

## NEWS

# Hydro received 2,105 calls in one day

From pg. 3

be at hydro staff's fingertips when help is needed.

Skidmore said during the debriefing following the storm it was determined that having staff answer calls from the public 24 hours a day was preferable to having them go to an answering service at times. On Dec. 23 there were 2,105 calls to HHH and 1,403 on Dec. 24.

The answering service "created some confusion for our customers," said Skidmore.

HHH has always had a tree-trimming program in place where branches are cut back to ensure three metres of clearance around any hydro infrastructure. But Skidmore said a lot of the trees and branches that came down on the lines during the storm were 20 to 30 ft. away from the lines.

"There is no way we could prevent that."

Skidmore said in the storm's aftermath there was some confusion that arose with customers about what hydro equipment was theirs or hydro's responsibility. As a result HHH has sent out a brochure to customers

explaining the difference.

"Would we have changed anything significant, perhaps information to our customers. We don't think our system could have been restored any quicker," said Skidmore. Bonnette said the storm was an eye opener about how important it is for individuals to be prepared for an emergency.

"You should have three days of water, you should have cash because the banks could be closed," said the Mayor.

Bonnette said the storm was frustrating for almost everyone, even more so because it hit right at Christmas.

"But I think it brought a lot of people together too."

There were many positive stories about neighbours barbecuing together, checking on each other and residents like Kathleen Dills and Katie Downes and local churches organizing volunteer drives for dinners for hydro crews, Christmas meals, going door to door with hot drinks and foods for those without power.

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