

Media statement – for immediate release

4.30pm, Tues 17 Sept 2013 - next update at 11.30am tomorrow

Efforts continue to restore power supply

Electricity still remains out to 1,000 of the original 28,000 Orion customers that lost electricity supply in last week's destructive wind storm. Contractors are continuing to make progress to clear fallen trees and debris before working on the damaged lines.

Unfortunately the progress to restore affected customers today has been impeded by two vehicle pole incidents as well as a dropped tree on a line and a bird strike which caused the number of customers without supply to temporarily rise.

Our total focus remains to reconnect as many of our customers as quickly and safely as possible.

To avoid the possibility of electrocution of those working on the lines we ask that anyone installing a generator have this undertaken by a registered electrician. An incorrectly installed generator may send power back into the electrical network while it is being worked on by a linesman resulting in electrocution.

If you see a fallen power line, or a tree on a power line, please stay well clear and call us on 0800 363 9898.

Our next update will be at 11.30am tomorrow.

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About Orion

Orion New Zealand Limited owns and operates the electricity distribution network in Christchurch and central Canterbury between the Waimakariri and Rakaia rivers and from the Canterbury coast to Arthur's Pass.

There are 11 electricity network companies in the South Island, each covering a distinct area. There is no geographical overlap between electricity network companies. Our neighbouring network companies are [Mainpower](#) to the north, [Electricity Ashburton](#) to the south and [Westpower](#) to the west.

Orion delivers electricity to 190,000 homes and businesses. We do not generate or sell electricity – those functions are carried out by electricity retailers and generators such as Meridian Energy and Mighty River Power. In very simple terms we are a 'transport company', tasked with distributing electricity within our region. That electricity is supplied to us from Transpower's national grid and is sold to consumers by electricity retailers.

On any given day there are inevitably some power cuts. The nature of electricity means that it is impossible to keep all of the power on all of the time, and we try to strike the right balance between the cost and inconvenience caused by power cuts and the costs to consumers of trying to prevent them.

The laws and regulations that govern electricity distribution companies recognise that on an average day in our region, power cuts that are equivalent to around 400 customers losing power for an hour are to be expected. The regulations also make allowance for those numbers to increase during snow and wind storms and other big weather events.

To view more information about Orion and what we do please see our website at oriongroup.co.nz.