



# Forecast

AUGUST 2012

SPECIAL POST STORM EDITION

## A Message from Mayor Pat Burda

Now that the dust has settled from the June 29 storm, power has been restored, and storm debris has been collected, the Town Council and staff are reviewing and addressing many issues related to the overall storm response. I want to take this opportunity to update residents on some actions that the Town intends to take over the next few months in order to improve future response efforts.

First and foremost, the Town will work with PEPCO, our State legislators, and the Maryland Public Service Commission, which regulates State utility companies, to 1) improve response time to power outages, 2) improve communication during power outages, and 3) address and repair PEPCO's defective and aged infrastructure in Town. The Town already has sent comments to the Public Service Commission, which will be undertaking a post-storm evaluation of PEPCO's performance. The Town also intends to invite PEPCO representatives to meet with residents at a future Town meeting and has contacted our State legislators to determine whether there are legislative solutions available to improve regulation of PEPCO. We will keep residents informed of our progress.

Second, the Town will work to expand resident use of the **Town Crier**, our e-mail alert system, as well as **Alert TOCC**, the Town's new voice message broadcast service. These are valuable tools to keep residents informed during emergencies, especially when phones are down. Information on how to sign up for these services is included in this newsletter.

Third, the Town will work with **Chevy Chase At Home** to identify seniors throughout the Town who may need special attention during emergency situations. See the article on page 2 for more information on this organization and the services it provides.

Fourth, the Town intends to install a generator at the Town Office that will provide continuous power during an emergency. This will allow the Town staff to remain in the office during emergencies and provide uninterrupted communication to residents.

Fifth, the Town arborist, in coordination with PEPCO, will undertake a survey to identify and address any hazardous conditions in public trees. The arborist performs a hazardous tree survey every two years; however, we feel it is important to perform a special survey following the recent storm. The Town also will consider ways to assist residents in maintaining private trees and will notify you of available programs and resources in future communications.

I want to thank the many people who were just amazing during this crisis, not the least of whom were our "powerless" residents. Your strength and resolve through this time was truly appreciated.

Thank you all.

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### Town Provides Important Communication Tools during Emergencies

One of the important lessons learned from the recent power outage is how important communication is during emergency situations. The Town encourages residents to sign up for both **Town Crier** and **Alert TOCC** to stay informed. More information can be found on page 2.

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# Join Town Crier and Alert TOCC

## Town Crier

The Town continues to encourage residents to join **Town Crier**, the Town's e-mail alert system, which keeps residents informed of important Town news and information. The Town Crier was very helpful during the recent sustained power outage. During the outage, the Town Crier was the principal means of communicating with Town residents since the Town's phone system lost power as well.

The Town Crier allows residents a choice of receiving several different types of information alerts, and you may modify, update or cancel your subscription via the "Manage Your Subscription" link in each e-mail you receive from the Town.

While you will not be able to respond to messages you receive from this e-mail system, you may contact the Town Office by email at [townoffice@townofchevychase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevychase.org) or by phone at 301-654-7144 for additional information.

## Alert TOCC

The Town is pleased to now offer residents a new service, **Alert TOCC**, which notifies subscribers with a phone call in the event of Town service interruptions or Town responses to emergency situations, including water main breaks, snow removal issues, etc. This optional service is offered in addition to the existing Town Crier e-mail alert system and Town website. To subscribe to this service, visit the Town website, [www.townofchevychase.org](http://www.townofchevychase.org), or call the Town Office at 301-654-7144.

Residents should note that there may be some limitations to this service. Typically, messages would be sent only during regular Town office hours. The Town may not know the cause, extent or duration of service interruptions, especially those related to power outages and water main breaks. In addition, the Town may not be aware of service interruptions, downed trees or other notable situations outside of the Town's boundaries.

Residents also may wish to sign up for **Alert Montgomery** ([alert.montgomerycountymd.gov](http://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov)), which is an emergency notification system maintained by the County.

## Chevy Chase At Home Provides Important Services to Area Seniors

**Chevy Chase At Home** served as a great resource for seniors during the recent storm and ensuing power outage. If you'd like more information, visit their website at [www.chevychase@home.org](http://www.chevychase@home.org), send an e-mail to [info@chevychaseathome.org](mailto:info@chevychaseathome.org) or call 301-657-3115.

**Chevy Chase At Home** is a non-profit, volunteer-driven organization for Chevy Chase seniors to keep them connected and active in our community as they age in place. Membership is open to all seniors who live in one of the Chevy Chase communities. Members of this organization have access to a broad network of services including the following:

- supportive services for practical daily needs
- cultural, educational and social opportunities
- activities to stay fit
- timely information

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Please check the Town website for up-to-date information about the Town.

[www.townofchevychase.org](http://www.townofchevychase.org)

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## Maryland PSC Investigates PEPCO Response

The Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) – the state panel responsible for regulating public utilities – has announced the opening of Case No. 9298, which will investigate Pepco and other utilities' responses to the June 29 storm. The Town urges residents to directly register their concerns and experiences from the most recent power outage with the PSC by formally submitting a service complaint. Every voice in our community is needed in order to ensure that the PSC understands the magnitude of Pepco's service failure.

Residents may submit a formal complaint online by visiting [www.psc.state.md.us/](http://www.psc.state.md.us/). Additionally, customers may file complaints with the PSC over the phone at (410) 767-8028 or via mail at David C. Collins, Executive Secretary/Maryland Public Service Commission/Office of External Relations/William D. Schaefer Tower/6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor/Baltimore, MD 21202.

## Generator Safety

When power is out, many residents turn to generators to provide power to their homes. The U.S. Fire Administration has published advice to help consumers avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, and other hazards, related to backup generators. A few of their safety tips include:

- Make sure that your portable generator is placed outside in a well ventilated area. The engine on the generator produces carbon monoxide. Install battery-operated or plug-in (with battery backup) carbon monoxide (CO) alarms in your home, and test them often.
- Before refueling a generator, turn it off and let it cool down to prevent accidental fires. Always store fuel outside and away from the generator.
- Do not connect your portable generator to the household wiring (plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty extension cord). The generator can 'backfeed' into the power line connected to your home. Any electricity that is fed back into the power lines by the generator can be amplified by utility transformers causing a dangerous situation for workers making outage repairs. In addition, this can cause extensive damage to both utility equipment and your generator.

The installation of a generator that is hard wired into your home requires a permit from both Montgomery County and the Town. The County will ensure that the generator is installed by a licensed electrician with an approved cut-off switch that will prevent 'backfeed'. If residents choose to install a generator, the Town encourages you to consider both placement and screening in order to minimize noise disruption to neighbors.

## PEPCO Continues Reliability Work in Town

In an effort to improve electric service reliability, PEPCO continues to work with the Town to remove and prune trees that interfere with power lines or exhibit hazardous conditions that might impact power lines. PEPCO has completed its first round of tree work, which included removing 10 public trees and 3 private trees with hazardous conditions, as well as pruning 7 public trees to provide clearance from power lines. All of the trees that were removed would have been taken down by the Town in the near future because of hazardous conditions.

The Town recently gave permission to PEPCO to begin the final round of removals and pruning. A map showing the locations of the trees to be either removed or pruned, as well as an explanation of the work, have been posted on the Town website.

The Town will work very closely with PEPCO to ensure that the approved plans are followed. Signs on the trees scheduled to be removed will be posted in advance of any work being done. The Town plans to plant new trees near the locations of the removed trees in next year's planting cycle.

If you have questions or would like to comment on this issue, please call the Town Office at 301-654-7144 to email [townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org](mailto:townoffice@townofchevy Chase.org).

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# Special Edition: Post Storm Response

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## Emergency Numbers

Please remember that in case of any emergency call 911.

Police non-emergency: 301-279-8000.

### Power Outages

To report a power outage at your home or to report street lights that are out: **1-877-PEPCO-62** (1-877-737-2662). To report downed wires or life-threatening emergencies to PEPCO: **202-872-3432**.

### Downed Trees

Report downed trees in the Town to the Police Department by calling **911** if it is a life-threatening emergency. Use the non-emergency number for non-life threatening situations: **301-279-8000**.

### Water Service

To report a water or sewer line break, sewer back-up or stoppage, or fire hydrant leaks, contact the WSSC Emergency Service line: **301-206-4002**.

**TOWN COUNCIL**  
Patricia Burda, Mayor  
David Lublin, Vice Mayor  
Al Lang, Secretary  
Linna Barnes, Treasurer  
Kathy Strom, Community Liaison

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