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GOOD STORY

Hurricane Sandy: Solar Sandy Project Reconnects Communities Devastated by Hurricane Sandy

The LLIS.gov team identified several innovative Whole Community ideas and practices to support preparedness, response, and recovery following Hurricane Sandy.

SUMMARY

Following Hurricane Sandy, several solar power companies partnered to deploy, install, and maintain 10-kilowatt mobile solar generators in some of the hardest hit communities in New York and New Jersey. These generators allowed survivors, volunteers, and relief workers to charge cell phones, power laptops, heat food, and power other critical electronic equipment.

DESCRIPTION

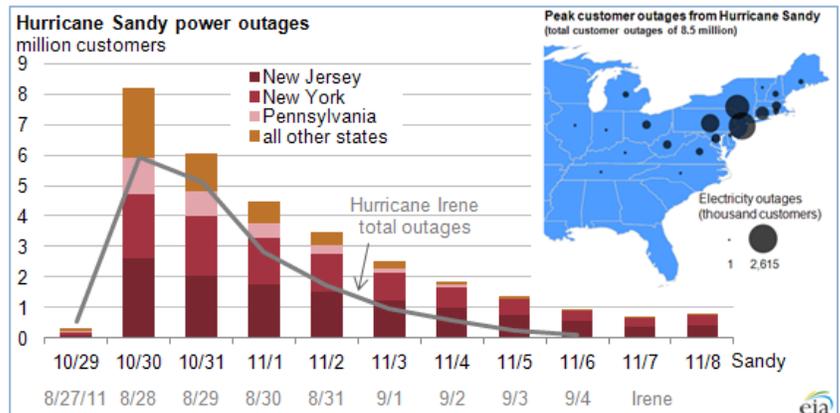
Hurricane Sandy

On Monday, October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy made landfall near Atlantic City, New Jersey, pushing a massive storm surge to shore and generating winds to up to 75 miles per hour. The National Hurricane Center downgraded Sandy to a post-tropical cyclone shortly after landfall. Sandy caused storm surge, record flooding, and wind damage. Nine days after the storm, a large nor'easter caused massive snowfall undermining response operations in the disaster-impacted areas.



Hurricane Sandy Image Captured by a NASA Satellite on October 28, 2012

As a result of these events, millions of people were left without power and hundreds were displaced along the East Coast from North Carolina to Maine. According to the Department of Energy, Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability's [Final Situation Report](#), "The combined total peak customer electricity outages from Hurricane Sandy and the Nor'easter are 8,661,527: 8,511,251 from Hurricane Sandy and 150,276 from the Nor'easter Storm, respectively." New York



Outage Analysis conducted by the Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration

and New Jersey, two of the most populated states in the nation, were particularly impacted by the storm.

The Solar Sandy Project

Solar power companies in New York and New Jersey partnered to deploy equipment and volunteers to install and maintain mobile solar power generators in some of the hardest hit communities following Hurricane Sandy.

Solar One, SolarCity, Consolidated Solar, and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) dispatched teams of volunteers with 10-kilowatt mobile solar generators to provide much-needed temporary electricity to multiple locations in the Rockaways, Staten Island, and New Jersey. The solar power systems allowed survivors and relief workers to charge cell phones, power laptops, heat food, and power other critical electronic equipment.



The Solar Sandy Project

The Solar Sandy Project also provided community organizations, installers, and equipment providers with an opportunity to volunteer for this project. Solar installers, electricians, and other individuals with the appropriate skillset could volunteer to deploy, install, and/or maintain these systems by filling out an online application. In addition, community organizations located in the disaster areas could submit online information related to the best locations where the generators could be deployed.



Locations of Solar Sandy Project generators as of 11 December 2012

Unlike gas or diesel generators that require an on-going fuel supply and are often difficult to acquire in the aftermath of a disaster, solar generators offer a flexible, clean source of energy. Both the Solar Sandy Project and the [Integration of Solar Energy in Emergency Planning](#) report state that the highest need and value of smart, flexible, and distributed clean energy technologies are at mission-critical healthcare and treatment facilities, first responder facilities, and community shelters such as schools and other public buildings.

Use of Solar Generators in Future Disasters

At the beginning of December 2012, the Solar Sandy organizations started exploring ways to utilize solar generators during future disasters. For instance, generators could be deployed to critical areas where power outages are likely to occur before a storm. According to the [Final Report, Roundtable 4, Solar Solutions for Disaster Planning and Emergency Management](#) report, solar power should be provided to local fire and police departments immediately after a disaster. Generators should also be employed to support critical

operations such as healthcare, traffic management, food and water distribution, and sheltering operations. Solar generators should be pre-positioned throughout a state and should be available through statewide mutual aid agreements.

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