

STATE OF MISSOURI
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Public Hearing

October 4, 2006

Wohl Community Center
St. Louis, Missouri

Volume 3

In the Matter of an Investigation of)
Union Electric Company d/b/a Ameren UE's) Case No. EO-2007-0037
Storm Preparation and Restoration)
Efforts in Eastern Missouri)

COLLEEN M. DALE, Presiding,

CHIEF REGULATORY LAW JUDGE

DOUG HEALY

STEVE GAW

ROBERT CLAYTON III

LINWARD APPLING

COMMISSIONERS

REPORTED BY: REBECCA L. LUCAS

P R O C E E D I N G S

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JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Good evening. It is Wednesday, October 4th, 2006. My name is Colleen Dale and I will be conducting this local public hearing. This is a local public hearing in Case Number EO-2007-0037 in the matter of investigation into Ameren UE's storm restoration efforts. The purpose of this local public hearing is for the commission to take testimony from local citizens concerning Ameren UE's storm restoration efforts. If you wish to testify, you should add your name to the list of speakers who would be called to testify in the order in which they signed the list. For everyone, both those who testify and those who do not, you can submit public comments in writing to PO Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri, or through our website at www.PSC.mo.gov. Most of you have information sheets that have information about contacting us in writing on the back of them. I want you all to know that if you contact us in writing or over our website that those comments are given the same weight as if you had testified here.

1 You also may be asked to provide further
2 documentation concerning correspondence with
3 Ameren. Those can be filed later with us and be
4 put into the case file.

5 Please keep in mind that this is a formal
6 hearing. Those wishing to testify will be sworn
7 in. There may be questions from commissioners or
8 me. The court reporter will record your testimony.
9 It is very important that the person testifying be
10 allowed to testify without interruption or
11 distraction. I ask all of you who are listening to
12 be quiet during testimony.

13 (Brief interruption).

14 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Well, being quiet during
15 testimony so that we and the court reporter can
16 hear. This hearing is not about Ameren UE's
17 proposed rate increase. We will be back for a
18 series of hearings on the rate increase later this
19 fall. At this hearing we want to hear only your
20 own experience with the storm restoration efforts
21 and your belief about what should or could have
22 been done to avoid the loss of electrical service
23 or bring the service back more quickly after
24 interruption. With that I'll ask the commissioners
25 to introduce themselves.

1 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Good evening. My
2 name is Steve Gaw. And I just want to say to you
3 all thank you very much for coming this evening.
4 We look forward to hearing from you about. What
5 you saw and experienced during the episode of the
6 storms in July. We also want to hear from you if
7 you have any particular concerns about the
8 liability, we'd like to also ask if you have other
9 information about utility services that have to do
10 with regulated utilities. And that would really,
11 in St. Louis City, be other than Ameren dealing
12 with your telephone service. We'd like to know
13 that as well. But we thank you for coming this
14 evening and look forward to what you have to tell
15 us. Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: My name is
17 Robert Clayton. I'm also a member of the Missouri
18 Public Service Commission. This is our third
19 public hearing that we've held in the St. Louis
20 metropolitan area in the last two days. We've
21 taken a lot of testimony. And we're here to take
22 some more testimony. We appreciate all the people
23 that are here and we appreciate your willingness to
24 share your concerns and the issues that relate to
25 electricity reliability in this area. We are

1 particularly interested in the storm outages, but
2 of course any other reliability issues are fair
3 game and we hope that you will bring those up as
4 well. We have a lot of ground to cover so I
5 welcome everyone and I look forward to your
6 comment.

7 COMMISSIONER LIN APPLING: My name is Lin
8 Appling. Some of you I've already shook your
9 hands. So thank you for coming out tonight and
10 hopefully we can get things rolling here in just a
11 few minutes. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER DOUG HEALY: My name is Doug
13 Healy. I am here on behalf of Chairman Jeff Davis.
14 I'll be taking notes tonight to give back to the
15 chair. Thank you.

16 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: You've already been
17 introduced to the staff members who are here and
18 the Ameren staff who are here. We'd like to
19 encourage you that if you have an individual issue
20 that you approach one of those people and explain
21 your issue with them so that they can get back with
22 you individually.

23 With that we will begin with our first
24 witness, George Neunreiter. I'm sorry with what
25 I've done to your name.

1 MR. GEORGE NEUNREITER: No problem.

2 - - -

3 GEORGE NEUNREITER,
4 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
5 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

6 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
7 proceed.

8 MR. GEORGE NEUNREITER: My name is George
9 Neunreiter. I've been dealing with regulatory
10 matters for 30 years. Still can't hear me? Okay.
11 I'd like to offer some comments as it relates to my
12 observations that have been occurring over
13 five-plus years as it relates to the maintenance of
14 the Ameren UE system. I've noticed that there is a
15 significant number of deterioration in the wood
16 poles that are covering distribution lines,
17 secondary distribution lines for businesses and
18 subdivisions. It's evident by the poles being
19 bent, by leaning, by bleaching at the top where
20 the surrogate, the wood has given out. I also see
21 issues where the replacement poles have been
22 strapped to the cut off pole at the ground and
23 many --

24 (Brief interruption).

25 MR. GEORGE NEUNREITER: Where the poles have

1 been cut off at the ground and strapped, which I do
2 not feel is a safe issue. The safeguarding of the
3 Ameren UE system is a matter not only of tree
4 trimming, but of the poles, the transformers and
5 the lines. Also the number of outdoor crews that
6 Ameren UE has employed has been decreasing as the
7 instances of the salvages being of longer duration
8 have also occurred. I do not have specifics in
9 terms of those reduction in the line crews that are
10 working on the lines on a continuous basis.
11 Certainly emergency work will never replace routine
12 maintenance, which will keep the system working in
13 a much more proper fashion. I feel the commission
14 should be looking at the issue of maintenance of
15 their total system and not be drawn off by just the
16 trees because the trees is only a partial
17 contribution to what we are dealing with in terms
18 of the longevity of the salvages. And certainly I
19 do not recommend that underground wire is also
20 going to solve the problem because I suffered an
21 outage to my house from an underground wire from a
22 small transformer and it was strictly on an
23 individual basis at that point. So I was out -- I
24 was on temporary lines across yards for over two
25 weeks. So there is no Pandora's -- or, yes. Thank

1 you.

2 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Just -- yes. Just a
3 couple of questions. First of all, the issues that
4 you raised in regard to maintenance, can you tell
5 me if there are specific areas that you have
6 noticed that you could describe where it is or is
7 it just throughout the territory?

8 MR. GEORGE NEUNREITER: I have noticed -- I
9 have knowledge that there has been a reduction in
10 their line crews. I can not be specific in terms
11 of a number that's been reduced. However I've
12 talked with some and they were losing their job
13 finding a different capacity in the Ameren system.
14 So it was not a growing category of Ameren. It's a
15 shrinking category at Ameren.

16 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you very much,
17 sir.

18 MR. GEORGE NEUNREITER: You're welcome.

19 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you very much.

20 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: I did want to
21 make several observations or give a welcome to
22 several people who are here. I'm not sure if
23 they're still here. Alderman OL Shelton is a 4th
24 Ward alderman in St. Louis. I think he may have
25 left. Said he had another meeting to attend. He

1 was here. We also wanted to recognize
2 representative elect Nasheed. Is she still here?
3 I think we are in her district that will become
4 January 1st. I also want to recognize Committeeman
5 Curtis Royston who is here. And I'm sure we may
6 here from you later on as well as committeeman
7 Jesse Todd who's here. We appreciate your coming
8 and appreciate your interest.

9 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Our next witness is Myra
10 Perkins.

11 MS. MYRA PERKINS: Hello.

12 - - -

13 MYRA PERKINS,
14 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
15 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

16 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
17 proceed.

18 MS. MYRA PERKINS: My name is Myra Perkins.
19 I'm the alderwoman in the city of Pine Lawn with a
20 population of 2,000. And we are northwest of
21 Highway 70. We were out of electricity for five to
22 seven days. You know, we had losses. It was a
23 hardship for us. I'm in a low income area. And it
24 was a big hardship to everyone. And I feel that
25 the supervision of getting things done was not

1 orderly enough. They brought people in from out of
2 town, different towns and everything. No one had a
3 proper map of the areas. I as an alderwoman I was
4 out trying to direct the tree men, the electricity
5 people. As we all know the problem came from the
6 trimming of the trees. Let's start there. It's
7 like that when they come and trim trees, they don't
8 do a good job on easements in our alleys. Yeah, if
9 it's all in front where the streets are, where the
10 roads are, they'll trim them. They'll come and
11 trim the trees in your easements where vehicles
12 cannot drive up through so they need to walk up
13 through --

14 (Brief interruption).

15 MS. MYRA PERKINS: They need to walk up
16 through the easements to see the problem. Okay.
17 And our alleys, they're just not doing a good job.
18 I don't know if Ameren and the other company, Union
19 Electric, were the same, but when Union Electric
20 had it we were getting our trees trimmed regularly.
21 And it's like when they come and trim the trees --
22 I'm a mail carrier too. And I'm kind of out in a
23 predominantly nice area carrying mail. And I can
24 see them out there trimming those trees and they're
25 cleaning them up. They came and trimmed all these

1 trees in my easement and I have had all kind of
2 calls, okay, what are you all going to do to get
3 the trees up. I'm like, you know, our street
4 department, you know, we just don't have that many
5 people to get these trees up like we would like
6 them. And I just felt that they didn't have it
7 supervised right. They'll send UE out there.
8 They'll go out there and look at the problem, then
9 they say the tree trimmers have to come. Then
10 they'll say the tree trimmers are two days behind.
11 Why would they send you all out here when you know
12 that the tree trimmers are behind. Okay. Day four
13 now. You all send representatives out. I'm
14 walking around. I had a good representative. I
15 don't remember her name. She was from out of town.
16 For her to be from out of town, she didn't mind.
17 She came out there with a hard hat on. She walked
18 through my easements with me. And she's like the
19 tree trimmer's have got to come here first. I'm
20 like, I know. That's what UE came out here and
21 told us. I'm like, they didn't tell you that
22 before they sent you out here. It just wasn't
23 supervised right. So if you could work on mapping
24 these people from out of town in the right place.
25 I had people -- I feel that you all should have had

1 someone from the St. Louis area with these trimmers
2 that were out here. The trimmers were really lost.
3 We don't have a lot of tree trimmers out here in
4 St. Louis so we had to bring them in from other
5 places. It was ridiculous. One tree trimmer would
6 get through trimming over here and then ride ten
7 miles to the next place. And I'm like, why would
8 they schedule you all this far apart from jobs.
9 You know, put the jobs together. Don't drive past
10 here and drive past there. The time consuming
11 would have been faster if the tree trimming -- you
12 knew the tree trimmers had to get out there first.
13 So, like I said, it was a good thing that you got
14 us up, but five to seven days, that was just too
15 long. So if you could next time just have a better
16 planning on when you start sending these people
17 out. We saw trucks, five or six trucks sitting in
18 one spot waiting for the next job, trimmers waiting
19 for the next job. Just kind of supervise it better
20 I feel. Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Real quick. In
22 regard to the tree trimming, can you tell me about
23 how frequently you think trees are being trimmed up
24 in your area if you've noticed them being trimmed?

25 MS. MYRA PERKINS: Yes. My trees in my

1 easement hadn't been trimmed I know in about four
2 or five years. I've been living in my community
3 since I was 12. There was a time when we could
4 walk through our easements. We can't do that
5 anymore. Why can't when you know you trim our
6 trees why can't you send some kind of notice to the
7 city hall where we were in your community. We
8 trimmed this area, this side of your town, we want
9 to start on this side. If we could just get more
10 information as an alderperson when they call I can
11 let them know. They're on their way out there.
12 Make sure your vehicles are not parked and blocked
13 where they can't get up in there. To me, they just
14 didn't want to go up in there because of the hazard
15 which is caused from not tending to our trees.

16 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Alderwoman,
17 other than the actual storm that we're discussing
18 with the service that Ameren, the service that
19 Ameren provides on a regular basis --

20 MS. MYRA PERKINS: Yes, I am.

21 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: You are.

22 MS. MYRA PERKINS: Everything but the tree
23 trimming part.

24 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Okay. Thank you
25 very much.

1 MS. MYRA PERKINS: Thank you.

2 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And I just want
3 to let everyone know to fix this feedback we may be
4 experimenting with the sound speakers. So bear
5 with us so we try to avoid the feedback.

6 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Our next
7 witness is John Brown.

8 - - -

9 JOHN BROWN,
10 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
11 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

12 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
13 proceed.

14 MR. JOHN BROWN: First of all I would like to
15 start off by reading recommendations from the PSC's
16 report from the July 5 storm. In that storm the
17 recommendation -- some of the recommendations were
18 staff strongly recommends that Ameren immediately
19 implement programs to begin addressing the existing
20 backlog in the tree trimming cycles of it's
21 distribution systems in rural and suburban areas.
22 As a result of the tree trimming program not being
23 adequately addressed, hundreds of thousands of
24 citizens suffered unnecessarily due to the misuse
25 of power by Ameren management. Ameren should be

1 fined heavily. It's leadership -- for not
2 maintaining it's tree trimming cycles as directed
3 by the PSC. Ameren is over half a decade behind in
4 it's tree trimming obligations according to the
5 PSC. This awful decision not to carry out these
6 duties has created a state of emergency which
7 caused unacceptable pain, suffering and death.
8 Ameren needs to drastically improve it's
9 credibility with the public. In my area as far as
10 tree trimming, a couple years ago there was a --
11 tree trimming outfits who came down within a block
12 of my house. They trimmed, they stopped. They
13 never came back. The trimming that they did do
14 seems to be done on a minimum basis. In other
15 words, trimmed the minimum amount necessary just to
16 clear the line and leave everything else three or
17 four foot on each side or above in places. And
18 every time we have a little wind or a little blow,
19 down comes the branches, out go the lights. And
20 the citizens have to wait either for a local crew
21 or for a crew to be sent in from hundreds of miles
22 away. And that seems to be something that Ameren
23 is relying on more and more and more that is
24 calling in crews hundreds of miles away while the
25 local citizens wait in the dark. I don't know what

1 the scheme is behind that, but I know it's not
2 working in the best interest of the public.

3 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Mr. Brown, what
4 area -- you said in your area. What area is that?

5 MR. JOHN BROWN: I'm at 6500 Martin Luther
6 King.

7 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: For somebody
8 that's not from St. Louis --

9 MR. JOHN BROWN: Wellston. Wellston,
10 Missouri.

11 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: That would be
12 helpful for everyone. Just so we have an idea of
13 which area we're talking about. Thank you very
14 much.

15 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: I wanted to ask if you've
16 tried to contact Ameren about your outages?

17 MR. JOHN BROWN: Yes, I did.

18 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Were you able to get
19 through on the phone?

20 MR. JOHN BROWN: Well, this was some time
21 after everything settled down. I called and got a
22 complaint form and I filled it out and I sent it
23 in.

24 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Okay. And generally
25 about your service, are you satisfied with the

1 level of quality of service that you receive except
2 for the tree trimming?

3 MR. JOHN BROWN: Not really. About a month
4 before the storm we called about a limb on the
5 service line. It stayed there like two and a half
6 weeks before a trimmer finally showed up to remove
7 it. And that was just a little small limb. They
8 took a stick and knocked it off. It wasn't very
9 complicated to accomplish that task. So it does
10 seem like the service -- I can't speak for all
11 areas, but in my area definitely seemed that the
12 service has not improved over the years. As a
13 matter of fact, it seems to have gotten worse. A
14 matter of fact, a couple spans down from my service
15 line has an old cast iron transformer that's been
16 hanging there I know since the '40's because it's
17 gray, rusty, burnt and looks horrible, but it's
18 still there probably producing some form of
19 electrical voltage. The wires, little small,
20 copper wires. And today everyone has central air,
21 videotape recorders and computers. And it hasn't
22 been upgraded. So we are suffering from low
23 voltage. When you call in and request that they
24 come in and do something about it, it gets lost.
25 So over all I would say that they have a lot of

1 work to do.

2 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Thank you,
3 sir. Our next witness is Samuel Jones.

4 Well, we'll skip ahead to Harold Brown.

5 Okay. Robyn Rutherford.

6 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Good evening.

7 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Raise your right hand.

8 - - -

9 ROBYN RUTHERFORD,
10 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
11 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

12 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. You might
13 want to tilt the microphone.

14 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: I stay at the 2600
15 block of Whittier. The 2600 block and 2500 block
16 and the 2700 block, those trees have not been cut.
17 Those trees are still on the line. In the event of
18 a storm our power outages would probably be
19 devastating. I know for sure that the first alley
20 in the 2600 block they did move the poles, but the
21 poles they removed is strapped to the bottom of the
22 pole, of the new pole. I went four and a half days
23 without electricity. I'm on a -- machine and I got
24 totally sick. It wasn't due to the weather. It
25 was due to the outage. As long as I have

1 electricity in my home and I can get on my machine
2 anywhere from 8 to 12 hours a day, my health is
3 fine. Without it, it's a disaster. So my biggest
4 thing is if the lines are being prepared and being
5 fixed and the trees are being removed, then we
6 wouldn't have that problem. I've even seen one
7 worker trimming trees at the far alley which was
8 St. Ferdinand block. That's near the 2500 block.
9 And the young man said I ran out of gas. I'll be
10 back. He never returned. So, I mean, my issue is
11 is someone going to actually remove those trees off
12 those lines and pick up the rubble that's there?

13 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: We can't actually answer
14 your questions.

15 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Okay. I mean --

16 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Let me direct you to
17 Mr. Burn over there. Talk with him individually
18 before you leave.

19 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Okay.

20 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: And if you will just
21 clarify for me how many nights did you have to go
22 without your sleep apnea machine.

23 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Four and a half days.

24 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: So four nights?

25 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Four nights. Yes.

1 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Are there
2 other questions?

3 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Ms. Rutherford,
4 just for my clarification, not being from the city
5 of St. Louis, what were the streets again?

6 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: The 2500, the 2600
7 block and 2700 block. All straight down that
8 alley.

9 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Of which street?

10 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Whittier.

11 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Whittier?

12 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: W-h-i-t-t-i-e-r Street.

13 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And what part of
14 the city is that?

15 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: It's --

16 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: What ward?

17 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Fourth ward

18 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: See, I know
19 where the fourth ward is. It's right down there.
20 I know where that is. Thank you very much.

21 MS. ROBYN RUTHERFORD: Thank you.

22 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Our next witness is Nina
23 Lewis.

24 - - -

25 NINA LEWIS,

1 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
2 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

3 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
4 proceed.

5 MS. NINA LEWIS: My name is Nina Lewis and I
6 have concerns about two different areas in the city
7 of St. Louis. My name is on the property. The
8 first one is 5138 Highland. That's between Union
9 and Kingshighway. Between Martin Luther King and
10 St. Louis Avenue. The day of the storm at 3:15 my
11 power went out at the second location, which I'll
12 speak to you about in a few moments. I got a call
13 five minutes after the power was out to say where
14 are you, come home. My house is on fire. I got in
15 the car not being able to drive and there was
16 someone at my house and we drove to 5138 Highland
17 Avenue where the street was filled with neighbors
18 and sightseers. And the flames were up at least
19 three stories in the back of my house. And there
20 were my neighbors. And this is what you call
21 neighbors, not people that gossip. My neighbors
22 from Wombleton (phonetic) and from Northland and
23 Highland were all there. They had pulled hoses
24 together and there were four garden hoses being put
25 on the fire to contain it. But my one lucky thing

1 was that I had a fire wall put up. And the fire
2 did not go much past that fire wall, but there was
3 a lot of smoke damage. There was no fire
4 department. When my neighbor called and said I'm
5 trying to call and I cannot get through. When I
6 got to the Highland address it took me 15 minutes.
7 The fire department still was not there. I sent
8 one of my kids up to Union and Natural Bridge where
9 the fire station is because we could not get
10 through to the police department, the fire
11 department or any other public department including
12 Ameren UE. She went up there. The fire trucks
13 were sitting outside and of course they didn't come
14 because nobody had called them. Nobody called them
15 because we couldn't get a call through. That was
16 on my cell phone. I called all the way from
17 Vandeventer to Highland Avenue. And I could not
18 get 911. It would either ring continuously or you
19 would get the busy signal. One time it said this
20 number is no longer in use. My house burnt for a
21 half hour before the fire department got there.
22 The fire was started by the lightening hitting the
23 transformer that was in the alley. The transformer
24 sparked and the wires that came into my house were
25 live. Over my six foot aluminum fence. The fire

1 was so intense it melted the big electrical boxes,
2 the central electrical box, and also the meter is
3 down, melted down on the ground. When the firemen
4 came they were apologetic. And I don't know --
5 there's only one truck up there. So there must
6 have been some kind of inside communication with
7 the fire department that it ended up with four
8 trucks. I'm still not in my house. When the call
9 did get Ameren UE it was about 3:30 in the morning
10 and we were told that there are no priorities. You
11 wait your turn. To me when you have live wires the
12 fire department said they took me by the hand and
13 led me around. My son came and he was going to
14 open the gate to come in and the electricity hit
15 him and knocked him down. The wires stayed down
16 from the first day until Tuesday of the following
17 week. They were sparking. They told us not to go
18 in the house. Do not go in the yard. Do not touch
19 any of the wires. All of this was live. That's
20 the question that I was asking about priorities.
21 It seems to me that this would be a priority if
22 someone's house and your wires are on there and
23 they're still sparking. My son went to White
24 Castle where he saw two ladies in two different
25 trucks. One was an Ameren UE and one was one from

1 out of town eating lunch. And he went up to them
2 and told them, I beg you to come and give me some
3 help. He wasn't asking anybody that we get
4 electricity. We wanted to cut the electricity off
5 so we could get an estimator in there from my
6 insurance company so that it would not be a danger
7 to me, anybody in my family or anybody in my
8 neighborhood that passed by there and the wires
9 would hit. That's for 5138. We have not begun yet
10 to clear up the damage.

11 On the other end in the Belle area, 3950 West
12 Belle Place, I was out -- I was out of electricity
13 from the Wednesday that it hit until the following
14 Tuesday evening about 3:30. I went down the alley
15 and as the men that I saw working on the wires
16 would I have any service. I told them I was not
17 rushing them. I was not trying to bully them. But
18 I was having surgery the next morning and I needed
19 to know whether I would have electricity by that
20 evening or whether I should make plans to stay in
21 the hospital until the next day. They asked me
22 where I lived. I pointed out my house which is a
23 new house. And they said we'll get you some
24 electricity this evening. These were individual
25 people that were hired by Ameren UE, but it wasn't

1 Ameren UE because I never was able to get in touch
2 with them. When I was able to get in touch with
3 them they told me that nobody called and asked for
4 service at your residence. I called, but I could
5 never get through. That was one week. I came as
6 some of the others have said, communication is the
7 problem. You cannot tell me that in a city this
8 large where we're not prepared for a catastrophe.
9 No police. No fire department. No electricity.
10 But I do want to commend the police and the eighth
11 district that ride because they came to my house,
12 said, Ms. Lewis, are you okay? Do you want to go
13 to the shelter? No, I want to stay here. Why
14 would I want to go to a shelter because with the
15 elderly -- and I guess I'm in that group now --
16 with the elderly when you don't have a family, you
17 have a pet. And I would rather stay in my house
18 and die than to leave my pet alone in situations
19 like that. If there's some way that as a person
20 said elderly could call a number and tell them that
21 there is something wrong, I think that that would
22 help a lot. It's the communication between the
23 companies and the communication is not only with
24 Ameren UE, but it's with police and the fire
25 department. They never got a call. Thank you.

1 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: I have a couple questions
2 for you. When you were calling you said that you
3 called on your cell phone. Did you then later
4 switch to a regular wire line phone?

5 MS. NINA LEWIS: No, because there was no
6 problem.

7 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Yes. If you would also
8 talk to Mr. Burn, that would be great. He may have
9 some answers for you or get your information from
10 you so they can get some answers back to you.
11 Thank you so much for coming this evening.

12 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: How are you, ma'am?

13 MS. NINA LEWIS: I'm fine.

14 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you for taking
15 the time to come down here. When you -- the line
16 that was down at the first house, it was down from
17 Wednesday until the following Tuesday. Did I
18 understand that?

19 MS. NINA LEWIS: That's right.

20 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay.

21 MS. NINA LEWIS: And that was not a planned
22 repair. When the women came and they touched the
23 box and it sparked With something, they have some
24 kind of little instrument. They said, oh, yeah,
25 that's live. That's the reason I was at the

1 opposite end of the pole. I was not asking for
2 electricity. I was asking them to remove what I
3 felt was a dangerous situation to get it turned
4 off.

5 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And who did you talk
6 to with Ameren about that? Did you talk to
7 someone?

8 MS. NINA LEWIS: I didn't talk to them. My
9 son talked to them. And they told him it was not a
10 priority, that he would have to wait his turn. And
11 that was early in the morning 3, 4 o'clock that he
12 kept calling.

13 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: On which day?

14 MS. NINA LEWIS: I don't know which day it
15 was, but the service that we got he happened to be
16 driving by White Castle and saw these trucks. And
17 the ladies really thought it was a joke and he
18 said, I'm not asking you, we're begging you. And
19 they said, we'll go look at it. And he said, no, I
20 will take you to go look at it. Follow me. And
21 that is what they did.

22 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And you never could
23 yourself get through to Ameren?

24 MS. NINA LEWIS: I never got to Ameren UE.
25 And then you know how you hear things about a

1 grapevine. I have friends that work for Ameren UE.
2 They said your outage -- they said your outage was
3 never reported. How are you going to report it
4 when nobody is listening, when you can't get them
5 by phone.

6 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Did the phone ring?
7 Was it busy?

8 MS. NINA LEWIS: It rang and rang for many
9 times. Other times it was just busy and we let it
10 ring for about ten times and then let it hang up.
11 But then when I got the message that this number is
12 no longer in service, what are you going to do.

13 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Sure. Okay. And I
14 think that tells me what I need to know. Thank you
15 very much.

16 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: I have one more question
17 for you. When you were getting those busy signals,
18 were you getting the normal busy signal or were you
19 getting a fast busy signal?

20 MS. NINA LEWIS: Normal busy signal.

21 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Okay. Thank you. Thank
22 you. Please talk to Mr. Burn.

23 Our next witness is Lucille Nelson. If
24 there's any Lucille and I've butchered your last
25 name.

1 May Tate.

2 Thomas Plathiro on Melrose.

3 Willie Bea Wallace.

4 Mrs. Edwynna Harris.

5 MS. EDWYNNA HARRIS: Good evening. My name is
6 Edwynna Harris. I live at 1800 Annie Mabne Drive.
7 And that's in the Belle area, fourth ward. I want
8 to commend each of you first for sharing this
9 evening with us and talking with us about our
10 problems. I was without power from Wednesday
11 evening until Saturday night about 10:15. I lost a
12 lot of meat in my freezer, but of course I knew it
13 was velocity of the wind was an act of God and
14 Ameren could not do anything about that. But
15 tonight I just wanted to make -- I want to make an
16 inquisition and a recommendation. If man power was
17 the real problem for the great delay, I would like
18 to suggest as I saw in Fort Wayne, Indiana several
19 years ago. They had crews of prisoners from the
20 jail come out with supervisors, small group of men,
21 who did the weeds and the trash and the limbs and
22 the leaves and things that were down in that city.
23 And I'm wondering if there's any kind of training
24 program that you could put forth or some kind of
25 work position that you could create and take some

1 of the prisoners out of the jailhouse. Many times
2 all they do is play checkers, watch television,
3 shoot pool or whatever, or something menial around
4 the building. But in a catastrophe like this they
5 could be a great source of man power to help get
6 some of the clearing that they could get the
7 electricity to the poles and things. So I'd like
8 for you to consider maybe a job program or some
9 kind of agency or some dollars somewhere that you
10 could pay these people to come out of the jail and
11 do something that I guess community service or
12 whatever you want to name it. But it would be a
13 source of man power to help solve some of the
14 problems. Thank you.

15 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Mrs. Harris, if I could
16 get you to swear or affirm that the testimony you
17 just gave was the truth.

18 MS. EDWYNNA HARRIS: Yes, it was.

19 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you.

20 Ms. Powell, Mr. or Ms. Powell, Delores Powell.

21 Virty Walls.

22 Alice Singleton or Alicia Singleton.

23 Helen Ivy.

24 Willie Palmer.

25 Martha West.

1 Lamont Harvey. Mr. Harvey. Excellent.

2 - - -

3 LAMONT HARVEY,

4 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
5 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

6 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
7 proceed.

8 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: My problem with Ameren UE,
9 my power went out Wednesday about 8:30. And it was
10 actually out for six and a half days. My testimony
11 is about the communication problems that Ameren has
12 with their customers. They have a problem of
13 giving us an estimated time that service will be
14 restored to us. And misfalsified. And I didn't
15 have a tree problem in my area. I went around the
16 neighborhood and looked. The people across the
17 street from me had power, but my side when it
18 rains, it's like an infrastructural problem with
19 their equipment. If it rains right now, my power
20 is gone, automatically gone. And I asked for a
21 report. I never received it. And it's like no one
22 down there will respond to this unless we come to a
23 committee to talk to you guys. And I think that's
24 poor customer service on their part because they're
25 leaving customers like me in the dark. It's

1 something else or it's a tree. I didn't see no
2 linemen those six days. And finally a lineman did
3 come down our street. He told us that the
4 substation had blown up, that's why we didn't have
5 any power it was going to take us another day to
6 get power because of the power at the substation.
7 Like I was telling you earlier, this substation --
8 I've been in that neighborhood three years. In the
9 three years look at my history. This year alone my
10 power's been out eight times. And no one will give
11 me no answers why, but it's the substation problem.
12 And I talked to this one gentleman earlier and I
13 lady that I've talked with at Ameren. They're not
14 giving me no response. And I think that the
15 equipment that Ameren has used is outdated and old.
16 When are they going to try to do something to
17 address the oldest of the equipment that they're
18 using to the source of the power. That's all I
19 have to say.

20 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you for coming,
21 Mr. Harvey. Can you tell me again where it is that
22 your area is, where you live?

23 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: I'm in the fourth ward.
24 I'm at 4819 Cupples Place. I'm off Euclid and
25 Cupples. I live up the street from the Salvation

1 Army. That's supposed to be like a shelter for us.
2 They didn't have any power either. And they were
3 telling people that you can go up to the Salvation
4 Army because they're supposed to be a center or
5 shelter. It never opened and the people stood
6 outside just like we did in the heat. And, you
7 know, we never got any kind of answers of what to
8 do. And this was a cooling center too, but it was
9 so overcrowded that you couldn't even get near it.
10 And it's just like it's a bad poor communication.
11 Like I said, I spoke with five people at Ameren in
12 those six days and I got five totally different
13 stories what was the problem.

14 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Did you have problems
15 getting through when you were calling?

16 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: No.

17 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: When you called did
18 you get through to a person?

19 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yes, I did.

20 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And tell me, if you
21 could, what different stories that you got.

22 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: One story was that she
23 said that there was a line down in my ZIP code and
24 it was 455 of us were down and they're on the job
25 and they're working on it. The job opened at about

1 1:45 in the morning and it should be back on at
2 9:30. And when 9:30 came I called back and told
3 her it wasn't on. And she said, no, the crew
4 stopped at 11 o'clock. And I was like, she said
5 the job was open and they're still out there doing
6 what they're supposed to do. And then she said,
7 well, another crew is going to reopen the ticket.
8 It's supposed to be there by 6:30 in the evening
9 you should have power. 6:30 come, nothing. And
10 called again and she said, well, the substation has
11 problems and we're working at the substation. And
12 I said okay. I said are you going to give me an
13 estimated time. And she said she would. She
14 looked and she said give us til about 6:30 in the
15 next morning it should be on. Nothing happened.
16 And just kept getting different stories of what was
17 going on.

18 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Were you talking to
19 different people over time?

20 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And you said
22 you've been out eight times?

23 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: This year.

24 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: This year. And
25 what's the shortest length of time you were without

1 power?

2 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Two and a half hours.

3 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. That's the
4 shortest, right?

5 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yeah.

6 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: What's the longest
7 beside from the storm?

8 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: A day.

9 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. And if it
10 rains --

11 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yeah. If it rains pretty
12 hard my area is gone just my side of the street is
13 gone.

14 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: That's what I was
15 going to ask you. Your side of the street, not
16 just your house?

17 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yes.

18 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you very much.

19 COMMISSIONER LIN APPLING: Sir, correct me.
20 Did I hear you say that every time it rains you
21 lose electric?

22 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yes.

23 COMMISSIONER LIN APPLING: Have you traced
24 down where the location of the substation is that
25 services your side of the street?

1 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Ameren will not tell me
2 that information. I've requested that information
3 in writing. I've called them and asked them where
4 is the substation. Because Ameren UE is not that
5 far from me. And I said is it over there? And
6 they said we can't get that structural information
7 out, but we can give you a report. That's back in
8 July. It's October. I haven't gotten anything. I
9 pay them. They're supposed to answer to me. I'm
10 the customer. Why do we have this problem
11 constantly?

12 COMMISSIONER LIN APPLING: I was just trying
13 to check to see if it was close to one of these big
14 ditches where water was getting to it and causing
15 it --

16 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: They won't give that
17 information out.

18 COMMISSIONER LIN APPLING: Okay. Thank you
19 very much for coming, sir.

20 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: If you have copies of
21 correspondence with them that you've sent them or
22 that they have sent you --

23 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: They haven't sent me
24 anything. She told me over the phone that my
25 outages are kind of alarming and she explained to

1 me that a lot of it is substation that the
2 equipment is kind of not in good positions to work
3 so they replaced a lot of the infrastructure of the
4 substations. But I'm like eight times, that's a
5 lot in one year, you know.

6 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Yes.

7 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Eight times this
8 year. How about last year?

9 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Last year it was about
10 six. I've been in this area for about three and a
11 half years.

12 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Three and half?

13 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yes.

14 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And it's, what,
15 five or six every year?

16 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Yeah, it's about four to
17 five times every year. This year was even more.

18 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Is the rain
19 issue just happening this year or --

20 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: No. Ever since I've been
21 here it goes out.

22 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Okay. Thank you
23 very much.

24 MR. LAMONT HARVEY: Thank you.

25 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you, sir.

1 Mr. or Ms. Whiteside.

2 - - -

3 SUNDY WHITESIDE,

4 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
5 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

6 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
7 proceed.

8 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: Thank you. I'd like to
9 preface my statements by saying that I do believe
10 honestly that Ameren did attempt to do everything
11 within it's power to help us out during this storm.
12 However, I feel that Ameren the bottom line is was
13 not prepared for disasters such as this. And I
14 think with the given natural disasters that have
15 occurred throughout these coming last two years we
16 can see future storms on the rise. So the bottom
17 line for me is that Ameren UE needs to step up it's
18 game and come up with creative ideas to react to
19 disastrous storms such as the one we just had. I
20 wanted to name two incidents that happened on my
21 street. The first one we had a line that came down
22 in someone's backyard. Ameren managed to restore
23 power to that -- to our street. But the line kept
24 catching fire and sparking and making loud sounds.
25 Twice we contacted the fire department. Twice the

1 fire department came out. Twice we contacted
2 Ameren UE. Ameren UE was aware of the situation
3 when we called this in and they said we are aware
4 of the situation we will have someone there. The
5 first time no one came. The fire department came
6 out. They went back there with water hoses and
7 they said they couldn't touch any of the lines and
8 they couldn't make it safe, that only an Ameren
9 linesman could do that. And they saw one a few
10 blocks over and that he should be in our area
11 shortly. So we waited for about an hour. No one
12 showed up from Ameren. The power came back on
13 again and again we had several sparks and craziness
14 going on. The fire department was called out
15 again. They came out. They said we've got the
16 same problem. We've notified the Ameren UE
17 technician about the situation and he said he's
18 getting over here. We waited and waited. Finally
19 the neighbors got in our cars, drove over to the
20 individual and explained to him that this is very
21 serious and we are very worried. We have children
22 out here. This could be a potential hazard and
23 someone could end up in a fatal accident. So
24 finally he came down. He talked to us. He
25 explained to us that there was an accidental line

1 that fell on some kind of ground connection that he
2 moved the line, but he couldn't mount the lines
3 back up. So we asked him why couldn't he. Could
4 he send someone else. He explained to us that he
5 had been working for over 12 hours and that he had
6 to get home and have his dinner. So we offered the
7 linesman dinner and he said well he's not really
8 from the state and he's communicating with his
9 wife. We did everything in our power to have that
10 linesman put the lines back up instead of leaving
11 them down on the ground where it was unsafe. And I
12 have other neighbors that were out in the alley
13 discussing this with the linesman because we were
14 begging him to stay to help us.

15 The second incident is the night of the storm,
16 Wednesday, in another neighbor's yard the lines
17 fell. It fell on her back porch. She called an
18 estimator in that came out maybe Friday, but no one
19 could go in the back because all of the lines were
20 still down. And the trouble was reported
21 immediately to Ameren UE that there was seriousness
22 because of the lines were down on her porch and she
23 was afraid to open her back door. So it was
24 reported to Ameren. And they did not come out
25 until well after the storms had lifted because

1 whatever wires were down they were able to restore
2 power. So it didn't interfere as a cause of
3 problems when they restored power. But they didn't
4 come back until possibly three or four days after
5 the power came back on that Saturday.

6 So those are the two incidents. But I want to
7 give some future suggestions. I want my
8 suggestions on record. I want to really explain
9 about the policy in restoring power to citizens
10 because we are not fully understanding the high
11 voltage area they have to work there and most of
12 our resources go to that. And the gentleman stood
13 up during the question and answer period and
14 explained to me when I recommended that they have
15 the distribution maybe 80 percent working on the
16 main feeder and then 15 percent working on the
17 lesser voltage lines and then another 5 percent
18 working on the low voltage lines, he said they had
19 a distribution, but he didn't go into detail on how
20 those resources are distributed. Also when I
21 looked inside the staff report on the storm
22 restoration and I look at your numbers for field
23 resource personnel from the storm in 2004, July 5th
24 of 2004, there's only 596 linesman for both the
25 Missouri and Illinois states. And also in the 2004

1 storm -- 2005 storm that occurred August 13th,
2 there were only 773. This year that number has
3 doubled during the day of the storm. You had about
4 1450 linesman working. Because of that, that
5 should give a warning sign that obviously we're --
6 we weren't prepared to handle that. We had a
7 double of what we normally needed. So I'd like for
8 creative solutions to be a committee within Ameren
9 to develop safer solutions on how to have some form
10 of ready reserve. I've been informed that they do
11 have some people on call. But it would be good to
12 have people locally that could come in and do that.
13 And as the lady mentioned, the tree trimming
14 services, the tree clearing group, you only have a
15 third of the percentage that are out there for line
16 trouble. A third of that are out there for trees.
17 So you have 776 men out there working on trouble.
18 Their trouble being a linesmen. But you only had
19 261 that were clearing trees. So you might want to
20 have a ready reserve for the tree clearing group as
21 well. Not necessarily to use prisoners but to have
22 other companies that normally clear trees and have
23 that type of service on hand as well. Also I'd
24 like for you to ask Ameren UE to explain to the
25 residents what projects specifically do they have

1 going on to improve the infrastructure within the
2 city. And a lot of the new development areas where
3 they're now building new homes, residential areas,
4 all of the electrical lines are underground. They
5 claim that it is safer. Why aren't we looking at
6 putting city infrastructure changes to our
7 electrical system of that type of nature. Is it
8 too costly? We would -- I would like to hear an
9 explanation and I'd like to hear about what
10 projects. To just give us a reply we have a lot of
11 projects going on is not good enough. Also I want
12 to state I did not see any Ameren UE trucks passing
13 by my house as it was stated during question and
14 answer session. I did not see any until possibly
15 Friday when I noticed that they were finally out
16 working on it. And I thank you. That's all I
17 have.

18 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Thank you for
19 coming very much, ma'am. I want to ask just a
20 couple of things in regard to your questions.
21 You're looking -- I want to understand what you're
22 asking because we may want to follow up to try to
23 see if we can get those questions answered. You
24 want to know what projects are going on in the city
25 to improve infrastructure. In particular you want

1 to know what areas there may be projects going and
2 what the nature of those projects are? Am I
3 following you?

4 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: Yes, sir. It should be
5 something that when you ask them what are you doing
6 to improve the electrical infrastructure within the
7 city, that they don't just give you a blanket
8 statement, oh, we're working on several projects.
9 That they said, well, we're focused on this area
10 and we're trying to implement this. And they give
11 you specifics instead of a blanket statement.

12 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And so far did you
13 ask that question earlier tonight?

14 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: Yes, sir, I did. During
15 the question and answer that was one of my several
16 questions.

17 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: All right. And in
18 regard to the issue of tree trimming, have you
19 noticed tree trimming going on in your area?

20 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: No.

21 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And how long have you
22 lived in the area?

23 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: For about 28 years.

24 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: 28? Tell me once
25 again what part of the city you're in.

1 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: I'm in the Walnut Park
2 area of the city, the 27th ward.

3 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: 27th ward. Thank you
4 very much, ma'am. I appreciate your suggestions.

5 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: Thank you for any help
6 you can give.

7 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: How long was your
8 power out after the storm?

9 MS. SUNDY WHITESIDE: Four days.

10 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you.

11 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Jackie Hutchinson.

12 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: Good evening.

13 - - -

14 JACKIE HUTCHINSON,
15 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
16 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

17 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Please proceed.

18 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: I'm Jackie Hutchinson
19 and I live in University City. And I want to talk
20 a little bit from two perspectives from the
21 perspective of a customer who was without service
22 for six continuous days. And then I had service
23 for a couple of days. And then I was out for
24 another day. And then I had service for a couple
25 of days and was out for then another day. So I was

1 totally without service for eight days, six
2 continuous days. As a consumer I have pretty much
3 the same concerns that all of the speakers have
4 had. I attempted to get through to Ameren UE by
5 phone the night of the storm, got busy signals, got
6 all circuits are busy. For a couple of days I
7 never could get through on the regular consumer
8 line to Ameren. As a matter of fact, I never
9 talked to anyone on that line. For me I, you know,
10 I was patient. I knew that there were a lot of
11 people without power. But it would have been good
12 for me to have some information about when they
13 would be in my neighborhood. I was simply looking
14 for how long am I going to be out of power. Do I
15 need to try to move out of my house, you know, what
16 is the duration that I can expect. And the --
17 there was no organized way to get that information
18 on a neighborhood by neighborhood basis. Tree
19 trimming is a concern for me personally. I finally
20 cut down the trees in my yard that was causing the
21 problems because I have the house that I live in
22 for almost 30 years. And in the beginning Ameren
23 trimmed the trees that hung over the wires in the
24 alley on a regular basis. And after a while every
25 storm that, you know, the power was going on, the

1 wires were down. So I finally just had the whole
2 tree cut down to prevent those problems. So I
3 think the problem in my neighborhood was the
4 transformer or somewhere up line. It wasn't
5 necessarily the trees in the immediate area that
6 caused the problems. We didn't have a lot of trees
7 down in that area. As a service provider I was
8 able to get a lot better information once -- well,
9 first of all, five out of our six offices had no
10 power for various lengths of time. But once we had
11 power and we were able to get to computers and all
12 of that, I was able to communicate with Ameren UE
13 and to get good information. There was good
14 information in the newspaper that I could get to.
15 But we also got -- I got daily sort of updates
16 e-mailed to me from Ameren sort of letting me know
17 different things and giving me answers to
18 questions. So that was good. So that our staff
19 that were on the ground trying to, you know, answer
20 some of the questions we were able to answer some
21 questions. But there, again, we didn't have the
22 questions -- the answer to the questions that was
23 most often asked us and that was, you know, when am
24 I going to have power, when are they going to be in
25 my neighborhood. So if we could figure out some

1 kind of communication system that would get
2 information to service providers and to block units
3 and other churches that were specific to their
4 neighborhoods. If people, you know, people could
5 get through to their local church or the local
6 center, if those folks had information we could
7 help to disseminate that information. But often we
8 did not have information. The other thing that I
9 wish that we had had was some way to get back up
10 generators to cooling sites. As I said earlier, we
11 have an organized system operation weather survival
12 for dealing with the heat and for dealing with some
13 extent of power outages where we have cooling sites
14 throughout the city. But 90 percent of the cooling
15 sites were also without power. And so if there was
16 some kind of system where Ameren had a reserve of
17 generators that could be loaned out to those sites
18 and neighborhoods where people have outages so that
19 during the extreme heat there we could quickly open
20 up places where people could go and be cool and be
21 safe, that would be a good thing. I guess the, you
22 know, the main issue with me was communication and
23 not having information. And if we could, you
24 know -- if Ameren could have some kind of way to
25 route those calls out of the area so that more

1 people can get through and get a live voice to
2 assure them or to give them information to get
3 those calls maybe out of the state, if necessary,
4 and have some kind of reserve outside of the area
5 even if it had to contract with another electric
6 company to answer some of those calls so that
7 their -- so that people could get good information.
8 I think that we would have a lot less panic. One
9 of the good things that I think they did was to
10 have someone on TV every day talking about what
11 Ameren was doing. But there again, if they could
12 have given out more specific information in those
13 briefings that they were doing every day, it would
14 have helped to stop the rumors and to give people
15 good information if they knew when they were going
16 to be in certain neighborhoods and could get that
17 information out by the radio and TV and posters or
18 whatever and get good information to people, then
19 it would have been -- it would have been much
20 better. And I hope that those are some of the
21 things that they will consider in the future.
22 Thanks.

23 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: I have a couple questions
24 for you about your phone calls. When you called
25 were you using a cell phone or a wire line phone?

1 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: No, I was using a wire
2 line phone.

3 THE COURT: Did you -- the busy signals that
4 you got, were they regular busies or fast busies?

5 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: I got all variations
6 of busy signals. There was fast busy, the regular
7 busy signal. I got no answers. And I got all
8 circuits are busy. So I got the whole gamont of
9 different things.

10 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you.

11 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Jackie, you might --
12 I think probably most people know what you do, but
13 would you mind telling everybody what you do?

14 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: I am the director of
15 crisis intervention program for the human
16 development corporation, St. Louis.

17 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And in doing that you
18 have a lot of contact on issues that relate to
19 individuals that are dealing with heating bills and
20 other things and also in communicating back and
21 forth with utilities in regard to trying to provide
22 assistance?

23 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: That is correct. Our
24 agency provides assistance through the low income
25 energy assistance program to families in the city

1 of St. Louis and the city of Wellston. We also do
2 quite a bit of policy work before the Public
3 Service Commission on cold weather rules and other
4 issues that effect low income consumers.

5 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Let me just say this
6 first of all to the public. I said this before and
7 others would say that you do a terrific job in
8 making sure that some of the difficulties that are
9 experienced in St. Louis City in regard to dealing
10 with trying to pay utility bills, trying to make
11 sure that people remain connected, that that
12 message gets across to the commission. And I want
13 to say that I appreciate the fact that you're here
14 tonight and I also appreciate all the other work
15 that you do.

16 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: Thank you very much.

17 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And I want to ask a
18 couple of questions, maybe a small number of
19 questions anyway about what you've said. Number
20 one, if I understand you correctly you believe that
21 it would be helpful to have some sort of a way to
22 ensure that people could find out what was going
23 on, right?

24 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: That is correct, to
25 get accurate information that is specific to their

1 problem and their neighborhood. Not just, well,
2 you know, we know that your power is out and, you
3 know, we're getting to you as soon as possible,
4 which, you know, I mean, knowing their -- in their
5 organization of where they're sending their trucks.
6 They know where they're going on a given day. And
7 they may know where they're going the day before.
8 So why not get that information out to the public
9 so if you know that it's going to be five days
10 before you get to my block, then I can prepare for
11 five days without power, as opposed to going home
12 every day to find that it's the same as it was the
13 day before. And, you know, or waiting it out the
14 first day. If I knew it was going to come back on,
15 I may have waited it out another day. But, you
16 know, having no information you just have to, you
17 know, try to find someplace else to go or whatever.

18 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Well, let me ask you
19 this. You had difficulty getting through on the
20 regular phone channel?

21 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: That's right.

22 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And you've heard some
23 of the experiences that other people have had.

24 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Assuming that there's

1 a way to fix that communication problem, is that
2 sufficient or are there other ways that can be --
3 that you've seen that are effective ways of
4 communicating with the community when there are
5 issues going on when you're trying to reach out and
6 if there are other avenues like that could you
7 maybe touch on them so that we can have that in the
8 record?

9 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: There again, as a part
10 of operation weather survival, all of the major
11 social service agencies in the area, and that's in
12 the St. Louis City, St. Louis County, the county
13 government, the health department from both the
14 city and county are all a part of that operation
15 weather survival group. We also coordinate with
16 the churches. We coordinate with the area agencies
17 on aging. Lots of other entities. The block units
18 to have a written piece of information that we
19 could then disseminate that says something specific
20 about the problem that exists in that particular
21 neighborhood would have been very helpful to the
22 alderperson and the committee person and the church
23 and all of the service providers who were trying to
24 be as helpful as possible and get out information.
25 We did not have the answers that people were

1 looking for. So there's a network in place, but we
2 didn't -- we didn't have any information.

3 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: So in other words
4 you're telling me that there's already some
5 infrastructure out there where people are used to
6 communicating through your agency, through the
7 alderman, through the churches and through some
8 block organizations that exist?

9 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: That's correct.

10 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: That if that -- if
11 the switch were turned on to that line of
12 communication would be effective?

13 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: That's correct.

14 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And if that -- if
15 that is something -- that's something that would
16 just mainly take trying to coordinate initial
17 communication link up with whoever disseminates
18 that information now along that chain of
19 communications. Am I following you?

20 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: Right. But it has to
21 be specific more specific than, you know, Ameren is
22 working very hard to restore power to all of the
23 customers as soon as possible. It has to be
24 specific enough to that area, that you know that --
25 so that the person that's giving out that

1 information has something meaningful to say to the
2 person that is trying to get information.

3 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Right. So the
4 information needs to be important and relevant and
5 all of that, but the infrastructure and the method
6 of distributing that information could be accessed.

7 MS. JACKIE HUTCHINSON: I believe so. I
8 believe that there's an infrastructure that can get
9 people on the ground knocking on doors throughout
10 the city, throughout the county, maybe a little bit
11 more difficult in the county because it's a little
12 more spread out. But certainly there's a block
13 unit system. Within the city there are lots of
14 different distributions. There are mailmen who
15 were walking up and down the streets giving out
16 mail. I mean, there's lots of different local
17 churches were open. So get some good information
18 to those of us that are on the ground trying to
19 serve people so that we can give them information
20 that's important and relevant to them.

21 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Well, I think that
22 sounds like a great idea and I'd like to see if
23 there can be some follow up to that. But that's
24 all the questions I have for you right now.
25 Jackie, thank you again.

1 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Good to see you.

2 Thank you for coming.

3 COMMISSIONER LIN APPLING: Good to see you, my

4 friend. I don't have any questions of you, but

5 thanks for coming out and I appreciate the hard

6 work that you do for the people in St. Louis.

7 Thank you very much.

8 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Clifton Ford.

9 Terry Kennedy.

10 Jesse Todd.

11 - - -

12 JESSE TODD,

13 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly

14 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

15 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please

16 proceed.

17 MR. JESSE TODD: My name is Jesse Todd,

18 committeeman. I people that the tree trimmers --

19 trees are not being trimmed. In fact, I've been in

20 the ward for 30 some years and have been

21 representing the ward for more than 12 years. And

22 I haven't seen UE people trimming the trees. And I

23 walk quite often. And so -- and I agree with other

24 people too that we need -- with the system.

25 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Mr. Todd,

1 Committeeman Todd, I appreciate you coming. Where
2 is the 18th ward?

3 MR. JESSE TODD: Approximate boundaries
4 Lindell, St. Louis Avenue business street. But
5 then Vandeventer. So within that area.

6 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: How long were
7 you without power after the storm?

8 MR. JESSE TODD: Approximately three days at
9 my house.

10 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Three days? And
11 aside from the storm that happened in August how do
12 you feel about the quality of service that you
13 receive from Ameren on a regular basis?

14 MR. JESSE TODD: Service --

15 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Does your power
16 go out when it rains like the other gentleman?

17 MR. JESSE TODD: It's gone out before, but not
18 when it rains. Goes out every once in a while.

19 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Has it ever gone
20 out for longer than a day?

21 MR. JESSE TODD: I think it -- stayed off
22 about three days.

23 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Okay. I don't
24 think I have any other questions. We appreciate
25 your being here.

1 I reside in Hazelwood, Missouri. My address is
2 1624 Ville Gloria Lane. During the time period of
3 July 21st my power was out from July 21st through
4 July 27th. And it was on sporadically during that
5 time period. My general issue with Ameren was I
6 have the basic issue of tree trimming within my
7 area. That is what is needed within our general
8 subdivision is tree trimming for our area. I find
9 it kind of -- I pause at that particular area
10 because during that time period we were out on and
11 off for about six days. And during the year we're
12 usually out, I would estimate, probably about four
13 or five times during the year we are usually out
14 because of power. And the reason why I say I
15 estimate four or five times, today I called Ameren
16 UE so that I could be prepared to give the exact
17 figures. But I found it ironic when I was letting
18 them know that I was coming before the Public
19 Service Commission to testify, because usually you
20 can call them and you can get a history of the
21 length of time that your service is out and they'll
22 give you all the dates. But I talked with a
23 Melissa today and she was like, since we have that
24 power outage in July we are no longer privileged to
25 give that information out. So they would only give

1 me information as of July of when my power was out.
2 So they said they couldn't go back further to July.
3 That made me wonder why you can't give me a history
4 of my service. But I can give you at least within
5 my subdivision it's at least four to five times.
6 And we usually have a problem with the trees being
7 trimmed because that's a constant issue within my
8 area. And it's usually we have -- it can range
9 from three to four hours to sometimes it's been a
10 day or two because my wife and daughter we've had
11 to at times go to a relative's house and some
12 people in our area have had to go to hotels. So as
13 some of the other people who have testified, tree
14 trimming is an issue within that needs to be
15 addressed. And I think one of the things that I
16 would suggest is I think if nothing else comes
17 from -- I appreciate you guys giving us an
18 opportunity to come before you. But I think what
19 would also help is -- and this is a stretch. This
20 is an idea that I was thinking of as I was sitting
21 back there. Maybe a subgroup or something.
22 Because I listened to some of the people that were
23 generating some ideas. And like this young lady
24 who worked for the social services agency and
25 another young lady who had some ideas. It's a lot

1 of people with some very good ideas in the
2 community. And I was thinking probably the Public
3 Service Commission could benefit from that. And so
4 what my thought is, maybe a subgroup from the
5 public, the Public Service Commission could benefit
6 from that. So maybe a subgroup from the community.
7 Maybe a representative from the Hazelwood area, the
8 St. Louis City area, the Overland area. And I
9 don't know if the people choose it or whatever, but
10 just at times that you could listen to the voice of
11 the people and see how you could be a barrier
12 between UE and could get the voices out to the
13 community. Because I know one of my issues is
14 sometimes when our power goes out and I call UE. I
15 feel that I didn't know how to get my voice across.
16 Because when I first came in and I got this paper I
17 was like, oh, okay, if I have a concern, here's the
18 toll free number. I don't have to call 342-1111.
19 There's another way I can voice my concern. When
20 my neighbors are frustrated I can go and get a
21 petition signed and we can send this petition to
22 the Public Service Commission, PO Box da-da-da. So
23 there's another angle that we can go to to bypass.
24 But see, the 342-1111 won't tell you that. But see
25 Elliot Davis on Channel 2 will tell you that. But

1 see, I'm just saying there are other angles that
2 you can go to. I shouldn't have to depend on
3 Melissa when she told me that she wouldn't give me
4 that information. But see, I'm just saying there
5 should be a subgroup that should be formed of
6 different areas of the city that probably have good
7 voices that you would want to hear from and tap
8 into. And you will only hear that if you tap into
9 the rich resources that I've been hearing when I've
10 been sitting in my seat. And I think that's a
11 valuable resource that you would learn a wealth of
12 knowledge. I just want to end on this point. I
13 work at St. Louis University. I'm the director of
14 the community outreach center. And the one thing
15 that I've learned is that every one of us here in
16 this room has a person that we report to. And
17 sometimes when people think that there's no
18 reporting line, they don't act in accordance as
19 they should. And when we know that there's someone
20 watching over our shoulders, we seem to act
21 differently. So I thank you for listening to my
22 concerns no matter how minuscule they may be.
23 Thank you.

24 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you very much
25 for coming. Again, would you mind telling me where

1 the neighborhood is that you're in?

2 MR. KEVIN TUCKER: The address is 1624 Ville
3 Gloria Lane. I stay on Ville Gloria at Dunn Road.

4 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. And you
5 mentioned tree trimming was an issue. Do you
6 believe that the trees are not being trimmed as
7 frequently as they should be or are you saying
8 something else?

9 MR. KEVIN TUCKER: I don't think that they're
10 trimmed in a timely manner because as often as they
11 go out in my area because it's just like on our
12 side of the street our lights go off and then the
13 other side of the area, they don't go out. So
14 that's probably one issue that is addressed. And
15 with the frequency of it, that's probably one issue
16 that --

17 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Have you noticed that
18 they are not trimming the trees?

19 MR. KEVIN TUCKER: Yes, I do notice that. And
20 probably after storms we see a lot of limbs down on
21 a reoccurring basis.

22 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. But have you
23 noticed that they've been coming through the
24 neighborhood, if you know and trimming trees on
25 some sort of an interval that you could describe

1 for me?

2 MR. KEVIN TUCKER: I do notice that they are
3 trimming them, but they're not trimming them
4 consistently. It's not on a consistent basis.
5 It's usually after we're out of power they will
6 trim them. And then it's not on a regular,
7 consistent basis.

8 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: But you don't see
9 trucks come down and trim through the entire block
10 on a regular maintenance?

11 MR. KEVIN TUCKER: I've never seen it. Only
12 on a reactive basis when a problem occurs.

13 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: I think I follow you.
14 Thank you very much for coming, sir.

15 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Thank you. We
16 have another member of the House of Representatives
17 that's here. We just want to recognize her. If
18 she'd like to say anything, Representatives
19 Boynkins. Thank you for being here.

20 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Tiffani Porter.

21 Andrew Elliott.

22 Sarah Davis.

23 Melanie Smith.

24 - - -

25 MELANIE SMITH,

1 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
2 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

3 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
4 proceed.

5 MS. MELANIE SMITH: My name is Melanie Smith.
6 I'm the resident of Country Club Hills 63136. We
7 kind of back up to Jennings. I want to just kind
8 of piggyback on what Ms. Hutchinson was saying in
9 terms of communication. Ameren has got to work on
10 their PR because when you're serving this many
11 people, customer service is essential. Especially
12 in a situation like this. One of the things that I
13 would like to say to take it a step further is help
14 people when they're without the communication if
15 you get on the local stations and at least let us
16 know where the resources are like gas so I can get
17 to work every day in the midst of a storm. That
18 can be very helpful. I found that -- I heard all
19 kinds of stories of outbreaks of violence over gas,
20 pumps are out, et cetera, not to mention that
21 people not knowing that we were going to get hit or
22 sideswiped by these storms may have not filled up
23 their tanks the day before. I personally was
24 driving over 20 miles to get to a gas station, not
25 to mention to eat at least two times a day. But

1 that kind of information would have been very
2 helpful. And also being a member of the service
3 industry working in retail, trying to keep your
4 job, staying, you know, within your hours every
5 day, and not being able to get those resources
6 during the daylight hours, I'm sure there are a
7 number of people who went to work every day trying
8 to provide ice, water, et cetera to the public that
9 was in need not being able to provide those very
10 resources for their own homes. So just wanted to
11 be heard and thank you for being present.

12 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you very much
13 for coming. And I want to say -- I want to ask you
14 location wise you say you're close to Jennings?

15 MS. MELANIE SMITH: Yes. My neighborhood is
16 located right in the corner that backs up between
17 70, Highway 70 and West Florissant and is bordered
18 by Lucas and Hunt. Jennings is on the other side.

19 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Is it north of 70?

20 MS. MELANIE SMITH: Yes.

21 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Do you know what
22 water service you have?

23 MS. MELANIE SMITH: Missouri American.

24 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Were you made aware
25 of a boil order?

1 MS. MELANIE SMITH: Not until I drove --
2 trying to get to Sams Club in Ferguson through all
3 the down lights and all that kind of stuff. And
4 just so happened to talk to one of my co-managers
5 that works at that location. She had information
6 because she lived north of 270. She had
7 information on the boil orders. I had already
8 brushed teeth, but thank God had not drank the
9 water. So, no, I wasn't aware of that until after
10 I spoke to someone that was living outside the
11 area.

12 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: So the communication
13 about the water issue was not successful to the
14 public except for someone telling you about that?

15 MS. MELANIE SMITH: No. And even I want to
16 also mention I'm glad that you've brought that up.
17 As a result of this storm and also having been out
18 of power for three days in 2005 as a result of this
19 storm that was mentioned previously, I've invested
20 in a generator. I refuse to return it even though
21 I can't afford it because I don't know when the
22 next one's coming and I don't have time to go
23 searching for batteries and generators and gas and
24 all this stuff. So I have a nice little reserve on
25 hand now of power cords and also air-conditioning

1 units for my window because those were some very
2 hot days. Unlike the one in 2005 we were fortunate
3 that we didn't have the heat.

4 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Did -- how many days
5 were you out?

6 MS. MELANIE SMITH: Seven almost to the hour.

7 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. And do you
8 have any issues with other outages besides this
9 one? There have been a few people --

10 MS. MELANIE SMITH: I can say that we -- I can
11 tell that we have periodic outages. I can't say
12 that I experienced them because I do work long
13 hours. And you come home and your lights, clocks
14 are blinking and that kind of stuff. But I think
15 in the process of recovering from the storm I think
16 it was that Friday after I got power restored I
17 think Wednesday just about the time the storm hit
18 that following Wednesday is when my power was
19 restored. That Friday evening you can imagine the
20 faces of everyone on the street when the power went
21 out again and we all stuck our heads out and looked
22 at each other with, oh, God. But I would say that
23 the only other power outage I've experienced this
24 year was due to someone running into a transformer
25 and knocking out my half of the block. But I was

1 able to reach Ameren. They explained to me what
2 the circumstances were. And I can't recall how
3 long we were out. I know it was through the night.
4 And I can't -- I don't recall it being on by the
5 time I left to go to work that next morning.

6 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And finally did you
7 have any issues trying to call Ameren during the
8 outage or did you try to call?

9 MS. MELANIE SMITH: I did not try to call this
10 time. I thought it was going to be a short outage,
11 you know, like anybody else thought. And it wasn't
12 until I got -- you know, first thing in the morning
13 you've got to go get ice, you know, to gather your
14 resources. And it wasn't until I drove down
15 Highway 70 trying to go to the Wal-Mart in St. Ann.
16 They were out of power. And then going a little
17 further just was -- I discovered it was everything
18 on this side of 270 was fine.

19 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you very much.

20 MS. MELANIE SMITH: Thank you.

21 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Thank you for
22 coming. I don't have any questions.

23 I've been instructed we still have another
24 sheet of folks to go. The court reporter needs to
25 rest her fingers so we'll take just five minutes.

1 And please stay close.

2

3 (Short break.)

4

5 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Mr. Royston, we're ready
6 for you, please.

7

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8

9 CURTIS ROYSTON, III,
10 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
11 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

12 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
13 proceed.

14 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: I have so much to say
15 this evening. I'm going to try to make it short.
16 Not because -- you might not be tired, but I am.
17 First I'd like to thank you all for being here in
18 St. Louis and doing this again. The last time the
19 Public Service Commission was here it was in a much
20 smaller room at a time that was not good for the
21 people that I represent. Earlier I was recognized
22 as being a committeeman for the 27th ward. And I'd
23 also like to testify as the chairperson for the
24 north side Gateway Center for the north side
25 advisory committee to the Human Development
Corporation. I represent an area from Sarah on the

1 east, to city limits on the west, Delmar on the
2 south, the river on the north is the rough
3 geography. And before I start talking about what
4 the problems are, I do want to acknowledge the fact
5 that being out in the community immediately after
6 the storm that I thought as I interacted with the
7 Ameren UE workers, employees, the front end folks,
8 I thought that they did a wonderful job providing
9 the services that were providing. They were
10 friendly. If you asked them a question, they'd try
11 their best to get an answer to you. If they didn't
12 know it, they'd try to get an answer to you.
13 Drove around and pointed out different things to
14 them. I saw folks making notes of things in order
15 to get back to them. So I think on a front end
16 thing it's good, on employees. It's on the policy
17 end or the business end or the back end, however
18 you want to describe it where I think some things
19 could have been made better. In particular in my
20 case I live at 5206 Thrush. Immediately after the
21 storm when I got home after the storm I had a wire
22 down in the back of my house. And there was a
23 young lady who testified earlier that lives not too
24 far from me. My situation was much the same as
25 hers. So the line was down. Every time the wind

1 would stir it up you could hear it crack against
2 the ground. It was almost like a gunshot the sound
3 was so loud. They tried to get through to UE.
4 There was no success in getting through to UE. A
5 police officer who was coming through the
6 neighborhood, we would get that officer to tape the
7 area off to at least try to keep folks from walking
8 back and forth through the line and possibly
9 causing injury to themselves. We were out of
10 electricity for at least my half of the block was
11 out of electricity for eight days. The lower end
12 was out for six days, I believe. I think as it
13 relates to the outage itself, I look at it the same
14 way others testified. It was an act of God,
15 something that Ameren could not have presented the
16 storm itself. But I think there are things that
17 Ameren can do on the back end now that we've seen
18 something like that in order to prepare for things
19 like that. And some of the things that were
20 mentioned before so I won't reiterate. I know at
21 least as I talk to the community I represent, there
22 were folks that reported restructuring from the
23 time line of the tree maintenance. Our
24 conversation of the tree maintenance in the city of
25 St. Louis. I know both in my neighborhood and

1 throughout the city that I've seen, I don't see
2 Ameren UE coming out and trimming trees on a
3 regular basis. And as evidence of that when I
4 drive down now or look down now either somebody's
5 back door to the alley or carry out somebody's back
6 door to the alley, it's obvious that the trees
7 haven't been trimmed in quite some time because of
8 how far they extend over the telephone line. I'm
9 not able to give you a time line or how often it's
10 been done. I can only say that based on how the
11 tree limb extends over the line that it's obvious
12 that it hasn't been trimmed in quite some time. If
13 we were just able to get those trees trimmed back I
14 think that would have done a lot in order to
15 alleviate some of the outages that folks saw
16 related to the lines actually being down, not that
17 it would do anything for a substation or anything
18 else. But as far as the lines going down, if
19 Ameren UE really looked at the Public Service
20 Commission, really held Ameren UE to making sure
21 that tree trimming was done. So I'm making a plea.
22 I'm asking not just the representatives of Ameren
23 UE, but I'm also asking you all as representatives
24 of the Public Service Commission to make sure that
25 Ameren UE is doing just that. It's a business.

1 It's a business that operates at a profit. And as
2 I testified a couple months ago even when you're
3 operating as a profit, it's best to operate in the
4 best interest of your constituents first of the
5 people that you're serving first. So I ask that
6 that tree maintenance time line, can you please
7 move it up to whatever it is right now, it
8 definitely needs to be moved up. One of the other
9 things that I noticed is folks who are coming in to
10 start to do the tree trimming, there were no
11 minorities. There weren't any women, weren't any
12 African Americans, weren't any Asians, weren't any
13 Hispanics. What I saw were mostly white males
14 either from Iowa or Kansas that were coming into
15 St. Louis to provide us service. I have a tree
16 trimmer -- and that might now be the right name for
17 the service, but I have a tree trimmer that stays
18 two doors -- actually caddy-corner from my house.
19 There are minorities in St. Louis that have tree
20 trimming businesses that can be hired on. And one
21 of the other things we need to look at when we have
22 somebody drawing some funds from the public is how
23 to incorporate an opportunity from the public to
24 take part in what's going on. So if Ameren UE
25 doesn't have a program, it needs to implement one.

1 And if it has one we need to look at how it can be
2 expanded and broadened and make sure the
3 information is out there. Maybe people just don't
4 know there's an opportunity to do those type of
5 things. But that's something else that we can look
6 at because when we talk about communicating, this
7 is another source right there in the community that
8 can make sure that Ameren UE is getting some of
9 that good publicity that somebody spoke about
10 earlier. We talked about getting information out.
11 One thing that we know, one way that we know that
12 people get information usually on a monthly basis
13 at least I know mine comes once a month is a little
14 card that comes in the mail, sometimes an envelope,
15 called a utility bill, the Ameren UE bill. If we
16 can just mail out a survey to those that are
17 receiving the bills at the same time the bills go
18 out put it in an envelope with the bill, it's a
19 sure fire way of just asking those questions, have
20 the trees been trimmed would you like the trees
21 trimmed or however it is you want to phrase it.
22 But go ahead and send the information out to the
23 same people that are getting the bills and I'm sure
24 you'll get something back. If not a survey, if the
25 response to the survey were, gosh, that's just so

1 costly to do a survey, then you could also look at
2 putting a postcard in with the utility bill.
3 Something that lets folks know that this is when
4 the utility company is coming into your
5 neighborhood so at least you know it's going to
6 happen, when it's going to happen so they can make
7 the necessary arrangements to have it happen. And
8 something else I know when they were trimming the
9 trees even though it wasn't an emergency was that
10 they would only trim just enough. If this was the
11 line, and tree was here, they would trim just
12 enough so that it was no longer hanging over the
13 line. But eventually -- and I'm no arborist, but I
14 believe that that tree limb would grow back. Why
15 not trim the tree line back as far as the property
16 owner will let you tree back so that you won't have
17 to worry about that tree limb growing back out in
18 the next couple of years. And, lastly, and this
19 comes from my heart of hearts as the chairperson
20 for one of the local neighborhood organizations
21 operating through the human development
22 corporation. And that's what we have to find is
23 some way to require Ameren UE, or ask Ameren UE to
24 find it in their corporate hearts to develop some
25 type of pool of money that low income folks can

1 access so that those folks that can't afford to
2 have their tree trim can access those dollars the
3 same way folks can access dollars for the light
4 heat program, the low energy assistance program.
5 Because one of the things that I'm constantly
6 getting is calls from my constituents asking about
7 do we have funds, who can I call in order to get
8 this tree trimmed that's in my yard. It's a very
9 expensive task to have a tree trimmed, let alone
10 take the tree down. So if there's any way Ameren
11 UE in it's corporate heart with the encouragement
12 or through the encouragement through the Public
13 Service Commission could develop that type of pool
14 of money, maybe work with neighborhood
15 organizations to make sure that program is
16 administered, that's something else that I think
17 would go a long way towards good PR for Ameren UE.
18 But, again, those things are things that have to be
19 suggested and have to be looked at and have to be
20 enforced by the Public Service Commission. Those
21 of you who are elected to do things on behalf of
22 the constituents. At least that's my belief in
23 what it is. That's my understanding of what you're
24 there for, is to protect the interest of the
25 consumer and not to protect the interest of the

1 corporate folks that are making all the money. I
2 think when I testified the last time you all were
3 here down near Barnes Hospital I spoke to the fact
4 that I understand economics enough to know that
5 there are folks that are invested in Ameren UE and
6 Ameren UE has to return a profit to those folks.
7 But those folks shouldn't earn a profit on the
8 backs of poor and low income folks simply by
9 cutting back services, cutting back the number of
10 folks that are on the employment lines or could
11 impact the order of the time line for which
12 maintenance, both the tree maintenance as well as
13 the line maintenance is done on the equipment that
14 Ameren UE has. And I think that's all that I have
15 to say this evening. I look forward to you all
16 coming back again to talk about the possible rate
17 hikes in the future.

18 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you for coming
19 and I appreciate all of your alls patience in
20 waiting. Just one quick question. You mentioned
21 that the trees are not trimmed. You can see them
22 over the lines. And you meant over the electric
23 lines?

24 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: Yes.

25 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Do you have any

1 pictures or is it possible that we might be able to
2 see some pictures?

3 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: I don't have pictures,
4 but I can take pictures. It's something I'd have
5 to do in addition to being a father, a husband, a
6 committeeman, working a day job and being a
7 chairperson --

8 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: You are very busy.

9 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: -- Human Development
10 Corporation. But I am willing to add one more
11 thing if it would get something done.

12 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Only if you want to,
13 but if you want to.

14 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: Okay.

15 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And if you do, send
16 them to us and someone can give you an address.
17 Make sure you identify where the location is if you
18 do it.

19 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: Oh, no, I'd like to. I'm
20 solution driven. I'd rather talk about solutions
21 more than the problem.

22 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: I know you are.

23 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Committeeman
24 Royston, as a father, husband, working a day job,
25 chairman and committeeman, how long was your power

1 out after the storm?

2 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: I was out for eight days
3 in my part of the block. And I was told that was
4 because a transformer was actually behind my house.
5 And when the line snapped it burned out the
6 transformer. But the lower end of my block was out
7 six days. The block immediately behind me never
8 lost electric power.

9 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: It's good to see
10 you again. And it's not the first time you've
11 testified before us, but we appreciate your
12 interest and your involvement on these important
13 issues.

14 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: I thank you all for
15 coming back to St. Louis again.

16 COMMISSIONER LIN APPLING: You've got a lot of
17 energy, my friend, so keep it up. Good to have you
18 here tonight. Keep it up.

19 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you, sir.

20 MR. CURTIS ROYSTON: Thank you. And can I say
21 one more thing because Mr. Gaw had said something
22 earlier when Ms. Hutchinson was testifying about
23 those ways in which we can get information out to
24 the community. I want to underscore that three
25 times because there are ways. There are mechanisms

1 that we have in locally that we can get information
2 out if we just had the information. Some folks
3 mentioned TV and radio. Well, in a case like this
4 storm where you didn't have electricity, I don't
5 know how you're going to get it through the TV and
6 radio if you don't have that electricity. We need
7 to have that ground network to make that happen.
8 So thank you all again for being here tonight.

9 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Alonzo Harris.

10 Peter Jones.

11 Daniel Schosch.

12 MR. DANIEL SCHOSCH: It's Daniel Schosch. The
13 first c-h is silent. Drives everybody crazy.

14 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Before you begin.

15 - - -

16 DANIEL SCHOSCH,

17 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
18 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

19 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
20 proceed.

21 MR. DANIEL SCHOSCH: My power at 6036
22 McPherson, ZIP code 63112 was out for six days from
23 Wednesday to Tuesday. And other parts of my
24 neighborhood the power was out for two days to nine
25 days. I live in the Skinker Olive neighborhood,

1 which is in the west end of the City of St. Louis
2 just east of U City and just northeast of the
3 Wash U campus. Though I'm president of the
4 community organization I'm speaking on behalf as an
5 individual. We only meet once a month so it's
6 pretty hard on short notice to speak on behalf. My
7 particular situation, the storm caused a tree
8 limb -- I have a backyard sycamore, wonderful shade
9 tree, to break off and fall across the top lines
10 which are the feeder lines I understand like 4800
11 volts each. And that knocked off power to most of
12 my block and my own house, of course. It also
13 blocked the alley. So actually the first picture,
14 number 750, is that particular tree limb. My
15 garage also. Anyway, one of the interesting things
16 that happened in terms of tree trimmings I would
17 say I've been there 38 years. Ameren has basically
18 or UE trims the trees about every five to six to
19 seven years. Pretty long. Sycamores, as you may
20 know, grow rather quickly. So I'm not suggesting
21 that they do that, but after about two years it
22 almost needs trimming again because those limbs
23 grow rather quickly. About 20 years ago a UE tree
24 people came in and topped my tree. It went way
25 into my backyard probably 20, 25 feet and cut off

1 the main trunk and topped it out, crew cut I call
2 it. And now there's about six or seven trunks
3 which are much bigger than the main trunk used to
4 be. They've in effect created the monster that my
5 tree now has become. I've read recently that
6 you're never supposed to top trees, but apparently
7 that contractor never read those, didn't know what
8 they were doing. The limb when it fell was
9 suspended, as you can see, on the two top wires.
10 So what happened is those wires were live and they
11 started to burn through the limb. And so I tried
12 calling Ameren UE about three or four or five
13 times. I got anywhere from a busy signal to this
14 line is out of service. And I have a little
15 battery operated TV and they came on, the mayor of
16 St. Louis, you can call the trim tree 112-1212
17 number. And I did and I got through. And sure
18 enough within an hour the fire department came out
19 and they said oh, we can't do anything about it,
20 but they did put up the yellow tape. And they also
21 said they would let Ameren UE know. So I figured
22 the fire department could get through to them. I
23 didn't need to call anymore. They came out about
24 four hours later and same deal, they couldn't touch
25 it. The issue though was that unlike the woman

1 where it actually caused a fire in her house, the
2 high voltage line was causing sparks and cinders
3 from those limbs. And this had been a live trunk.
4 So thank God it didn't burst into flames. It was
5 pretty damp. It was live. But there were sparks
6 literally falling onto my wooden fence and very
7 close to my garage. And when I went to sleep that
8 night I was very paranoid that I'd have a burnt
9 down garage the next morning. And when I went to
10 sleep I was very worried about that. Then two days
11 passed. In other words, all we really needed was
12 for them to come down and turn off the power to
13 those lines. And that didn't happen for two days.
14 On Friday a tree trimmers came out. A liaison from
15 their Ameren office came out, an office kind of
16 guy, but he had the cell phone. And they waited
17 for the linesman to come to turn off the power
18 because they couldn't trim the tree until the power
19 was turned off. After a couple of hours the tree
20 trimmers left. The Ameren linesman could call the
21 number and they couldn't tell him where the
22 trimmers were. And that gets to my first
23 recommendation, gee, guys, if you're going to be
24 coordinating all these people, they at least I
25 think all had cell phones. But you rent a whole

1 bunch of GPS locators that are pretty common these
2 days and you give one to each of your contractors
3 and linesman so you know where they are at any
4 given point in time because here's this poor guy
5 who's waited for about four to five hours and when
6 he'd call the number they couldn't tell them where
7 the linesman was that was supposed to come turn on
8 the power. They all gave up at about 7 o'clock in
9 the evening and the linesman finally came and they
10 did shut off power knocking out the block to the
11 east of me. They were not happy, but we were. So
12 that was -- that was that situation. I went
13 through Friday. That's my first recommendation.
14 It didn't seem that the coordination of the work
15 crews was being handled very well. It sounds like
16 Ameren UE needs to get some real strong maybe get
17 consultation with Scott Air Force Base about
18 logistics because it didn't seem like they really
19 had a plan and it wasn't being implemented very
20 well. A second thing -- so that's the one issue.
21 Moving on, on August 2nd, which is I guess about a
22 week and a half after the thing was finished and I
23 think almost everybody had their power out, I
24 deliberately waited a week. I then called Ameren
25 and said, oh, by the way. And that's the third

1 picture number 358 or 758. Anyway, the limb that
2 fell was a forked trunk. So a piece broke off,
3 fell across the lines. And as that picture clearly
4 shows the remaining part of the fork is much
5 thinner and very weak. And another good blow like
6 that and that will fall over. So I called them and
7 said hey, by the way, you really should get out and
8 cut this other second piece off before we have
9 another problem in the future. Alesia is the
10 person who answered the phone. She said it'll be
11 about a week. It's been two months. So I, you
12 know, please do maybe refer this to Ameren and find
13 out why they still haven't gotten around to it. I
14 mean, by now they should be catching up on these
15 kinds of things or long since caught up. And
16 something like this, you know. Okay. The last
17 thing is a little Excel table that I put together.
18 I had access to another office where I could access
19 computer stuff that I'd go commute to. And I
20 started noticing that the Post Dispatch would
21 publish these ZIP code things. So I picked
22 arbitrarily a bunch of ZIP codes including my own.
23 And I started to notice that some ZIP codes were
24 getting much, much quicker restoration than my ZIP
25 code and some other ZIP codes. In fact, in my ZIP

1 code the number of outages actually of people
2 without power went up slightly. The main crunch
3 was over the weekend where a number of ZIP codes
4 went from the substantial amount of outages, 50, 60
5 percent down to 20, 15 and 10 percent, where as we
6 were stuck at about 34. There were some other
7 worse areas. Interestingly enough you would assume
8 that it might be the minority areas, but Ladue got
9 hammered also. But the main thing here is to say,
10 okay, whatever the thing is -- and several people
11 have said that they had like in my case the burning
12 lines the downed wires, the dangerous things. And
13 Ameren was here and they're talking about we've got
14 to get the institutions and so forth. Right up
15 there in the priority list should be disabling
16 downed live wires. They don't even talk about
17 that. Somewhere in there their priorities after a
18 storm like this should be people running around
19 turning off power to downed live wires. So I make
20 that recommendation that they add something to
21 their priority list and it should be pretty high
22 up. Then I heard the comment that they were taking
23 care of sort of the most bang for their buck kind
24 of thing. They were accessing and turning on the
25 power to areas where one fix would turn on a lot of

1 power. And that sort of makes sense. But part of
2 the problem is my sense is that some of those areas
3 especially further out in the county, St. Charles
4 County, Jefferson County, are newer, have newer
5 infrastructures. And I'm wondering -- and this is
6 a question, suspicious, but it's only a question,
7 that the older parts of the metropolitan area, the
8 city and inner county may have very old
9 infrastructures. And Ameren as long as it
10 literally doesn't blow up is nursing them along.
11 And so of course where they have the newer parts of
12 the distribution system they can make those repairs
13 much more quickly, get more bang for the buck. But
14 they have to come into our areas where there's a
15 lot of band-aids and very old distribution
16 infrastructure and takes them much longer. And so
17 sure enough we're going to get it. And so I
18 suggest -- I think one of the questions is again
19 it's a profit making organization. If you've got
20 power distribution stuff that lasts for 40 years,
21 they probably depreciated in 20 years. They can
22 keep that stuff going for the full 40 years, that's
23 full profit rather than replace it. Of course it
24 may not be the most reliable thing. And so
25 therefore you may hear the stories of the people

1 whose power is out when it rains a lot or it's out
2 four to six to eight times a year. And you've got
3 the bean counter sitting there saying well it costs
4 us 20 or \$40,000 to replace these particular pieces
5 of equipment, but we can send a crew out and it
6 only costs us \$400 and that's six times a year and
7 that's cheaper than spending \$20,000 to replace the
8 equipment. So the corporate mentality says let's
9 just keep that old stuff going and keep applying
10 patches rather than modernize it because it's
11 better for our bottom line. They have no
12 competition so who are they going to switch to? So
13 my question is I don't think there's any incentive
14 in Ameren to have them go through and on a
15 systematic basis constantly look at their oldest
16 equipment and say, okay, we're going to replace
17 this stuff 15 years 20 years, whatever it is before
18 perhaps before the end of it's completely useful
19 life so the system is constantly being modernized
20 and updated and less prone to failure on a frequent
21 basis. So my request is that the Ameren -- that
22 the Public Service Commission ask Ameren or require
23 Ameren to go through and look at it's calls for
24 repairs through the entire service area. People
25 are calling in. It's all recorded in the computer.

1 They should be able very quickly. You'll have to
2 set up the computer program to do it. But I
3 suspect within a month they could identify all
4 those areas where people lose power six times a
5 year, eight times a year, whatever it is. And then
6 have them sit there. You know, the police do that
7 now. One of the crime fighting things in St. Louis
8 and other cities and sit there and say where are
9 all these crimes going on. And they find they have
10 these hot spots. So they now assign their tactical
11 units to focus on their hot spots and they're
12 having a major impact on crime. They hadn't
13 bothered to track this stuff before. Let's have
14 Ameren track where all these constant calls for
15 repairs are coming from outside of like this
16 windstorm. Okay. You know, that's an unusual
17 event. And then they can identify the hot spots of
18 the equipment that keeps failing. And then you
19 say, okay, guys, in a year we want all those fixed
20 and you're going to let us know that whatever the
21 time frame is that the end of that time you're not
22 going to have any more breakdowns there that's more
23 than an average one a year or one every three
24 years. So basically force them to look at the
25 places where their equipment is old. It may not be

1 completely obsolete. It's not reliable. And force
2 them to start modernizing the areas where it's been
3 a constant headache for those customers because I
4 don't think without you kicking them they're going
5 to bother. It's cheaper for them to keep applying
6 the band-aids. That's the end of my testimony.

7 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you very much.

8 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Mr. Schosch, the
9 first c-h is silent. First of all, sorry for the
10 late hour and I appreciate you sticking around.
11 And also thank you very much for this document. It
12 clearly sits out what happened, the steps that you
13 took or the steps that Ameren took or the different
14 participants took. And I also appreciate your
15 pictures. It helps to really identify what the
16 problem was in this instance. I just wanted to
17 respond a little bit on your suggestion about old
18 infrastructure. There may well be a problem of old
19 infrastructure in the city. Not necessarily
20 agreeing with you on that. But I will tell you
21 that we were in North County last night. And some
22 brand new subdivisions that said many of the same
23 things we've heard from West County earlier today
24 and the city. So there are problems that I think
25 need to be addressed all over and we're going to

1 take a look at all of them.

2 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: I have only one question.
3 How old is your house?

4 MR. DANIEL SCHOSCH: My house is 98 years old.
5 Going to be a century house in 2008. My whole
6 neighborhood is almost like that, three-quarters of
7 it. And, by the way, if you need me I can send you
8 the colored picture, but my color printer decided
9 to kick out a couple days ago. So I had to print
10 these out in black and white. But I can send stuff
11 by e-mail and all that if anything's necessary.
12 I've left my phone number if anybody needs
13 anything. Send everything else.

14 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: We'll probably ask you to
15 submit this if you've got it digitally.

16 MR. DANIEL SCHOSCH: Terrific. Who should I
17 get the address from? Somebody back there?

18 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: If you could just give
19 one of them your number and we'll contact you and
20 go from there. Thank you.

21 MR. DANIEL SCHOSCH: Thank you.

22 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Ken Younger.
23 Michael Hudson.
24 Otis Grundy.
25 Clarence Tiller.

1 Cynthia French.

2 Darlene Lewis.

3 MS. DARLENE LEWIS: Good evening.

4 - - -

5 DARLENE LEWIS,

6 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
7 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

8 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
9 proceed.

10 MS. DARLENE LEWIS: My name is Darlene Lewis
11 and I reside in the county of Pine Lawn. The
12 concerns that I have are about power lines. I
13 still have lines down in my backyard. It took a
14 month for me to get a person to speak to at Ameren
15 UE and when I did they sent someone. And when they
16 came they said those are not ours. Call somebody
17 else. I called the cable company. They came,
18 those are not our wires. Call somebody else. I'm
19 still waiting on the telephone company to come and
20 check the wires. But there's so many things I had
21 to say. I forgot. But I do have some suggestions.
22 Like everyone that receives mail from your company,
23 like tonight's meeting, maybe a lot more people
24 would have come if they knew about it. Some people
25 don't have access to TV or all those other means of

1 communication. I really thought there should have
2 been more people here. And if I had not watched
3 the news on Monday, I would not have known of this
4 meeting.

5 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Ms. Lewis, you
6 mentioned that you're still waiting on a response
7 from the telephone company; is that right?

8 MS. DARLENE LEWIS: Yes.

9 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: There is someone
10 here. If you turn around and seeing a waving hand.
11 There is someone here from AT&T to talk about these
12 particular issues. And I suggest that you touch
13 base and work on that issue. As far as the public
14 notice, we're doing the best we can to get the word
15 out. We're doing better. At least we got a better
16 location, decent size. But we appreciate you
17 sticking around here tonight.

18 MS. DARLENE LEWIS: I do have a question
19 relating to the telephone company. A month ago I
20 switched services and I called yesterday or the day
21 before, whatever it was, to ask about my lines are
22 still down. And the lady told me that you know
23 you're no longer with our company. And I said okay
24 but during the outage I was with your company. And
25 they told me that when you switch companies you

1 have to call them to do your repairs even though
2 this happened in July before I switched services.

3 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Start with AT&T,
4 the gentleman back there, and then perhaps one of
5 our consumer services people can help mediate
6 between you. And I'm sure you can work towards
7 some resolution. I don't know how to answer your
8 question beyond that. I came to talk Ameren storm
9 stuff and you bring up a phone issue.

10 MS. DARLENE LEWIS: I'm glad you said phone.
11 I was hoping I would be able to speak while the
12 room was crowded. I would suggest to everyone to
13 get an old fashioned phone. When you have the
14 wireless phones you don't get service. So I was
15 going to tell everybody that, but they're not here.
16 So that would be a good suggestion.

17 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Might be one to give to
18 your community representatives.

19 MS. DARLENE LEWIS: I tell everyone that I
20 know and hopefully they'll pass it on.

21 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you.

22 Doris House.

23 - - -

24 DORIS HOUSE,

25 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly

1 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

2 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
3 proceed.

4 MS. DORIS HOUSE: Is this better? Okay. I am
5 very glad that I have had an opportunity to speak
6 before you today because I was very upset during
7 the time of the storm. And I have three concerns
8 or issues that I'm hoping will be addressed in the
9 findings. Number one, I would like to talk about
10 the lack of communication that the gentleman before
11 me spoke about. That was a tremendous issue. We
12 had -- I have a property on Ellington in St. Louis
13 County. The box was pulled away from the house.
14 And we just needed -- we also had some lines on the
15 trees. The people who were the electricians that
16 he told me to call needed someone to clear the
17 trees off the lines and the line to be dropped. In
18 the course of all this I went downtown. And I'll
19 tell you about that a little later on in my
20 presentation. But I went to their main office. I
21 was told that they would send an evaluator down to
22 look at the trees and to remove it. I got a call
23 while I was in UE's main office that a
24 subcontractor tree company was on the property on
25 Ellington and they were looking at it. And

1 actually they said since they were there and they
2 had the ability, they could go ahead and take care
3 of it. However, it took them so long to contact
4 someone in UE to give them permission to cut the
5 tree until they left. And UE apparently never got
6 back to them. That's a major problem. They were
7 there. They could have taken care of it in a few
8 minutes because they were in the neighborhood
9 taking care of other properties on the same block.
10 So that's a major issue. And in talking to some of
11 the workers from out of state they were also saying
12 that the manner in which things were orchestrated
13 needed to be addressed and clarified. The second
14 thing I'd like to talk about is the box that was
15 pulled away from the house. Immediately I called
16 UE and I went around about and I did talk to people
17 several times about having someone to come and to
18 drop the wires. Because the electric company said
19 that they needed UE to do that. Well, from the
20 beginning of the storm, first day of the storm, all
21 the way to the time that the contractors were
22 leaving St. Louis, UE never sent anybody, never
23 contacted anyone, never contacted their workmen.
24 On the last day when the trucks were leaving
25 St. Louis I called UE again to ask them since you

1 know every -- the lights and everything were back
2 on, could they send somebody out to drop the lines
3 so I could have the electrician -- the electricians
4 have been waiting for I don't know how many days.
5 They told me on the last day, oh, the electricians
6 should know how to do it and we've given them
7 permission or they can drop the lines. Had they
8 told us that way back days before, the lines could
9 have been dropped and dropped safely. As a home
10 owner and a property owner I think putting the
11 owner in the situation where they could be liable
12 in terms of insurance in terms of someone that's
13 being asked to come on the property to take care of
14 trees or electricians to take care of the box, they
15 really need to do better in that area. If they
16 have electricians or companies that know how to
17 drop the lines as the gentleman -- as the
18 alderperson said or the committee person said, we
19 have people in St. Louis who could have helped. I
20 have -- they were waiting on me and they would call
21 me. I would call them. And we were waiting on UE.
22 And in the end they were told what they could do in
23 order to just drop the lines. This is after
24 everybody is leaving. That was unnecessary. The
25 third thing is I do not appreciate the way that UE

1 treats it's customers when they come to the main
2 headquarters downtown. After things got so bad --
3 and I have tenants in the building that I live in
4 on Julia. It's an older building built in the
5 1920's. One half of the house eventually had some
6 lights on enough to run the TV, the refrigerator --
7 not the refrigerator, just the TV, just the regular
8 outlets. The second portion of the two-family
9 flat, no electricity on the first floor. And our
10 whole neighborhood in our block rather the
11 electricity was partially on, which means that
12 people who had breathing problems, senior citizens,
13 were subjected to extreme heat. And I really don't
14 understand that phenomenon that electricity can
15 come to a building and only come into the first
16 floor and not the second floor. And my neighbors
17 who had whole houses were experiencing the same
18 thing. So it didn't really matter whether it was a
19 two-family flat or a single home. Only part of the
20 building was -- had electricity. I don't
21 understand how that happened, but that situation
22 went on too long. And, again, all the way to the
23 last days. Seven or eight days, however long that
24 period lasted. When I went down to talk to someone
25 at UE I asked to speak to a supervisor. I also had

1 my lawyer with me. And he was -- we wanted to talk
2 to them about the property on Ellington because the
3 person living there had a breathing problem.
4 Instead of us seeing a supervisor, they called
5 security down. I don't understand why it was
6 necessary to call security down. There were not a
7 lot of people there. There were not. We wanted to
8 get some information. We went to the little
9 waiting area behind the receptionist's desk. She
10 seemed to be -- the receptionist seemed to be a
11 little frazzled also when we were telling her that
12 we wanted to speak to a supervisor. And she --
13 this also happened with MSD where the public cannot
14 speak to a person when it comes to a complaint or a
15 concern. That should not have happened. When --
16 the only thing that the consumer wanted to do was
17 to get information. We were told by the security
18 that that was their procedure. Now as a tax paying
19 citizen I see no reason why there should be extra
20 security when you already have security at the door
21 to greet people. So it wasn't a weapons situation.
22 It wasn't -- no one was screaming or threatening
23 anybody. Just for asking to speak to someone on
24 the supervisory level there was no need to call
25 security. I did not appreciate that. And if that

1 is their policy, it definitely needs to change.
2 And when people do call UE they deserve to talk to
3 a person. And there should be somewhere in that --
4 in the headquarters or wherever their offices are
5 where an individual can go in to talk to someone
6 even if it's not a supervisor who could help them
7 whatever their problem is. Because many times the
8 person may be trying to make arrangements for
9 payment or maybe something else that's a private
10 matter. And if the person should not be sitting in
11 a waiting open public area to discuss personal
12 business. That's not the way you do business. And
13 I think UE needs to change their policy as it
14 relates to that.

15 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Ma'am, thank you for
16 coming tonight and waiting and being so patient.

17 MS. DORIS HOUSE: You're welcome.

18 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: I want to ask just
19 real quick, when you went downtown to talk to
20 somebody, which office were you going to?

21 MS. DORIS HOUSE: It's near Jefferson. I
22 think it's Chouteau. I'm positive it's Chouteau.

23 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. Was it their
24 main office?

25 MS. DORIS HOUSE: Yes, their main office,

1 nice, big building.

2 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Just wanted to make
3 sure I was following. Thank you very much.

4 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Is there anyone else?

5 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: We just want to
6 recognize Senator Coleman is here. We just wanted
7 to recognize Senator Coleman. We're not forcing
8 you. We're glad that you're here.

9 SENATOR COLEMAN: I'm here to observe.

10 - - -

11 KEVIN JOHNSON,
12 of lawful age, having been produced and first duly
13 sworn as a witness, testified as follows:

14 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Could you please state
15 your name for me.

16 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: My name is Kevin Johnson.

17 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Kevin Johnson?

18 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Yes.

19 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: And your address?

20 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: I live on 5179 Cabanne,
21 St. Louis, which is about five blocks south of
22 here. I live on Cabanne.

23 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Can you spell Cabanne --

24 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: C-a-b-a-n-n-e. It's
25 Cabanne is how it's pronounced.

1 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you. Please
2 proceed with your comments.

3 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Well, first of all, I know
4 you've been through a lot with the storms. I want
5 to commend the hard work that your employees did to
6 having to get the service restored. I know it was
7 quite a bit and my sympathy goes out to you guys.
8 And on behalf of the family, the gentleman who lost
9 his life as a result of, you know, working to get
10 people's power restored, so I know there's a lot of
11 things going on. And I can relate. But my
12 concern, our power went out on the 19th around
13 7 o'clock. And the area that I live there, I guess
14 from what I understand we are divided between a
15 couple bridges. Now I think I know what they are,
16 but just for I guess for layman's sake, one side of
17 the street had power, the other didn't. And then
18 later on the other side didn't have power and I
19 think we did and then it kind of went back and
20 forth. Finally it all went out. And it was out
21 for about two days. And then came back on the
22 20th. Storm hit again on the 21st. And then it
23 was out until the following week or whatever. But
24 anyway, the issue that we have primarily is when it
25 rains or when there is a bad storm, because it's

1 happened once before, our power generally goes out.
2 About two years ago it went out and it was out a
3 whole week. And that's, you know, there was no
4 rhyme or reason, but it was out a week as a result.
5 So what we're wondering, our neighbors are
6 concerned is the infrastructure as such that it's
7 so old that it needs to be totally replaced. I've
8 got friends that work for Ameren and they've stated
9 that it's very old, a very old infrastructure which
10 is why the power goes out so often or at least when
11 there is a bad storm. So, you know, if there's
12 something that could be done to improve that, that
13 would certainly be appreciated if that's the case.
14 In the neighborhood that I live in the city
15 obviously you can imagine bad things happen.
16 There's crime. That's just the fact of life that
17 we experience. Well, during that time period
18 because of the power outage it really induced a lot
19 of crime. Some people, you know, there's some kids
20 from the other neighborhood and just ransacked the
21 area. Go into people's yards and things like that.
22 I know you have no control over things like that.
23 Even police had limited control. Some couldn't
24 call police because they had the phones that
25 were -- needed electronic power. So they couldn't

1 call 911. And the cell phone, couldn't get a cell
2 tower. So we were like sitting ducks. And that's
3 just the way things were. So the question came up
4 from many of our neighbors, are certain areas given
5 preference as far as when power was restored. Are
6 certain areas given or considered not as
7 significant as others. And if that's the case is
8 there some way that that could be changed. I'm not
9 sure if that's, you know, the case, but that's the
10 way, you know, that's the way it came across when
11 the power is out. There was one area. I don't
12 live on this end, but there are problems in this
13 area on the street down on Evans. It's in the
14 Ville neighborhood. It's a street that I think the
15 city has started to do some development in. But
16 right now there's nothing there. It was just a few
17 houses and I happen to own property on this
18 particular street. I don't live in it because it's
19 under renovations, but there are some neighbors who
20 do live there and they were out until close to a
21 week. Many of these neighbors were completely just
22 to the best of what I could describe is molested
23 from, you know, predators that had taken advantage
24 of their situation, you know, being without power.
25 And as a result many of them had their homes

1 robbed, took things in the yard, took things, cars
2 vandalized. And the list went on and on. When the
3 police were called, and again I know you can't
4 control this, but when they were called the only
5 way they would respond is if there was some
6 physical act of violence where a person's physical
7 life was in danger. And some couldn't call 911. So
8 the bottom line is they felt that because of where
9 they lived they were not as significant than areas
10 such as Central West End, Barnes, or some of the
11 more higher profile areas in the city. So I guess
12 my question would be what -- what do they have in
13 place to avoid such a massive outage so that at
14 least should we get a storm like that again, and
15 I'm sure we will, it won't have such an impact on
16 this area as it did on the 19th and the 20th of
17 July or 21st of July.

18 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Just to clarify, we're
19 not with Ameren. We're the Public Service
20 Commission. But I'm going to point to those guys
21 that are -- who are with Ameren. And I encourage
22 you to get with them and have them explain to you
23 what their system is of priorities for turning
24 power back on and that sort of stuff.

25 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And I would

1 answer that we're here to find answers to answer
2 that question. I think we're all hearing what
3 problems are out in the different neighborhoods
4 around the metropolitan area to address the
5 circumstance of something like this happening again
6 so that we're all better prepared. And it's our
7 responsibility to help Ameren find ways or address
8 some of the problems that have been raised here
9 tonight. I did want to ask you a couple of
10 questions if that's okay. First of all can you
11 help me identify which part of the city that you're
12 from again? And don't call it by street. What
13 ward or what neighborhood?

14 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: 18th ward. The
15 neighborhood is the Sherman Park Academy
16 Neighborhood.

17 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Sherman Park?

18 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Sherman Park Academy
19 Neighborhood. The west boundary is Union. East
20 boundary is Kingshighway. South boundary is
21 Delmar. And north boundary is Page.

22 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And it was in
23 this neighborhood where there was a significant
24 increase in crime?

25 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: During that time, yeah.

1 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And was it all
2 types of crime or was it just vandalism? I mean,
3 were people mugged and burglaries?

4 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Yeah, all the above,
5 burglaries, mugging, burglaries of personal
6 property and some -- some persons.

7 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And how many
8 days were you without power?

9 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Four days total.

10 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Four days total?

11 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: And it came back on --
12 let's see. It went out the 19th around 7 o'clock.
13 Came back on the next day. That's the 20th,
14 7 o'clock on the 20th. The storm came in on the
15 21st, that Friday and was out for the rest of the
16 week.

17 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And is there a
18 particular night when crime was especially bad?

19 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: All of them.

20 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: This is the
21 first that I recall this is our third hearing.
22 This is the first I recall hearing a significant
23 increase in criminal activity. You mentioned
24 obviously the part of that was because there were
25 no lights. No street lights, no light on in any of

1 the homes, correct?

2 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Right.

3 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: You also
4 mentioned that there was no phone or you were not
5 able to call the police.

6 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Many of the customers -- I
7 happen to have a regular land line phone.

8 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Well, let's
9 start with the land line phone. Did the land line
10 phones work?

11 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: The land line phones they
12 worked, yes.

13 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: So you did have
14 some ability of dialing out?

15 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: I did, yes.

16 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: And then you
17 mentioned cell phone service wasn't working?

18 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: No, you couldn't get to a
19 cell tower. No service was available. Now, I
20 don't know if it's the company that I was with,
21 but, or, you know, that had anything to do with it,
22 but you just could not get a signal at all.

23 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Can -- do you
24 know if police reports were ever filed?

25 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: They were filed. I don't

1 know -- and as a matter of fact one night the
2 police did start to patrol the area. As a matter
3 of fact I think multiples were out on one night.

4 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: Did you ever
5 have any problem -- I'm not going to ask that. Any
6 problems with water service?

7 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: No.

8 COMMISSIONER ROBERT CLAYTON: I appreciate
9 your bringing up these issues. This is the last
10 witness of the night, but it's very important that
11 these issues are brought up. Thank you.

12 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Sir, just to follow
13 up. I believe you mentioned you had a problem
14 with -- with this neighborhood of yours?

15 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Yes. Generally if there's
16 a heavy storm there are -- you can almost rest
17 assured that we're going to have an outage.

18 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: And how often a year
19 do you see those outages?

20 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Well, like I said, when
21 there's a bad storm. Now the one in July was
22 pretty bad. There was one last year and there was
23 one the year before last. Two years ago I think it
24 was 2003 that was a pretty bad -- yeah, 2003. We
25 were out of power for about a week.

1 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. About a week?

2 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: About a week, yeah. And
3 just ironically it was just on our side of the
4 street. The other side of the street had power.

5 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Is it something where
6 it requires a major storm with wind or is it a rain
7 issue? I've heard different things from different
8 neighborhoods.

9 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Well, in this neighborhood
10 it's primarily a storm where there's high winds.

11 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay.

12 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Primarily. It's not
13 just -- if there's lot of lightening too. There's
14 a lot of lightening, that's -- the power does go
15 out.

16 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: I'm sorry to
17 interrupt you. Is it something that happens
18 multiple times a year or is it just one big storm
19 might come through in a year and you have this
20 problem?

21 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Generally once a year.

22 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Okay. That helps me.
23 But it generally has more impact on your side of
24 the street?

25 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: That's correct. Yeah.

1 COMMISSIONER STEVE GAW: Thank you very much,
2 sir.

3 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: I have one brief
4 question. You said that Page and Delmar were the
5 north and south boundaries. What were the east and
6 west boundaries again?

7 MR. KEVIN JOHNSON: Kingshighway is the east
8 boundary. Union is the west boundary. They're
9 doing a lot of development in that area and there
10 are a lot of, you know, homes that are being
11 renovated. So, you know, most would be people who
12 are home owners in that area. Ironically there is
13 a school that is right on the street north of me on
14 Ramon, I believe. And I think they were out of
15 power perhaps one day. I don't know if they have a
16 generator, but I think they were out one day. At
17 least that area, that street, did get their power
18 restored fairly quickly as compared to -- so like I
19 said, the neighbors, we're just concerned, you
20 know, with the infrastructure that's there. Is it
21 going to be upgraded, are they going to do
22 something about it. You know, because it's -- I
23 think the one that happened this past summer had a
24 big, big impact on everybody.

25 JUDGE COLLEEN DALE: Thank you very much. Is

1 there anyone else who wishes to testify? Seeing
2 none, then we will go off record and are adjourned.

3 (The hearing was adjourned at 9:13 p.m.)

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