

**January 17, 2009**

## **City of Toronto responded to outage by supporting residents and serving the community**

The City of Toronto responded to the power outage yesterday by ensuring the safety of residents and working to ensure power was restored as quickly as possible.

During the power outage, the City of Toronto opened 7 reception centres for residents to stay warm. During the day, over 100 people used the reception centres for various periods. City facilities with power were also available to residents during the day and some city services in the area were re-started as soon as power was restored to facilities in the afternoon. When power was restored, the reception centres stayed open until all residents returned home last night. A special overnight shelter was also set-up for those needing to stay out of their homes for the night to allow their homes to warm-up. In total, just over 40 residents stayed over night in the specially set-up centres.

Toronto residents are thanked for their patience and the help they gave each other during the outage.

"I am incredibly proud of the work done by the City to support our residents during the outage," said Toronto Mayor David Miller. "The City acted quickly to help residents and our response to this emergency exemplifies the city government's deep commitment to protecting the safety and well being of all Torontonians."

During the outage, City of Toronto staff went door-to-door in the area and also phoned to check on seniors and other vulnerable people affected by the outage. Anyone needing assistance was given help in going to reception centres.

City health inspectors also visited over 1000 restaurants and food premises providing information on safe food handling during a power outage. Inspectors also visited 120 rooming houses to make contact with residents and help them get to warming centres. During the outage public health nurses also made contact with at risk people, including new and pregnant mothers, homeless and the elderly.

The City also opened dedicated phone lines for the elderly or persons with disabilities to call and seek assistance in getting to centres. In addition, the City coordinated and responded to calls from family members and friends concerned about people living in the affected area.

A very small number of frozen water pipes were reported to the City. As of 10 a.m. this morning, City of Toronto staff responded to 12 frozen water service calls from across the entire City. Only 5 were in the area affected by the power outage. The advice from the City of Toronto to keep the water moving through pipes by opening a faucet at both the lowest and highest point of a home remains the best way to deal with water pipes during such an incident.

Great care must be taken when using candles during a power outage. During the outage, the City issued advice on how to safely use candles during a power outage and these directions must be carefully followed to avoid causing a fire. These instructions can be seen at [http://www.toronto.ca/fire/news/earth\\_hour/](http://www.toronto.ca/fire/news/earth_hour/) and other tips are available at <http://www.toronto.ca/fire/prevention/index.htm>

75% of power was restored to the area by mid-afternoon yesterday and full power was restored before 10 p.m. last night. The TTC resumed full subway service on the Bloor-Danforth line by 2:30 p.m. Throughout the day, Toronto Police provided traffic control and enhanced police patrols in the area affected. There was no increase in reported crime as a result of the outage.

The power outage yesterday is a reminder that all City of Toronto residents - whether they live in a home or apartment - should have an emergency kit. All homeowners and residents living in apartments are also reminded to have adequate insurance. The City of Toronto has a website dedicated to giving advice to residents on how to plan for emergencies - <http://www.toronto.ca/oem>

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