

NORTHWEST MUNICIPAL CONFERENCE
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*A Regional Association of Illinois
Municipalities and Townships
Representing a Population of Over One Million*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MUNICIPALITIES PROPOSE SOLUTIONS TO
COMED OUTAGE RESTORATION FAILURES THAT PLACE THE
HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF RESIDENTS AT RISK**

**Local leaders seek ComEd emergency plan
before vote on "Smart Grid" rate hike**

Commonwealth Edison's (ComEd's) inadequate response to repeated power outages in the Chicago region this summer has prompted municipal leaders to craft solutions that implement higher reliability and outage response standards to better protect the health, safety and welfare of residents and businesses. Local officials are insisting that these measures must be adopted prior to any further consideration of legislation that raises rates and guarantees ComEd profits.

Communities, particularly those in the north and northwest suburbs, were crippled by prolonged electric power outages that accompanied a series of severe storms in June and July. These extended outages left critical public facilities inoperable during crisis periods when residents and businesses were most dependent on these operations. In addition, many communities needed to divert police and fire personnel to watch over downed power lines blocking streets for days while awaiting ComEd repair crews to arrive.

"The ability of our municipalities to facilitate the storm recovery process is too often hamstrung by the failures of ComEd to restore necessary power to keep our first responders, emergency operation centers and medical facilities operational," stated NWMC President and Wilmette Village President Christopher Canning, "We have no confidence that meaningful measures to address these problems will be made by ComEd without corrective legislation by the General Assembly to hold them accountable."

With local frustration at high levels over unacceptably slow power restoration, the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC) is recommending solutions to these potentially life threatening issues. These solutions are articulated in "Solutions to Inadequate ComEd Outage Response", a white paper describing systematic shortfalls with ComEd's restoration efforts, the risks these shortfalls place upon the health, safety and welfare of residents and how local officials are denied critical information to help ComEd manage storm restorations and ongoing electric system investment.

The NWMC white paper recommends specific protocols for ComEd power restoration during widespread outage events. It also recommends legislative and regulatory actions needed to ensure ComEd emergency management and preparedness is up to the task during future outage situations and penalizes ComEd for failure to follow these prescribed protocols.

The white paper also proposes accountability measures that are absent in both current statute and in Senate Bill 1652, ComEd's legislation to increase electric rates and corporate profits as part of implementation of "smart grid" technologies. Municipal leaders are calling upon state legislators to defer any further consideration of Senate Bill 1652 until the recommendations in the white paper are adopted.

"We recognize that during a major outage event no utility, including ComEd, has the ability to restore everyone's power within minutes. What we do expect is that ComEd is devoting their full resources to addressing their current shortfalls instead of seeking legislation to increase their profits," stated President Canning, "These recommendations are common sense measures that should already be in place. Addressing these issues must be ComEd's highest priority. Failure to do so in future outage events places the health, safety and welfare of our residents at risk."

Local leaders and legislators, including State Senator Susan Garrett who is preparing legislation based on the white paper recommendations, will be available at a press conference on Tuesday, October 11 to discuss these recommended solutions.

Tuesday, October 11 at 10:00 a.m.
James R. Thompson Center
Blue Room, 15th Floor
100 W. Randolph St., Chicago

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