



vector

Important
information about
power outages
after the recent
severe weather

How we restore power after a storm – in order



1
HIGH-VOLTAGE
SUB-TRANSMISSION
LINES



2
ZONE
SUBSTATIONS



3
ESSENTIAL
SERVICES



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NEIGHBOURHOODS

Kia ora,

We hope we were able to give you the information you needed when we came to see you after the recent terrible weather and damage to the electricity network.

If your power is still out, please be assured our crews will get it back on as soon as they can. We will be in touch with an estimated time of power restoration as soon as we have one.

Here is some useful information in the meantime.

Why is my power out?

The recent severe weather caused widespread damage. Falling trees and branches hitting powerlines cause outages, whether lines are broken or not. This is even more common in rural areas with more vegetation. When tree roots move, they can damage underground powerlines. High winds can lift any object and fling it onto lines or equipment, causing damage.

Heavy rain can lead to slips and unstable ground, causing power poles to fall. Floodwater can also damage equipment such as transformers. Severe flooding can even damage underground powerlines.

Even when damage to the equipment isn't major, severe weather makes repairs difficult. Crews can only work in conditions where it is safe, and access can be impeded by landslides and blocked roads. The safety of our crews and the public is our priority.



SERVICE
LINES



HOT WATER

How do you know my power is out?

We follow live data of our network to see where outages have occurred. You can also register your outage with us via our outage centre. See help.vector.co.nz/address.

Why did a crew come here and then leave without fixing my power?

Our crews' first job is to come and assess what repairs are needed and what equipment is required. We may then need to bring in arborists to cut trees and remove branches before work can begin. We may also need to arrange for a traffic management team, to organise access and/or road closures to ensure the public is safe around our work.

Once trees and roads are cleared, we are ready to start repairs.

If a Vector truck left your neighbourhood before your power was back on, please know that we are not ignoring your problem, and will return to repair all lines under our control (for individual service lines, which are the lines connecting directly to your house, and under your control, see page 4).

How do you decide whose power is fixed first?

We have a **storm restoration** process, which restores the largest number of people first.

This means we prioritise repairs to main lines (high voltage lines), and equipment (substations, transformers) that will restore power to as many customers as possible in the quickest way. We also prioritise essential services such as hospitals or fire departments (we may need to use emergency generators until power is restored).

Next, we restore individual transformers and smaller lines (low voltage lines) to individual homes and businesses. We can't fix an individual problem until the main lines and equipment are restored.

Note: Towards the tail end of restoration work we may have different crews working at the same time on main lines, smaller street lines and hot water restoration, if we have additional crews available. This means that you will not have to wait till the very last person has power back on before we can attend to your hot water.

Within the **storm restoration process**, we also consider the following factors:

- special cases – if anyone is especially vulnerable at your address (please notify your power retailer so they can make contingency plans.)
- time – when your outage was first reported and how long you have been without power

We appreciate how distressing it is to be without power for a lengthy period, but we can't move people up the queue when there are others who have been waiting longer.

Our hard-working crews are working through the list in order, until every last person has their power back on.

During and after a major storm, we stop non-critical work and focus everything on restoration work. We may also call on crews from other regions or even Australia to help get your power back on sooner.

Why is my power out, when my neighbours' power is back on?

There are two possible reasons for this.

1. Even though you may be close to your neighbours or across the street from each other, you may be connected to different equipment. If there is a fault with the equipment that you're connected to, you will have a power outage. If your neighbour is connected to different equipment, they may be unaffected. Within each neighbourhood there are borders where one network zone starts and another one ends.
2. There may be an issue with your **service line**, the individual line that connects into your home. This would be most likely if everyone else around you has power, but you do not. Your service line is your responsibility. You will need to contact a registered electrician to fix it and



you can find a list of people on our website (www.vector.co.nz/personal/electricity/what-you-need-to-know/lineownership). If you report an outage and the issue is found to be on the service line or equipment that you own, we won't charge you for the call out.

Why is my power out, when I cannot see any damage on my street?

After a storm, there are several possibilities:

- When tree roots move during a storm, they can damage underground powerlines.
- You may be connected to damaged equipment that you can't see (it's farther away, maybe round the corner, but still connects to your house). Network connections are mapped on our systems but are not obvious at street level.
- Equipment doesn't look damaged but is in fact broken.

I can see damage but it's only minor (e.g. one hanging wire). Why is it taking so long when it's a simple fix?

Our **storm restoration process** restores everyone's power in the most efficient way possible. If there are large areas without power,

it's more efficient for our crews to attend to larger jobs, which have impacted large numbers of customers rather than the smaller or individual jobs. As mentioned we always take the following into account:

- special cases – if anyone is especially vulnerable at your address
- time – when your outage was first reported and how long you have been without power

Even if your job is 'simple', we can't move you up the queue if others have been waiting longer.

Please also note – a fix may appear simple but that may not be the case. There may be additional more complicated faults on other connected equipment that you can't see.

There are downed lines, but someone came to check them. How do I know if they are still live? The crew didn't give me any information.

Always stay well away from downed lines. If a crew have come to check on downed lines or equipment, they should be able to let you know if the area is now disconnected and safe – or not. However, during a storm because of their heavy workload this may not always occur. They will have



logged the problem in our system, so please call us on **0508 832 867** and we will be able to look up the job and see what has happened. We understand this can be frustrating, so our call centre is here to help.

Why does my outage not show when I have reported it online?

It may be because we have fixed the power line in your street, but your service line has a fault (see page 4). You will need to contact a registered electrician.

There may be a technical glitch in our outage centre, and you need to report the outage again. We apologise for this inconvenience.

You can call us on **0508 832 867** or send us a Facebook message or email us, so we can ensure that your service request contains the outage's original date of occurrence, not the later date.

What about my hot water?

If you live in central or south Auckland your hot water cylinder should automatically reheat when power is restored. Reheating can take up to six hours. If power has been restored and hot water is still not available after six hours:

- Check the hot water cylinder is switched on.

- There may be an issue with your meter box. Please call us on **0508 832 867**.
- If your hot water cylinder is heated by gas, contact a registered plumber.

If you live in north or west Auckland, your hot water may be controlled by a pilot wire system. Once power has been restored after an outage, we repair network pilot wires. Reheating can take up to six hours.

If you are still without hot water once we've restored network pilot wires, there may be an issue with your service pilot wire system. Call us on **0508 832 867**.

Will I be compensated for losses or costs incurred because of the severe weather?

When there is a severe storm (a "Force Majeure" in legal terms) our normal service standard penalties do not apply. This is because the event is outside our control. Therefore, we do not pay compensation over this period. Depending on its terms and conditions, your own insurance policy may cover you for loss and damage incurred during a storm.

See www.vector.co.nz/personal/electricity/about-our-network/our-service-standards.

Practical tips during outages

- Don't touch or use any electrical appliances while barefoot in damp or wet conditions.
- Stay at least 10 metres away from damaged power lines and electrical equipment.
- Use a torch instead of candles (it's safer).
- Switch off sensitive electrical equipment, (e.g. TV, computer and stereo) as they can be affected when power is restored.
- Make sure elements on your stove, and all heaters and appliances are turned off, so they don't come back on without you noticing.



Important contacts

Call us on **0508 832 867**.

Our outage centre has the most up-to-date info – vector.co.nz/outages. Get notified in real time by opting in to texts or emails about your specific outage.

Call your local Civil Defence Group, which is Auckland Emergency Management, on **0800 22 22 00** or visit www.aucklandemergencymanagement.org.nz

If life or property is threatened always dial 111 for Police, Fire or Ambulance.



vector.co.nz/outages
0508 832 867

