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Mayor's message: The wrath of hurricane Sandy

November 08, 2012 - Rhode Island

Dear Neighbors,

Providence was fortunate to avoid the worst of the storm. We are all thinking of the families in other parts of R.I., Conn., N.Y., N.J. and elsewhere that experienced incredible damage from Sandy's winds and rain.

I am grateful that we were spared the brunt of the storm, and I appreciate the work of our dedicated city employees who helped us prepare. City employees worked through the weekend, throughout the night and have continued working in its aftermath. Residents took individual responsibility to protect Providence from the damaging effects of the storm. The Providence Emergency Management Agency, under the leadership of director Peter Gaynor, began coordinating city services last week, and they continue to keep department directors and first responders abreast of the latest developments.

With the help of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, we were able to close the Fox Point flood gates and four street flood gates nearby, to prevent flooding of the lower-lying sections of our downtown and city, which faced incredible losses in historic flooding generations ago and even 2 years ago in the epic spring 2010 floods.

At last report, approximately 600 National Grid customers were without power in Providence. We know this is small compared to what our neighbors to the south are facing, and difficult as it is, we are grateful for the injuries and losses from which we have been spared.

After touring the city earlier today, and I know there are a number of trees and branches that still need to be cleared. We will not stop until all the work is done and every resident and business owner has had their power restored. We have also delayed trash and recycling services and closed schools to finish cleaning up in Sandy's aftermath.

Please help us. Continue to follow #PVDsandy on Twitter and report outages and other storm-related needs.

Thank you again for your neighborly responsiveness. We all need to continue to be good neighbors to each other and to our neighbors in southern Rhode Island, and to our friends, relatives and neighbors so ravaged by this hurricane. As soon as we finish our response efforts in Providence, we will offer any assistance we can to hard-hit communities along the Rhode Island coast and elsewhere. We are better positioned to weather storms like these and every other challenge when we work together.

Angel Taveras is the mayor of Providence.

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