

Clark Bussard September 20, 2012

My family is one of those that has to endure frequent power surges and outages. Following the derecho storm in June, 2012 we were without power for a WEEK. Although this storm was severe in Atlantic County, our service could have been restored much sooner if the Atlantic City Electric Company had kept the trees trimmed in the power line right of ways. My neighbor and I had complained for several years about tree growth in the lines but AC Electric just didn't respond. Finally, about one month before the storm I finally contacted County Executive, Dennis Levinson's office, and was given the telephone number of the right of way manager. I left a message with him to call me and he did. I explained the problem and he said he would send the tree trimming company to see me. The supervisor of the tree trimming company came to see me, he surveyed the job, and asked how long it had been since the trees had been trimmed. I told him it was at least 10 years. I showed him where a limb had recently been burned off after coming into contact with the power line. I also pointed out the burnt areas on the utility pole adjacent to the tree. He said he would report back to AC Electric because the power would need to be shut off for them to trim the trees. I heard nothing for about two weeks and then the derecho arrived and the service was knocked out from Saturday night until the following Saturday. I am a disabled person and I nearly died in the extreme heat. I firmly believe that if the power line right of ways were kept trimmed on a regular basis the length of the power interruptions could be reduced. It seems to me that the electric company saves the cost of trimming, and when a major storm knocks out the power, they call in help from other areas and file for a rate increase with the Board of Public Utilities. C. E. Bussard Northfield, NJ