

Media statement – for immediate release
11.30am, Thursday 12 September 2013

Progress to restore power continues

Power remains out to 11,000 Orion customers this morning after strong winds on Tuesday night affected power supply across Orion's electricity distribution network.

The areas without power are predominantly in the rural region west of Christchurch, while some smaller areas within Christchurch city are also affected.

"All available crews are working to restore power as quickly and safely as they can. This morning our focus is on clearing trees and repairing lines so that we can bring more customers back on later today," says Orion Chief Executive Rob Jamieson.

"Our high voltage system which supplies power in bulk around our network has been damaged in many places. Our priority is to get that damage fixed as quickly as possible. Most damage is due to multiple trees through power lines, sometimes in several places on the same line, so it's not a quick fix," continues Mr Jamieson.

"The good news is that we now have power back to all of our major rural substations except for one in the Burnham area where the damage is particularly severe. We expect it will take another two days to get the high voltage supply back to that substation. Our network in this area was weakened by earthquake damage from the Greendale fault and has now borne the brunt of the storm."

"As most lines into our rural substations from the national grid have now been fixed, we have started to assess and repair the lines that supply power to our customers from the substations."

Given the severity and extent of the damage, it's possible that some customers could be without power for up to four more days.

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

Our next update will be at 4.30pm.

ENDS