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## ComEd balks at Glenview service repairs

(<http://www.pioneerlocal.com/glenview/news/1626059,glenview-comed-061609-s1.article>)

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By [LYNNE STIEFEL](#) [lstiefel@pioneerlocal.com](mailto:lstiefel@pioneerlocal.com)

Glenview customers of ComEd enjoyed fewer service interruptions in 2008 than in years past, according to the utility's annual performance report delivered to the Village Board Tuesday night.

But village officials are threatening to file complaints with the Illinois Commerce Commission over specific repairs ComEd has refused to make.

Repairing or replacing an underground cable for 13 street lights along Waukegan Road between Harrison Street and Overlook Drive would be too expensive, utility officials informed Glenview officials last October.

Instead, Glenview could pay ComEd \$313,000 to do the work, contract for the work on its own or make permanent the temporary overhead power supply for the lights that ComEd provided on an emergency basis in spring of 2008, they said.

In a letter to ComEd last week, Village Attorney Eric Patt insisted ComEd is obligated to maintain all its utility facilities in good condition.

"ComEd's attempts to pass the remediation costs on to the village and its threats to terminate service for these street lights are without basis in the agreement, and are in bad faith," Patt wrote.

In light of the letter, ComEd intends to again review the matter, Eric Duray, ComEd's external affairs manager for Glenview and a dozen other communities, told trustees Tuesday. It hoped to respond by Friday.

"You guys are the only game in town," Trustee Debby Karton said. "I think it's important those lines get buried and you live up to your commitment."

Residents of the 3400 block of Winchester Lane have been complaining that a transformer box in their neighborhood is inundated with storm water when it rains, causing power outages.

ComEd officials said none of the outages were specifically caused by the flooding of the transformer, and, again, refused to pay the estimated \$7,500 to \$10,000 to relocate or raise the transformer.

"It's not a ComEd equipment issue that's causing it," Duray told trustees. "The franchise rules and regulations are pretty specific in terms of customer requests for relocations ... We can't pass that cost onto other customers."

Village President Kerry Cummings said the issue could hardly be considered a "resident request."

"This is not for aesthetics. This is not to expand their yard. It's not because they want to plant bushes. It is really out of their concern for power outages," she said.

Patt said the village could pursue a complaint with the ICC if it's determined ComEd is knowingly ignoring a threatening situation.

Duray said he would work with village officials to try to find a solution.

Additionally, three outages this year impacting Classic Residence by Hyatt prompted village officials to support the assisted living community's request that equipment be replaced to alleviate the problem.

"This is a very new development and they're having equipment failures ... and it's a high need area," Cummings observed.

Duray said ComEd wanted to investigate the failures further before determining how to remedy the situation.

The average number of service interruptions per Glenview customer in 2008 was .9, down from an average of 1.8 in 2007 -- not counting the August 2007 severe storm-related outages. That compares with an average of about 1.4 interruptions for the northern region's 3.8 million customers, according to data provided by ComEd.

The power outages averaged about 100 minutes for Glenview customers in 2008, up from 91 minutes a year earlier, also without counting the August 2007 storm data.

At the same time, ComEd's northern region customers averaged interruptions of 190 minutes for all of 2008.

"It's the best performance we've seen here in Glenview in five years," Duray said.

Duray credited more than \$1 million worth of projects ComEd has done in Glenview, including installing equipment that would prevent a domino effect of outages, replacing cable and trimming vegetation.

Cummings made clear much of the tree trimming had been done naturally.

"I do appreciate there's been an increase in the trimming of trees," she said. "I will note, however, that the drop from 2007 to 2008 was thanks to Mother Nature, who took down all the trees in this town" during incidents of severe weather.

Brian McDaniel, representing the Citizens Utility Board, told trustees state standards requiring customers receive a credit when service is interrupted -- similar to those enacted for telephone companies -- should be put in place for the electric utilities.

"We're going to make that a priority in Springfield in the coming years," he said.

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