friday afternoon, Sanitation has had 32 additional collection trucks working in the area. These



NEW YORK CITY **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
Office of Public Information

trucks have made 7648 unscheduled stops collecting a total of 159.29 tons of waste since the beginning of the blackout. In addition, a mechanical street sweepers are still deployed in the area alongside a motorized litter patrol unit to pick up any debris that may have fallen into the street and street gutters.

Human Resources Administration

HRA opened the Special Services Center at its office in Long Island City at 45-22 32nd Place (off Queens Boulevard). Personnel from numerous city agencies staffed the Center to provide information and referrals to residents in the affected areas. Over the weekend, HRA has had more than 1,000 cases of water onsite and in-stock and more than 500 heater meals. These meals were shared with senior centers run by the Department for the Aging. There are three vans and seven cars available to transport residents to the Center and deliver supplies and services to homes and locations within the community. Crisis workers and volunteers are available during hours of operation and are on-call 24 hours. These services will remain in place until power is restored.

NYC Small Business Services

SBS has reached out to 751 local small businesses in the affected area. Of these businesses, more than 40 percent had perishable items. These businesses were provided with ConEd claim forms for reimbursement for up to \$7,000. SBS staff will continue its outreach in the neighborhood. In addition, in conjunction with the EDC, SBS is working to provide information to businesses on emergency loan applications and availability.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

DOHMH dispatched dozens of food inspectors to address food safety issues in area restaurants and ensure that restaurants discard spoiled food. In addition, two mental health professionals have provided assistance via phone to residents seeking help at the Special Assistance Center. DOHMH also intensified its analysis of syndromic surveillance trends so that the city can quickly detect any heat- or diarrhea-related increases in the affected areas and citywide. To date, there have been no such increases. DOHMH is also prepared to intensify rodent control activities in the area if needed.

Health and Hospitals Corporation

HHC has deployed a mobile medical unit at the intersection of Ditmars Boulevard and Steinway Street. The unit was staffed with medical personnel ready to address health issues that may arise for affected residents including providing emergency medications such as insulin and blood pressure medication. HHC also deployed three commuter vans to transport area residents to the mobile medical unit, the Special Services Center, or local hospitals if needed



NEW YORK CITY **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
Office of Public Information

Department for the Aging

Department for the Aging operated its senior centers during the power outage. All senior centers ran on generator power and were able to provide food and water to seniors. DFTA deployed two wheelchair accessible vans to transport area seniors to these centers. Overall, over 950 seniors have visited these centers. During the power outage, 150 seniors receiving Meals-on-Wheels or senior home health services were checked on and contacted. Meals-on-Wheels food deliveries were completed Friday.

Department of Consumer Affairs

In addition to DCA staff at the Special Assistance Center, DCA Inspectors were in the field to monitor any reports of short supply and price gouging in the area.

Department of Citywide Administrative Services

DCAS provided logistical support to the overall relief operation, providing bottled water and vans for shuttle service between Astoria and the Special Services Center in Long Island City.

Economic Development Corporation

During the power outage, EDC assisted several companies and housing co-ops obtain emergency generators from Con Edison including Silvercup Studios, National Envelope, Playbill, Inc., and two housing co-ops in the NW Queens Boulevard Gardens. EDC also reached out to 18 area companies to offer assistance.

Department of Environmental Protection

The Bowery Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant remains on the grid for power and is functioning normally. No increased odors have been detected in the community. Scheduled emergency fuel deliveries to Bowery Bay have been cancelled and the facility's fuel reserves are full.

Mayor's Community Assistance Unit

CAU has reached out to more than 350 local civic leaders and elected officials and provided them with information on where additional City resources are being dispatched and how the community can access assistance. CAU has also provided staff at each NYPD Command Post. CAU is also operating four commuter vans in the Sunnyside and Woodside neighborhoods handing out bottled water and food reimbursement forms. CAU is also organizing a volunteer effort in the area to staff vans and hand out food and water with the American Red Cross on MTA bus routes. CAU staff is also coordinating other agency commuter vans and advising on which neighborhood routes have the most people requiring transportation to City facilities such as the Special Assistance Center and the HHC mobile medical unit.



NEW YORK CITY **OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
Office of Public Information

As during all periods of high energy demand, OEM urges residents to conserve energy to help prevent power disruptions.

- Set your air conditioner thermostat no lower than 78 degrees.
- Only use the air conditioner when you are home. If you want to cool your home before you return, set a timer to have it switch on no more than a half-hour before you arrive.
- Turn non-essential appliances off.
- Only use appliances that have heavy electrical loads early in the morning or very late at night

Learn more about how to stay cool all summer long with OEM's **Ready New York: Beat the Heat** guide. For more information about heat-related hazards and the Ready New York campaign, visit **NYC.gov/oem** or call **311**.

-30-

CONTACT: Jarrod Bernstein 718-422-4888