



# **Electricity Distributors Customer Communications Related to Severe Weather Events**

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Non-Residential Customers – Summary of Results  
July 2024

# Content

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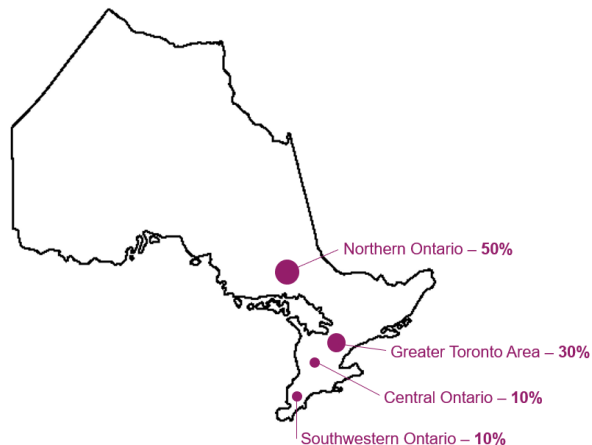
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Background

# Background

On May 27, 2024, OEB staff conducted a customer-oriented survey to gain insights into how LDCs communicate before, during, and after severe weather events. The survey gathered responses based on customers' experiences with the communications they receive from their LDCs.

## Respondents by Geographic Area



## Respondent Breakdown

6

**Manufacturing and Business**  
consumer representatives

3

**Energy Association**  
representatives

1

**Real Estate Association**  
representative

# Key Takeaways From Survey Responses

# Takeaways

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## Current Experience

- Customers identified opportunities for receiving more accurate and adequate information from their distributors.

## Quality of Communication

- Respondents emphasized the need for better communication before, during and after major weather events.
- Customers found it important to have better **information on estimated and actual restoration times**.

## Source of Communication

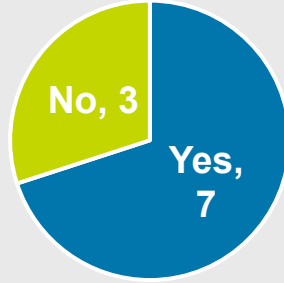
- Most customers currently rely on news and social media for information and **prefer to receive notifications via text and email**.

# Results from Customer Survey

# Experiences with Past Power Interruptions

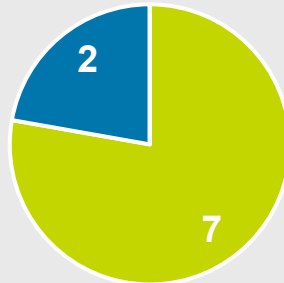


Among 10 respondents, not all questions were answered by every participant, as some items were optional or contingent upon responses to previous questions.



Have you experienced a power interruption due to a severe weather event within the past two years?

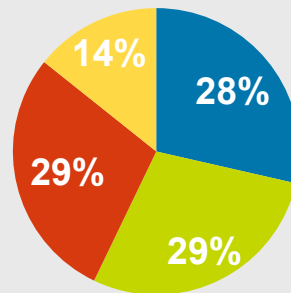
- 8 hours or less
- Between 8 hours to 24 hours



Approximately how long did the power interruption(s), due to a severe weather event, last?



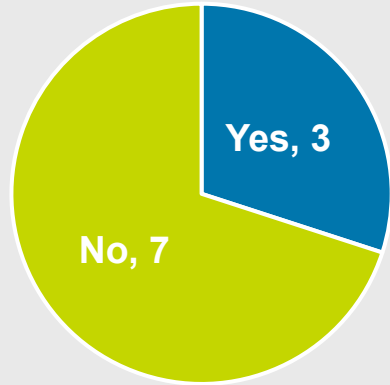
- 2 hours
- 5 hours
- 8 hours
- 4 hours



Thinking about the information you just provided about how long the power interruption(s) lasted, please specify how many times you experienced a **power interruption that lasted 8 hours or less** within the past 2 years.

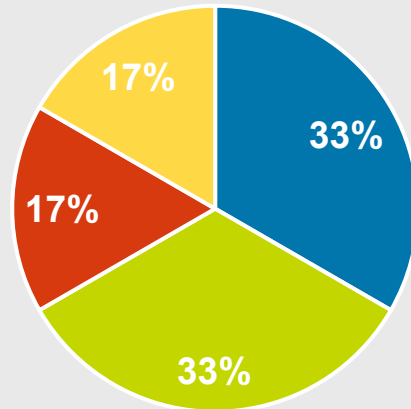


# Communication Channels



In the past, do you recall receiving any communications from your electricity utility regarding power interruptions due to a severe weather event (whether through email, text, social media or distributor's website)?

- Social Media
- News coverage (TV, radio, etc. )
- Text Messages/SMS
- Electricity utility's website



How did you receive communications from your local utility company?

# Communication Materials

What type of information was communicated by the electricity utility?

**22%**

Information on how to register for power interruption alerts and receive real-time notifications

Alerts on any potential weather events that may cause power interruptions in your area.

Safety tips and resources for you to prepare for a power interruption caused by a severe weather event

**11%**

Estimated power restoration time after an interruption has occurred

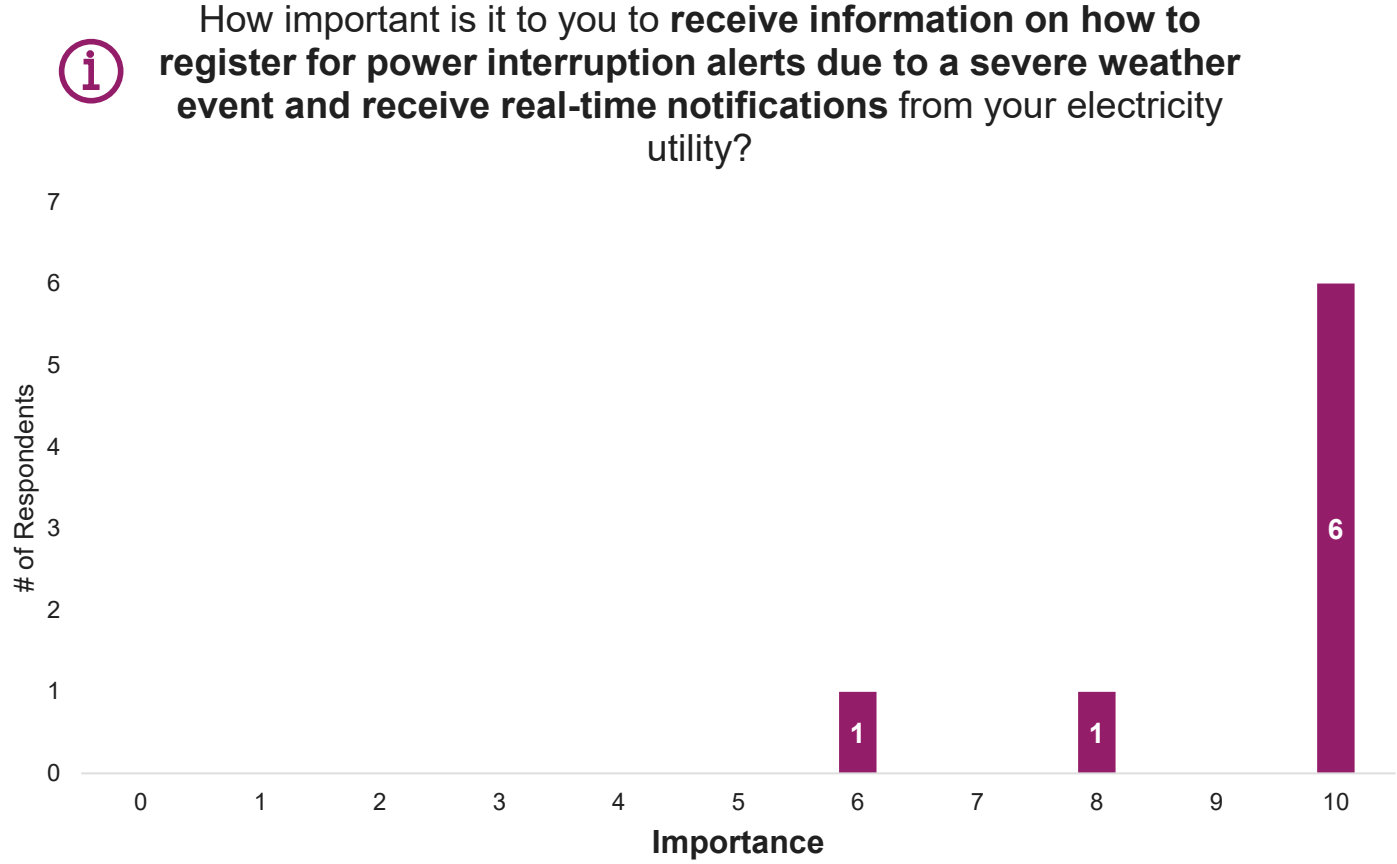
The severity of the power interruption caused by a severe weather event (e.g., the number of customers affected)

Actual power restoration time after the interruption.

# Importance of Customer Communication

**i** Among 10 respondents, not all questions were answered by every participant, as some items were optional or contingent upon responses to previous questions.

**100%**  
of respondents would like to receive communications from their electricity utility about power interruptions due to severe weather events in the future



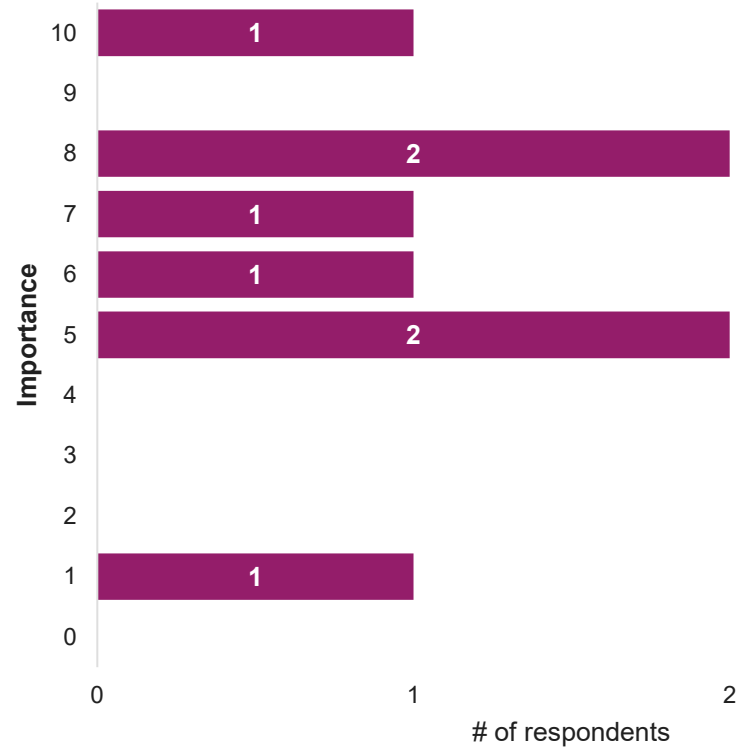
# Alerts & Information Sharing



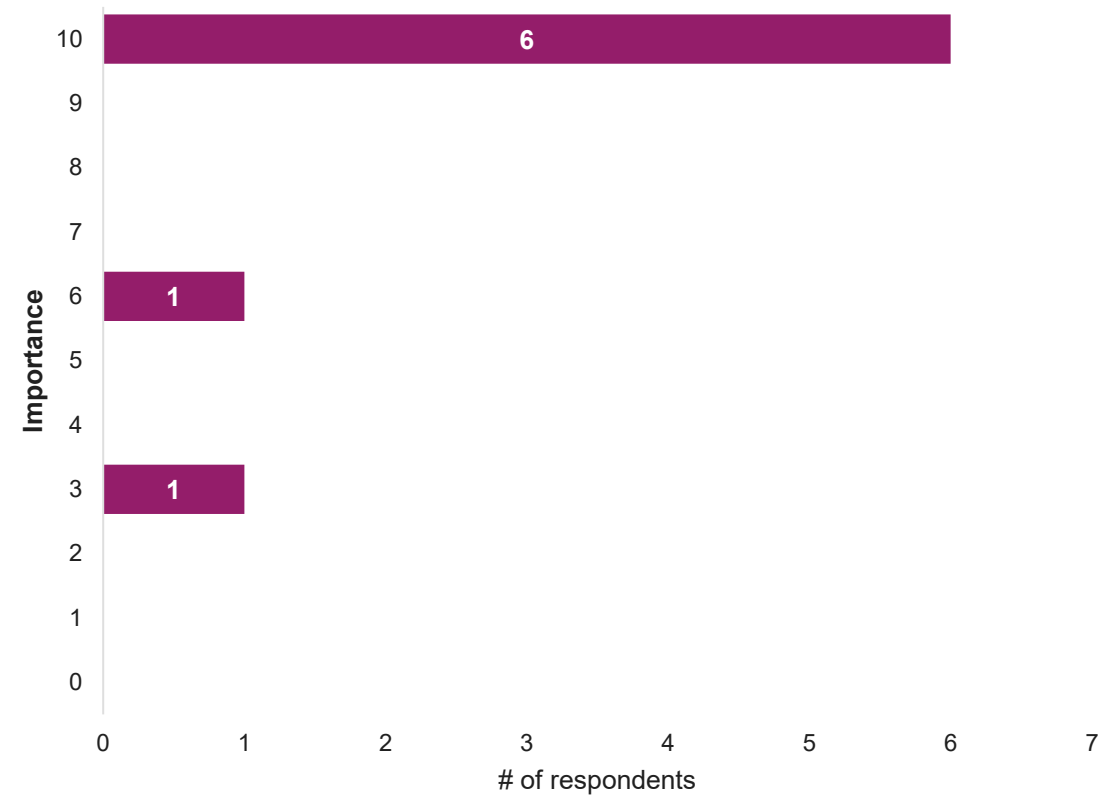
Among 10 respondents, not all questions were answered by every participant, as some items were optional or contingent upon responses to previous questions.



How important is it to you to receive **safety tips and resources** for you to prepare for a power interruption caused by a severe weather event from your electricity utility?



How important is it to you to **receive alerts on any potential weather events** that may cause power interruptions in your area from your electricity utility?



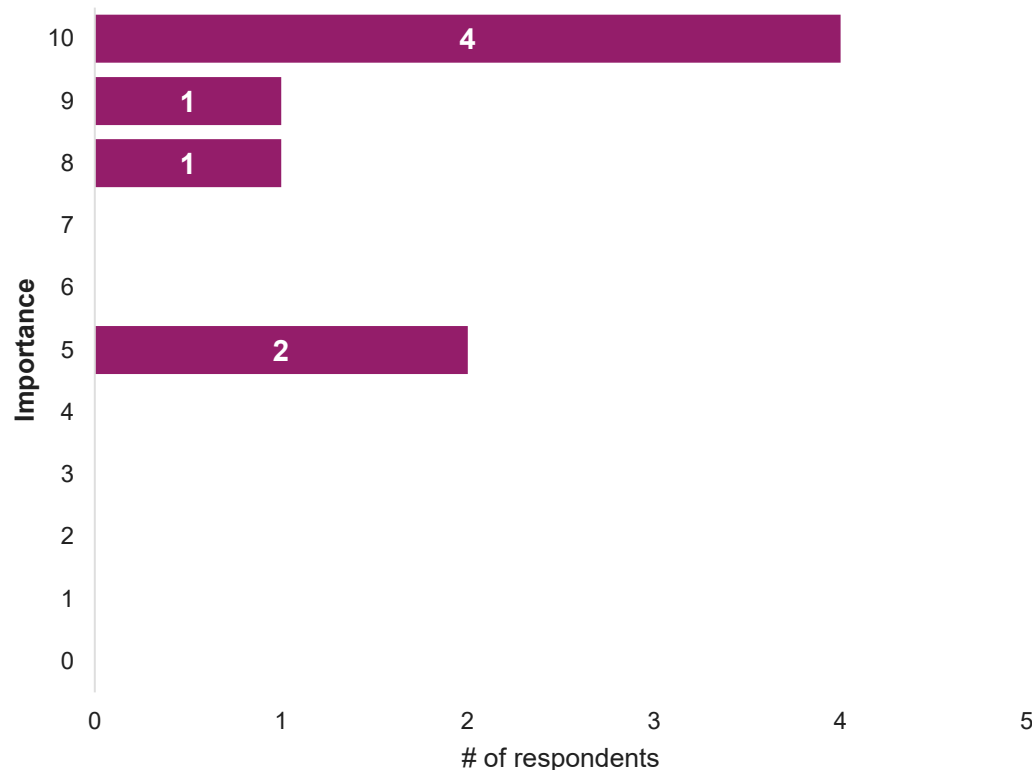
# Receipt of Communication



Among 10 respondents, not all questions were answered by every participant, as some items were optional or contingent upon responses to previous questions.



How important is it to you to receive information on the **severity of the power interruption** caused by a severe weather event (e.g., the number of customers affected) from your electricity utility?



**Survey inquired if the respondents had additional information that they would like to receive from their electricity utility regarding power interruptions due to a severe weather event.**

Respondents advised that communication is appreciated.

One party advised that the size of the event should determine the communication details.

# Restoration Time

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100%

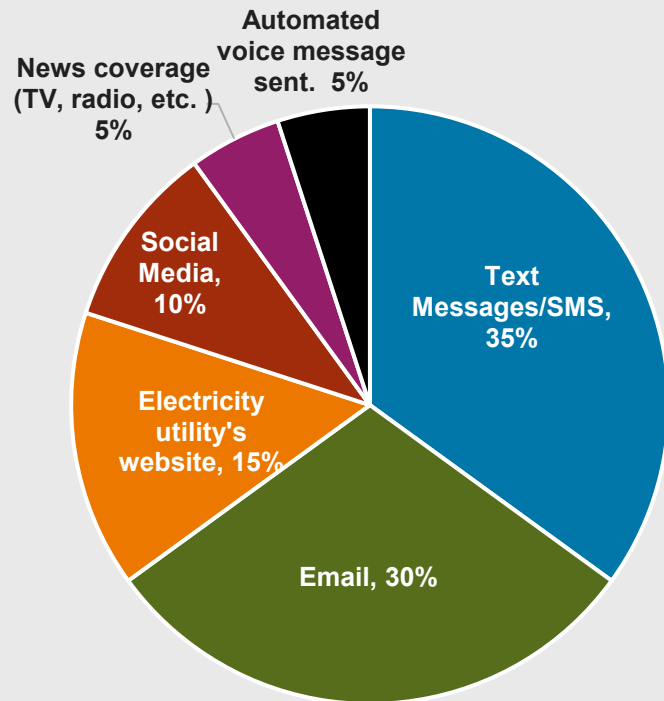
of respondents indicated that receiving an **ESTIMATED** power restoration time from their utility after a weather-related interruption is of high importance

of respondents indicated that receiving an **ACTUAL** power restoration time from their utility after a weather-related interruption is of high importance

of respondents would like to be updated if the original estimated time of power restoration changes.

# Preferred Communication Channels

Through which of the following communication channels would you prefer to receive information and updates from your electricity utility about power interruptions due to severe weather events?



## Leading Communication Channels

**35%**

**Text Messages/SMS**

**30%**

**Email**

**15%**

**Electricity Utility's Website**

**10%**

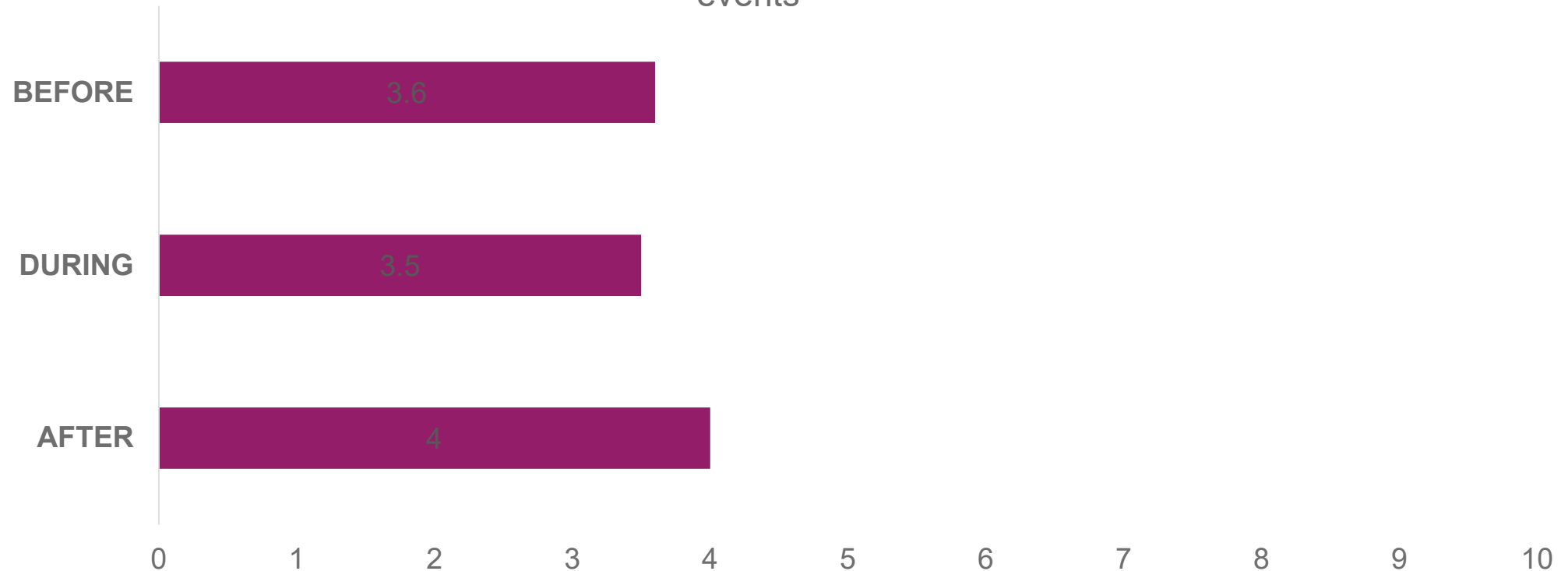
**Social Media**

# Customers Satisfaction Level

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## Average Satisfaction for Communication

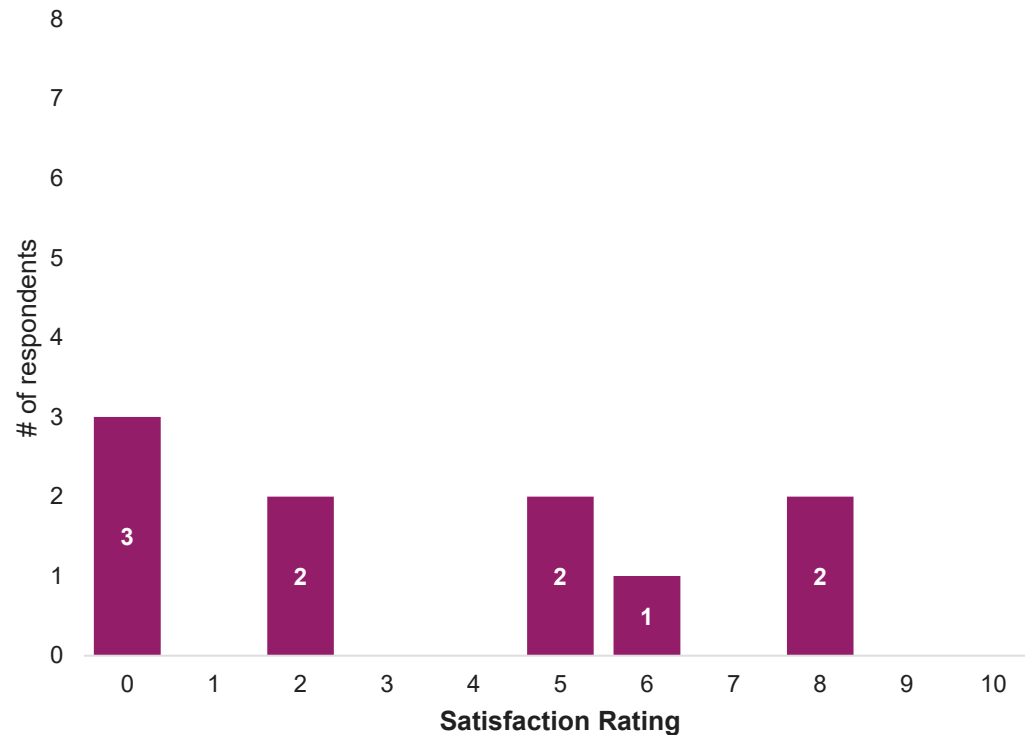
Communication satisfaction rating averages before, during & after severe weather events





# Customers Satisfaction Level

How satisfied are you with communications you've received from your electricity utility **BEFORE** a power interruption caused by a severe weather event?



Two respondents opined that advanced communication is welcomed. This would allow them to better plan impacts on their institution. The information that is currently shared is insufficient.

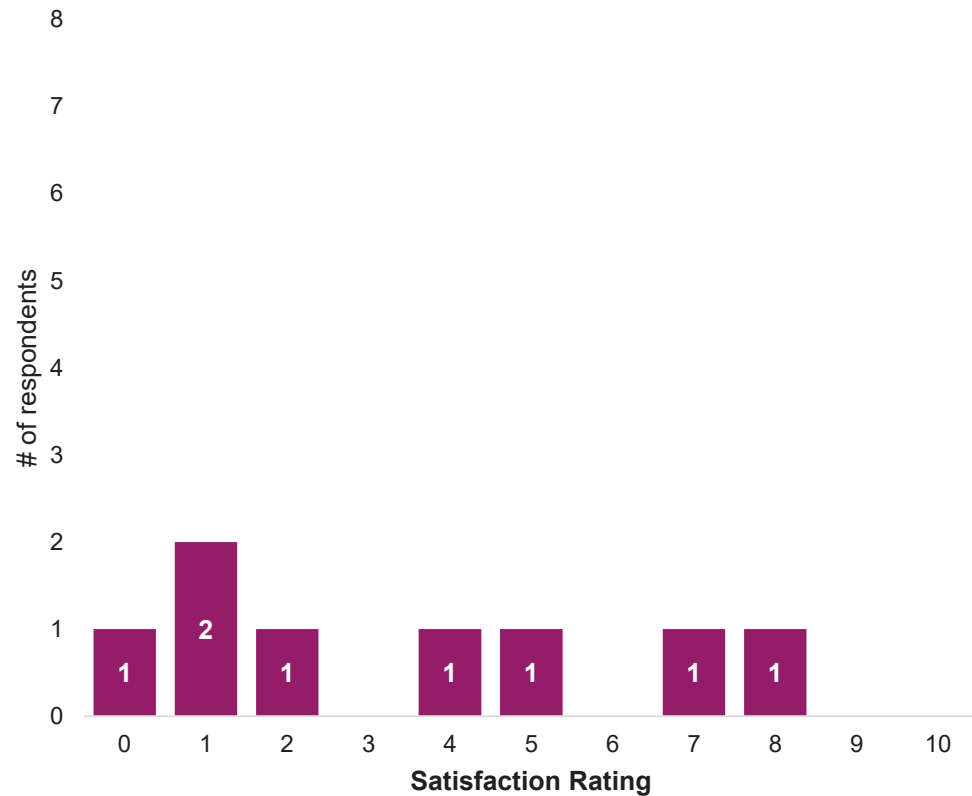
One respondent shared that they would like timely access to utility data, including historical and aggregated data.

# Customers Satisfaction Level

**i** Among 10 respondents, not all questions were answered by every participant, as some items were optional or contingent upon responses to previous questions.



How satisfied are you with communications you've received from your electricity utility **DURING** a power interruption caused by a severe weather event?



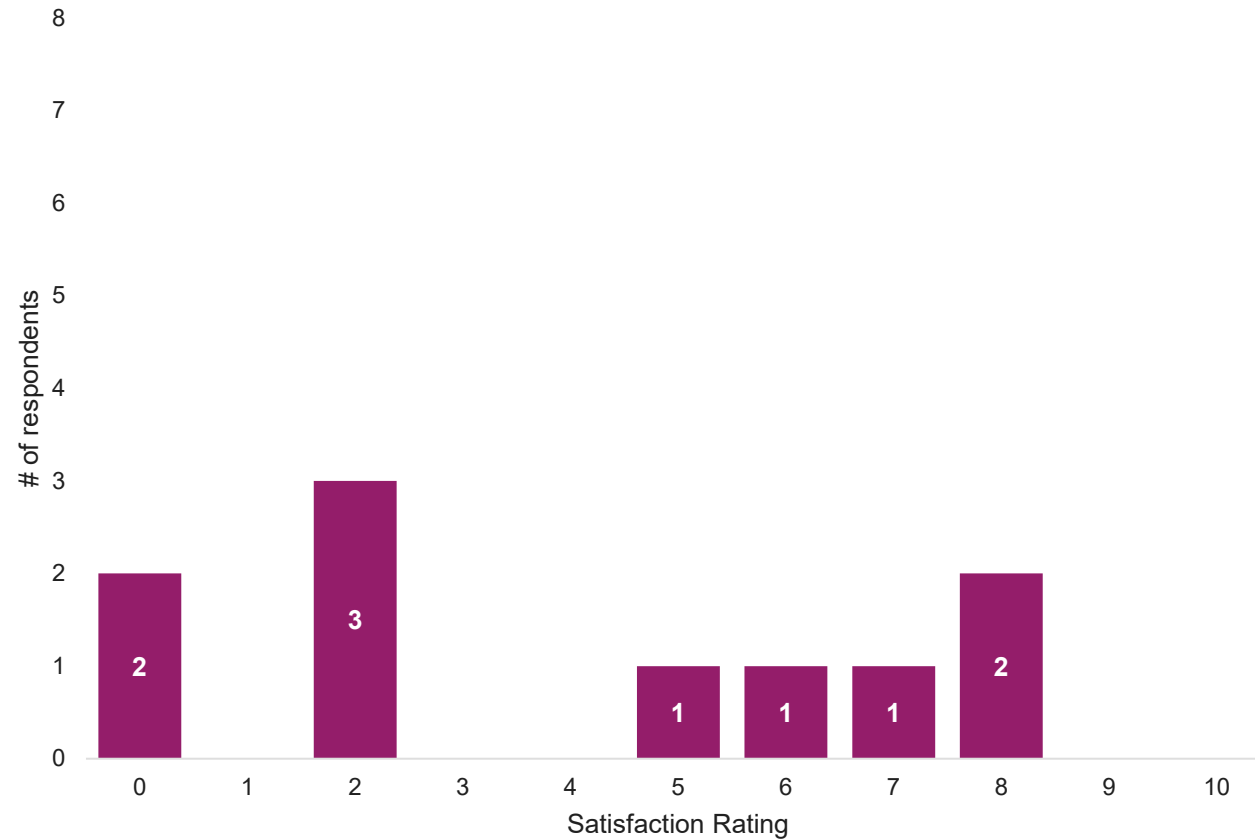
One respondent wanted updates within 15 minutes regarding the severity, duration and estimated time of restoration. They emphasized the need for informed responses from the utility.

One respondent cited a lack of communication from the utility as they currently do not receive any direct communication during an interruption, instead visiting the utility website to find outdated outage data. Another respondent also cited lack of timeliness of receipt outage alerts .

One respondent stressed the importance of clear communication regarding estimated time of restoration.

# Customers Satisfaction Level

How satisfied are you with communications you've received from your electricity utility **AFTER** a power interruption caused by a severe weather event?



Respondents would like to see timely notifications when power is restored.