

Media statement – for immediate release

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

Efforts to restore power supply continue

All available crews, including those from other regions, are making every effort to clear storm damage and reconnect supply to the remaining 1,200 Orion customers without power. To date we have restored power to over 26,000 customers.

Unfortunately, a truck collided with a power pole in Johns Road this morning and this has caused further damage to our network. This affected supply to approximately 200 customers.

The tree damage to our network as a result of the wind storm is widespread and we continue to work on the remaining pockets of customers without power.

“The progress to restore power to those still affected has slowed as many of the repairs completed only bring on a few customers at a time,” says Orion Chief Executive Rob Jamieson.

“This is not an easy and quick repair and as a result some customers will remain without power. We are making every effort to restore supply to them. We thank our customers for their continued tolerance and patience,” continues Mr Jamieson.

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 4.30pm today.

ENDS

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.