

Interim People's Counsel wants probe of Pepco

By: **DAVID SHERFINSKI**
Examiner Staff Writer
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<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/local/Pepco-gets-out-of-state-help-to-repair-downed-lines-1004453-99497859.html>

The Interim People's Counsel for the District of Columbia wants a review of Pepco's performance handling this week's power outages as well as other outages this summer.

"The frustration of consumers with outage restoration times underscores the fact that there is an electric reliability problem in D.C.," said Brenda Pennington, Interim People's Counsel in D.C.'s Office of the People's Counsel. "Reliability has been a major concern of OPC and electric utility consumers even before the winter storms and the weather of this past week. Pepco has consistently failed to deliver the quality of service D.C. consumers deserve and expect; it is time to find out why."

Montgomery County Councilman Roger Berliner also is displeased with Pepco's performance.

"The reliability of this service is not what it should be... I think it is incumbent upon you to put a plan before the Maryland Public Service Commission in which you say here are the three of four steps that we are asking for your authority to do to increase our reliability," he told Pepco region president Thomas Graham.

Pepco brought in more than 400 crews members from as far away as Ohio to help restore service this week after hundreds of thousands of customers were left powerless by Sunday's squall.

Still, most of the reinforcements weren't helping clear lines until Tuesday, drawing criticism from Montgomery County's top elected official.

County Executive Ike Leggett said he was "very disappointed" in Pepco's response, particularly in mobilizing crews from other areas.

"We knew that 10 minutes after the storm we had well over 200,000 people impacted," he said Wednesday. "I would have thought they would have a full deployment in place by Sunday night."

Examiner Staff Writers Brian Hughes and Hayley Peterson contributed to this report.

dsherfinski@washingtonexaminer.com

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