

[npr.org](https://www.npr.org)

# New York And Connecticut Call For Probes Into Utility Companies' Response To Isaias

*Rachel Treisman Twitter*

5-6 minutes



Tropical Storm Isaias downed wires and uprooted trees, like this one in New York City, leaving millions of customers without power in parts of the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast on

Wednesday. The governors of Connecticut and New York have each declared a state of emergency and are calling for investigations into state utility companies' response. **Lev Radin/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images** hide caption toggle caption

Lev Radin/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images



*Tropical Storm Isaias* downed wires and uprooted trees, like this one in New York City, leaving millions of customers without power in parts of the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast on Wednesday. The governors of Connecticut and New York have each declared a state of emergency and are calling for investigations into state utility companies' response.

Lev Radin/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images

The governors of New York and Connecticut are launching

investigations into utility companies' response to Tropical Storm Isaias, which tore through the Northeast on Tuesday and left thousands of households without power one day later.

Each governor has also declared a state of emergency in order to expedite support for local governments. Connecticut's applies statewide, while New York's specifically includes 11 counties and three others that border them.

Cuomo [said](#) on Wednesday afternoon that more than 703,000 New Yorkers remained without power in the aftermath of Isaias, which caused a peak of more than 920,000 power outages statewide.

Utilities have deployed 7,000 workers to help respond to the damage and restore service, according to the governor's office.

Cuomo said that "due to the apparent lack of adequate planning by utility companies," he has directed the Department of Public Service to launch an investigation into the responses by Verizon, PSEG Long Island, Con Edison, Central Hudson Gas & Electric, Orange and Rockland Utilities and New York State Electric & Gas to "determine the causes of their failures."





In Connecticut, Ned Lamont [declared](#) a state of emergency specifically in response to widespread power outages, which he said had impacted more than 700,000 customers.

He also [called on](#) the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority to thoroughly investigate the state's utility companies' response to the storm in order to determine "whether the companies are meeting their legal obligations and whether any penalties need to be applied."

"Several years ago, Connecticut experienced large-scale outages that took days to recover from, and we were told that the utilities were improving their resources so that they can be prepared for the next time Mother Nature inevitably hits again," Lamont wrote in a series of [tweets](#). "And now here we are, with a wholly inadequate response to another storm."

Eversource, New England's largest energy provider, said in a [statement](#) that crews had restored power to about 100,000 Connecticut customers as of 10 a.m. Wednesday. The

company anticipates it will take "multiple days" to restore all of the state's outages.

"The impact from this storm, in terms of power outages, is greater than Superstorm Sandy," said Michael Hayhurst, Eversource vice president of electric operations in Connecticut. "The fierce winds with this storm caused widespread power outages and historic damage, affecting customers in all of the 149 communities we serve in Connecticut."

The company added that crews are working around-the-clock shifts and operating under a COVID-19 plan with sanitation and social distancing protocols.





Officials across the country are grappling with the combined threat of an [above-average](#) hurricane season and a public health crisis. Florida [paused](#) coronavirus testing due to Isaias, and shelters are modifying operations to account for social distancing.

[Isaias](#) plowed up the East Coast after making landfall as a hurricane on Monday night, generating flash floods and tornadoes along the way. Its heavy winds downed trees and branches on top of power lines, leaving 6.4 million customers without power from South Carolina to Maine.

The New York metropolitan area suffered particularly widespread power outages, with 1.4 million of those in New Jersey.

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy [said](#) on Wednesday afternoon that the state was down to approximately 840,000 outages, and is "pressing all the major utilities to restore power as quickly and safely as possible."

As of Wednesday afternoon, according to [PowerOutage.us](#), 2.8 million electric customers in parts of the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast remain in the dark.

Catch up on the latest headlines and unique NPR stories, sent every weekday.