

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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## **NIPSCO Adds New Customer and Crew Tools to Storm Season Preparations**

*Mobile site and added technology focused on saving time, increasing communication during major outage events*

**MERRILLVILLE, Ind.** – Nationwide, severe weather-related problems (storms, wind, fallen tree limbs) are the top cause of power outages. In preparation for storm season, NIPSCO is rolling out new technologies to improve customer communication and field crew response time.

“Restoring power as quickly and safely as possible is our top priority, and we constantly look for new approaches to improve service,” said NIPSCO Chief Operating Office Mike Finissi. “Some of our recent projects are focused on increasing communication, both internally between our dispatch center and field crews as well as with our customers.”

### **Expanding Customer Communication Tools**

NIPSCO is utilizing two new channels to enhance existing communications activities around power outages – mobile web and social media.

“Customers are increasingly going online for timely information,” added Finissi. “Our mobile site and Twitter page give customers convenient ways to find information whenever they need it.”

Earlier this year, the NIPSCO mobile site went live, designed to give customers access to outage, safety and account information whenever and wherever they are. With the added power outage tracking and reporting feature, our electric customers can quickly inform us of an outage and view the latest restoration updates. Customers accessing NIPSCO.com on any smart phone or other mobile device will automatically be redirected to the new mobile site.

NIPSCO also added a Twitter page, which will be used to communicate major electric outage information, including estimated restoration times. Twitter is one of the top 10 most visited sites in the world, providing a real-time information network aimed at connecting users to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news. NIPSCO’s Twitter page can be found at [www.Twitter.com/NIPSCO](http://www.Twitter.com/NIPSCO).

### **Improving Crew Callout Process with Automated Calling System**

In any outage event, NIPSCO’s Operations Team works as quickly as possible to mobilize crews and equipment and restore power. When a major storm is in the forecast, NIPSCO crews are put on alert and prepared to respond. Through a new automated callout and scheduling tool, NIPSCO will now be able to contact crews faster.

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The new system uses a mass calling feature to identify and assemble nearby crews, with an aim to improve service restoration and emergency response time.

#### Storm Safety Information

Most important to your safety is to avoid downed power lines, damaged poles or other hazardous situations. Every downed wire should be treated as though it is a live wire.

Once you are in a safe place, you can report the problem a few different ways:

- 1. On your computer** – Visit [www.NIPSCO.com/OutageCenter](http://www.NIPSCO.com/OutageCenter) and enter some basic information about your location.
- 2. From your smart phone or other mobile device** – Search NIPSCO and your device will be automatically directed to our mobile site where you will find a button on the main page to report an outage.
- 3. Via phone** – Call 1-800-4NIPSCO (1-800-464-7726) and follow the automated prompts. You can ask to receive a call back when power has been restored.

Customers can also prepare for storms by following the customer safety tips below:

- Monitor the weather and know what conditions are forecasted for your area.
- Check to see if shrubs or trees need trimming or if you have any weak limbs. Be particularly careful when working near power lines.
- Compile a storm preparedness kit, including essential medicines, non-perishable food items and water, flashlights, portable radios, extra batteries and a manual can opener.
- If someone in your family requires life support equipment, make prior arrangements for a back-up power supply. This may mean having a back-up power supply such as a generator or going to a health care facility that has back-up power.
- Avoid opening the refrigerator or freezer. Food will stay frozen in a fully loaded freezer for 36 to 48 hours if the doors remain closed. If the freezer is half full, the food will generally keep 24 hours.

Find more storm safety tips and monitor the status of power restoration at [www.NIPSCO.com/OutageCenter](http://www.NIPSCO.com/OutageCenter).

*NIPSCO, with headquarters in Merrillville, Ind., is one of the seven energy distribution companies of NiSource Inc. (NYSE: NI). With more than 786,000 natural gas customers and 457,000 electric customers across the northern third of Indiana, NIPSCO is the largest natural gas distribution company, and the second largest electric distribution company, in the state. NiSource distribution companies serve 3.8 million natural gas and electric customers primarily in seven states. More information about NIPSCO is available at [www.nipsco.com](http://www.nipsco.com).*

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**Editor's note: Related photo is enclosed.**