

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**  
**Harrisburg, PA 17105**

**Final Policy Statement Regarding Utility Service  
Outage Response, Recovery and Public  
Notification Guidelines**

**Public Meeting - March 6, 2014  
2382943 - LAW  
Docket No. M-2013-2382943**

**STATEMENT OF**  
**COMMISSIONER PAMELA A. WITMER**

Before the Public Utility Commission (Commission) today is the Final Order approving revisions to our Proposed Policy Statement regarding Utility Service Outage Response, Recovery and Public Notification Guidelines. The updated Policy Statement establishes guidance for additional preparation and response measures by electric distribution companies (EDCs) during major service outage events. Some of the additional measures provide for regional conference calls for state and local government officials including local emergency managers, annual storm restoration exercises, and up-to-date outage information reported on websites, as available. I fully support this Final Policy Statement because it incorporates and consolidates many best practices developed through the utilities' storm response to date from events occurring in Pennsylvania over the last three years.

We have learned many lessons, and will continue to learn, from weather events ranging from Superstorm Sandy to the most recent snow and ice storms in terms of better managing major service outages to mitigate the serious impacts that may occur to the lives and property of Pennsylvania's residents and businesses. Ensuring safe and reliable service is a basic responsibility of the Commission. Whether the cause of an outage is an anticipated major storm or an unexpected cybersecurity incident, today's action represents further progress on the part of the Commission, utilities, statutory advocates, and interested partners in assuring that significant measures are in place to expedite the restoration of electric service for all customers.

Specifically, I have had a keen interest in the interdependency between all utility sectors from both a physical and cybersecurity perspective and in the development of interoperability best practices so that certain utility services can be maintained during a major service outage. Thus, I fully support the establishment of the Critical Infrastructure Interdependency Working Group (CIIWG) and its mission to further develop additional best practices to address the needs of all customers during major outages. During these outage events, it is critical that our utilities work cooperatively across various utility and government sectors so that power is restored as quickly and safely as possible. The safe and reliable operation of one or several utilities may be dependent upon the quick restoration of service by another sector.

Having all of our utilities and non-jurisdictional partners in one room discussing best practices can only lead to greater cooperation and procedures that benefit all residential and business customers in this Commonwealth.

I am confident that the outcomes from this Working Group will enhance our outage response capabilities during future major service outage events and will help companies share lessons learned throughout the Commonwealth for the good of all customers. I look forward to attending the first meeting of the CIIWG to help effectuate these goals.

**DATE: March 6, 2014**

  
**PAMELA A. WITMER**  
**COMMISSIONER**