

**Media statement – for immediate release**  
**7.00am, 6 July 2013**

## **Strong winds and trees on lines cut power**

Power was cut to 9,800 Orion customers in the early hours of this morning as strong winds affected power lines across Orion's electricity distribution network. Most power cuts were due to trees or branches falling onto power lines.

Affected customers are in the area south west of Christchurch which includes parts of Lincoln, Prebbleton, Leeston, Southbridge and Annat. There are also some smaller outages throughout Christchurch city and on Banks Peninsula.

"Emergency crews worked throughout the night on critical faults and more crews joined them at first light today," says Orion chief executive Rob Jamieson. "We will continue to work as quickly and safely as we can in difficult conditions, and hope to have at least half of the power supply restored to customers by noon today. The power cuts are scattered across our network, so it takes some time to find and fix each fault, particularly in the rural areas."

"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."

### **ENDS**

For further information please contact:  
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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. View a map of our network [here](#).

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. A map of electricity network boundaries is available [here](#).

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](http://oriongroup.co.nz).