#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 18, 2013

# FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

24-Hour Media Hotline (219) 647-6210



## NIPSCO Works to Restore Power to more than 75,000 Affected Customers

12,000 Currently Remain Without Power

**MERRILLVILLE, Ind.** – NIPSCO crews worked throughout Sunday night to assess widespread damage and begin to restore power to the more than 75,000 total customers affected by the severe weather that brought wind gusts up to 86 miles per hour in some areas.

Due to the extent of damage, field employees – which were held on standby in preparation for the storm's arrival – spent much of the night making sure the area and system were safe, including the removal of downed power lines and tree damage.

A majority of the remaining 12,000 customers are located in northwest Indiana and the southern end of NIPSCO's service territory, although significant damage and outages remain scattered in other areas. Crews continue working around the clock to restore service – including additional support contractors being brought in from neighboring states.

Better estimated restoration times will be provided later this afternoon, but some customers may be without power for multiple days.

"The severity of this storm has affected so many people across northern Indiana and throughout the Midwest, and it's critical that we continue to help one another given the dropping temperatures," said Keith Wooldridge, NIPSCO's senior vice president of field operations. "We're working hard to get power back to those still affected while supplying as much information as possible."

Assessments indicate that damage from the storm has resulted in more than 1,400 separate outage causes, including; three downed transmission towers, 48 distribution lines, more than 120 broken poles and cross arms and several hundred downed trees and limbs.

#### **Storm Restoration Process**

- NIPSCO repairs high voltage transmission lines and substations (and re-route power where
  possible), which provide power to the largest number of customers. Without repairing this part
  of the system first, the smaller electric lines connected to homes and businesses can't be
  energized.
- Priorities shift to restore power to facilities most critical to public safety and health –including hospitals, police and fire stations, water lift stations and communication systems.

- Crews are then disbursed to repair service lines that will bring power back to the largest amount of customers the quickest – including major lines that feed power to densely-populated neighborhoods and other rural/municipal electric companies.
- Finally, NIPSCO is able to make repairs to electric service affecting smaller neighborhoods or outages that impact one or two individual customers.

## Safety First – Stay Away from Downed Power Lines

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. Report them to NIPSCO immediately.

Residents are also encouraged to drive safely when approaching any NIPSCO field employee or contractor vehicles working to restore power in the area.

## Reporting an Outage or Downed Power Line

If customers have not yet reported an outage, they can do so in a few different ways:

- 1. 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.
- **2. On your computer** Visit <u>NIPSCO.com/OutageCenter</u> and enter some basic information about your location.
- **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.

### **Staying Informed**

Regular updates regarding the current number of customers affected, where outages are located and when power is expected to be restored can be found in a variety of ways, including:

- <u>NIPSCO.com/OutageCenter</u> Find current information on the status of power outages and estimated restoration times.
- m.nipsco.com View the same outage map and details on NIPSCO.com from your mobile device.
- <u>Facebook.com/NIPSCO</u> or <u>Twitter.com/NIPSCO</u> Follow NIPSCO's progress through popular social media channels to view photos and power restoration updates.

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.