

September 27, 2004

SPECIAL HURRICANE IVAN RECOVERY UPDATE

NWC GIVES HURRICANE RECOVERY SUMMARY

The National Water Commission is reporting that more than 300 of its over 400 water supply systems and nearly all of its waste water systems across the island are now up and running, two weeks after the disruptions caused by Hurricane Ivan.

In a special report summarizing the utility company's daily systems update since the hurricane, NWC President E. G. Hunter on Friday indicated that more than 85% of the NWC's normal water treatment and production capacity was now in operation. The NWC President also indicated that many of the outstanding systems that are still out of operation needed significant work, but were all being tackled.

"All capital towns and most other major townships now have piped water as the systems that remain out of operation represent approximately 12-15% of our normal production," Mr. Hunter stated.

The NWC President acknowledged that notwithstanding this significant achievement so soon after the passage of Hurricane Ivan, the Commission continues to face very formidable challenges in restoring service in some sections of every parish, but especially so in sections of Manchester, Clarendon, St. Elizabeth and Westmoreland.

Power supply at treatment and distribution facilities remains the most significant challenge and the NWC is therefore heavily dependent on the continued work of the JPS in energizing the electricity-dependent facilities. However, there are several areas in which the NWC itself continues to work. These activities include the reconstruction of raw water intake areas and conveyance systems; desilting and cleaning of intake areas; repairs and installation of water treatment and purification systems; reconstruction of broken and dislocated pumping and distribution pipelines; repairs to reservoir and tanks; and rehabilitation or replacement of electro-mechanical equipment at treatment and distribution facilities, including pumps, motors and switchgears.

Along with the Rapid Response Unit of the Ministry of Water and Housing and private contractors, NWC continues to truck water to areas not yet supplied with piped service with a priority placed on

schools and health facilities. Daily updates on restoration efforts are also provided to the media and is also updated to the NWC website at www.nwcjamaica.com The NWC has also increased the staff complement answering queries at its 1 888 CALL NWC (1 888 225-5692) toll free number.

The Commission acknowledges that some customers and pockets within service areas are still experiencing low water pressure, intermittent water supply and no water as a result of fluctuating pressure within the distribution network, and said that field personnel are now trouble-shooting those problems.

The NWC asks for the continued patience and understanding of those customers not yet supplied as it strives to restore their service in the shortest possible time.

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