

# Storm Work: Helping Customers and Communities

**W**hether it's a hurricane, tornado, wet snow or ice, Asplundh crews help utilities and municipalities restore a sense of order in their communities. The Asplundh Army is always ready to battle the chaos created by downed trees and power lines.

## Lili Response Team — Tree, Construction and AES

As mentioned in the Autumn issue, almost 1,500 Asplundh crews responded to Hurricane Lili when she hit south central Louisiana on October 3. Over 1,200 tree crews and almost 150 linemen were sent in from 19 states, representing 27 different management regions. In addition, over 100 crews were subcontracted to Asplundh Environmental Services, Inc. (AES) to clear roads and dispose of storm debris. All of these crews assisted the local staff of the Eugene Wyatt Region, some for as long as four weeks.

Everyone found themselves working in very wet and hot conditions due to the rains and storm surge from both Lili and Tropical Storm Isidore. Even in normal conditions, Southern Louisiana has many swampy places. But after Lili, there were even more.

Access to downed trees and damaged power lines was a challenge, but Asplundh and its utility customers responded with creativity by sending our employees to work via helicopters, air boats and tracked swamp vehicles. Many out-of-state crews encountered alligators and water snakes for the first time, making the storm response extra memorable.

Overhead line construction crews came from Asplundh divisions in Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi, as well as our Utility Lines Construction Service (ULCS) subsidiary in Delaware. They met many challenges in the watery environment as well.

Helping Louisiana clean up after Lili was one of the first major projects for our new subsidiary AES. Subcontracted crews from the Steve Bostock, Allen LeBlanc and Tim Manners Regions joined with a larger workforce that was subcontracted by AES



*This photo was taken from an offshore oil well as Hurricane Lili generated waterspouts. She picked up an awful lot of water and dumped it on Louisiana, as well as many other states as she moved inland and up to the Northeast.*

*Near Covington, Louisiana, a group of over 40 crews from the Ernest Morrison Region in Georgia gathered at a staging area to work for Central Louisiana Electric Co. (CLECO). Supervisor Wilmer McWhirter and eight general foremen accompanied the group who worked for 14 days to help restore power.*



*A helicopter carried this crew to a very important Entergy line surrounded by water near Lafayette, Louisiana. Pictured here (L to R) are Crew Member Cleveland Lewis, Crew Member Ernest Aldridge, Foreman Troy Norwood, Foreman Doug Brooks, Foreman Keith Music, and Crew Member William Lewis. They came to work for Entergy from their home states of Georgia and Arkansas.*

*Near Morgan City, Louisiana, an airboat made it possible for this crew from the Steve Bostock Region in Alabama to clear a right-of-way for CLECO. The power lines serve oil fields and hunting lodges on the water. Coordinator Marvin Barrett, Jr. sent in this photo of Foremen Kevin Jones and Shane Smitherman with Crew Members Larry Smitherman and Johnny Trewett hard at work.*



to clear away storm debris from about 7,500 miles of roads. They worked for almost four weeks straight to help many communities get moving again—and all of this work was done without accident or injury.

AES President Sid Vogel said, "I was very impressed with the quality and professionalism of all the crews—not only the leaders and supervisors, but all the employees as well." We couldn't agree more!

Utilities like CLECO leased a variety of swamp vehicles like this "Marsh Master" near Morgan City, Louisiana. They made it much easier to reach swampy rights-of-way after Hurricane Lili.



Working side-by-side with alligators was a new experience for many out-of-state Asplundh crews. As mean as they look, alligators are fairly shy creatures unless they feel threatened.

## November Brings Wave of Tornadoes and Ice Storm

A massive band of more than 70 tornadoes killed 36 people and devastated many communities from Alabama to Ohio on November 10. Asplundh crews from several regions responded to the emergency, although no outside crews were called in.

One of our own Asplundh employees, Climber Chris Harten of the Steve

Bostock Region, was tragically affected by the tornado that struck Carbon Hill, Alabama. Not only did he lose his father, but he was seriously injured when he tried to rescue him. Chris was released from the hospital on December 4 and we send our sympathy to him and his family, as well as best wishes for a full recovery.

Six days after the wave of tornadoes, an ice storm knocked out power to more than 143,000 customers of Northeast Utilities, with the majority of outages on the property of Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P). About 70 tree crews from the George Leszkowicz Region in Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts worked 16 to 20 hour shifts for a week, clearing ice damaged trees from power lines and roadways.

In addition, our ULCS subsidiary in Connecticut had 55 linemen, plus 34 lifts and digger derricks on extra hours for six days. CL&P also called in 12 line crews from our Asplundh Construction Corp. subsidiary on Long Island, New York. They helped CL&P repair lines for several days as well.



## Storm Orchids for Hurricane Lili and T.S. Isidore



**General Foremen Randy Brabham, Luis Hernandez and Keith Lewis and crews from the Eugene Wyatt Region in Louisiana**, three e-mails were received from residents of Abbeville and Vermilion Parish expressing their appreciation for the great help provided to their communities by Asplundh crews, City of Abbeville, LA

**General Foreman Noe Gonzales, Jr. and crews from the Eugene Wyatt Region in Texas**, for doing a great job of being right in there working on whatever was asked of them, Entergy, LA

**Foreman Ron Hatter and crew from the Mel Riley Region in Kansas**, for their attention to safety, good work ethics and customer satisfaction while clearing lines near Covington, CLECO Power, LA

**General Foreman Phil Stephenson, Foremen Jose Mancilla, Medardo Orellana, Juan Pena, Jr. and crews from the Tom Leverentz Region in Texas**, for working very hard (and safely) to do whatever was asked of them by the employees of the River Division after

Tropical Storm Isidore, CLECO Power, LA

**General Foremen Harlis Stewart, Sr., Raphael Venable and crews from the Eugene Wyatt Region in Louisiana**, for working feverishly throughout the Acadiana area despite the rain, heat and long hours, Lafayette Utility Systems, LA

**Asplundh Environmental Services President Sid Vogel and crews**, for the large number of crews from various states who left their families behind to work long hours helping the residents of Maurice, LA get up and running again.

**Asplundh Environmental Services President Sid Vogel and crews**, for courtesy and politeness despite the "sardine" conditions in a New Orleans hotel while waiting out Hurricane Lili.

**Supervisor Mike Williams and crews from the Ernest Morrison Region in Georgia**, for helping out all the residents of New Iberia, LA, especially an elderly couple who had a half uprooted tree leaning precariously close to their house power line. The crew went out of their way to safely clear the tree away from their house and line.

A general e-mail from a resident of St. Martinville, LA said, "Lili was not as bad as it could have been, but your crews, which are from various states, are still here helping us get somewhat back to normal. These people are really considered heroes."

A general e-mail received on the day Hurricane Lili hit the Gulf Coast came from a resident of Atlanta, GA. He wrote, "As I was driving home last night, west on I-285, I drove past the biggest motorcade I have ever seen. ... It gave me the warmest feeling that you all are going to be there for those folks who are going to bear the brunt of the storm. So thanks to your teams, Asplundh!"

A general e-mail, received two days after Hurricane Lili hit, came from a resident of Jackson, MS. She wrote, "I would like to let you know how impressed I was with your company this week. ... Hundreds of trucks filled parking lots and open fields, waiting to be dispatched to areas that needed assistance after the storm. In particular, I noticed that they came from as far away as Roanoke, VA and Ocala, FL. Thank you for your assistance!"