

NEWS RELEASE

Quick Response to Blackout Crises

(Detroit, MI) - The August 14 blackout that shut down electric power to more than 50 million people in the country's north coast and New York, and in Ontario, also shut down the Detroit Thermal steam system. As electricity from DTE Energy failed throughout the region, Detroit Thermal lost the power it needs to run the boiler and steam controls, plant and control room lighting, sump pumps and telephones. The electricity outage also interfered with the city's ability to pump water and Beacon, like many other facilities in the region, lost its water supply. "Our staff did a remarkable job in the face of an unprecedented outage," said Chuck French, Detroit Thermal general manager. "We worked closely with customers to make sure that all systems were closed down safely and, when the power returned, brought back up safely.

During the crisis French and his staff told customers to close the isolation valves that connect customer systems to the Detroit Thermal distribution system and to reopen the valves slowly when the steam came back on. "Reopening the isolation valves slowly protected customer systems against potential damage from hot steam rushing in to cool pipes," French said.

Detroit Thermal made the best of a bad situation by quickly making a number of repairs while the system was down. Two steam leaks were repaired, a section of pipe was replaced and a malfunctioning drain was fixed.

Steam service was fully restored the evening of Sunday, August 17.

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