

2011 STORM SEASON OPENS DOORS TO DATA SHARING WITH UTILITY COMPANIES

By Meghan McGaffin, GIS Analyst City of Milford

WHY SHARE DATA?

- Personal philosophy
 - Make the world a better place
 - Learn something new
 - Help
- Understanding of the GIS Community
 - Seems to draw like-minded individuals
- Spatial data is often created from a neutral point of view
- GIS data value is situational and variable
- GIS data is like language, same words have different meanings, can't communicate without it
- Sharing data saves time, saves money, improves accuracy



D IS FOR DECISION MAKING

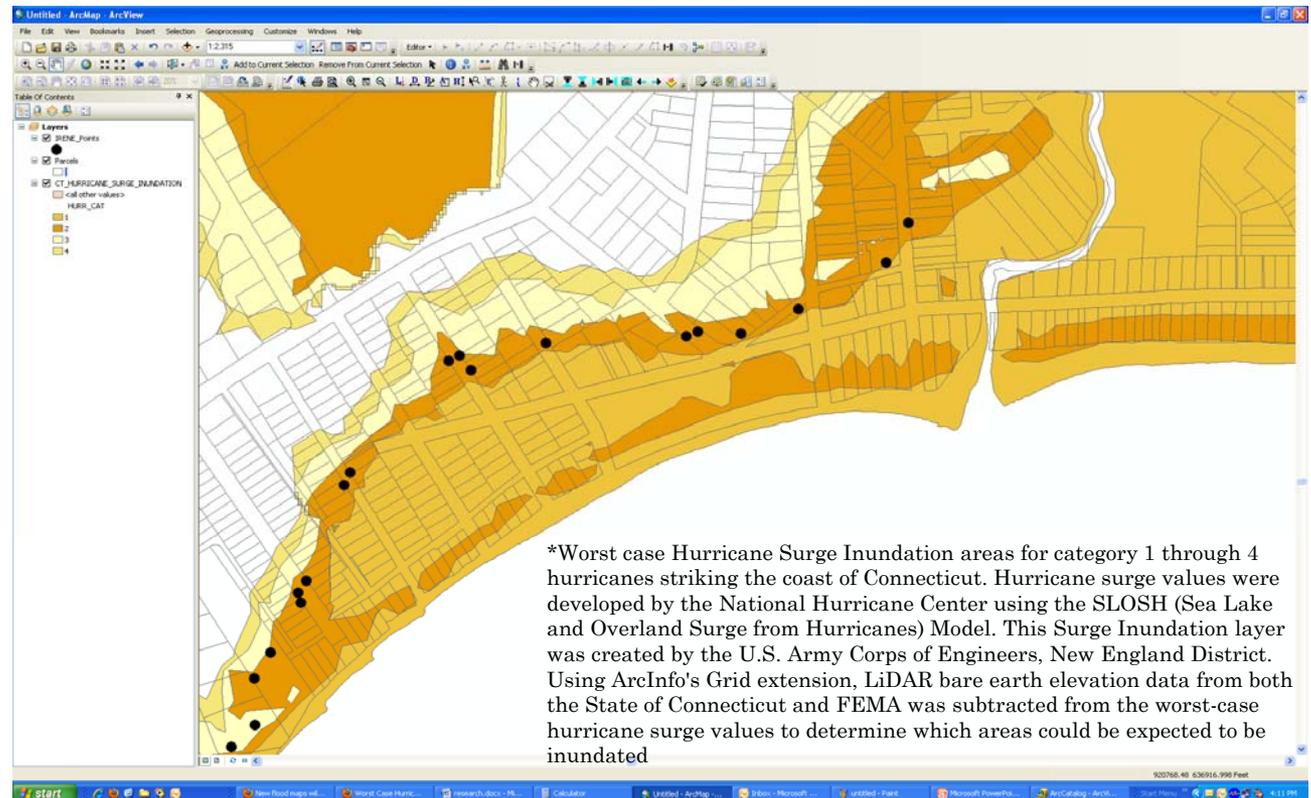
- The purpose of accessing data is to make some sort of decision
- When the health, safety and welfare of the many are left in the hands of a few it is vital that the best decisions can be made
- Data - information – knowledge
- Spatial data belongs in a network, not a silo



SOMETIME'S IT'S NOT PERFECT

While Irene was categorized as a tropical storm, Milford tracked the edge of the salt burn. The resulting points over CT SLOSH* Data show this as equal to a Category 2, almost category 3 storm event.

The data was not perfect, in this case no one could have anticipated the amount of flooding on our coast if we depended on the weather report and the map to make our decisions.



STORM SEASON

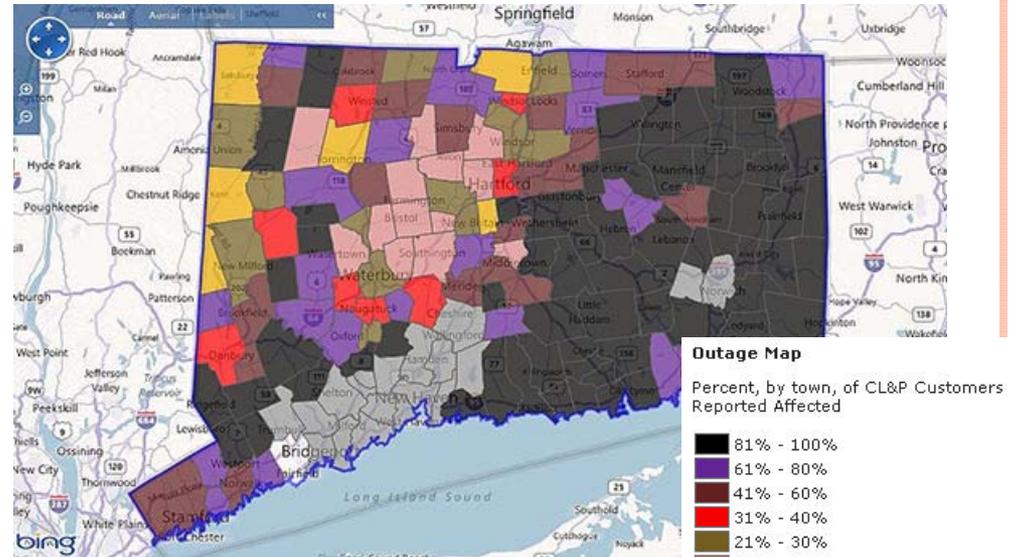
- Irene and the October snowstorm crippled New England
- NY Times article estimate \$7 to \$10 billion dollars in damage from Irene along the east coast
- In CT alone it's estimated the October snow storm caused **\$3 billion** in damage – not since a snow hurricane in 1804 has New England had such an October snowfall
- Insurance claims in CT:
 - Irene 60,000 claims, \$235,000,000 paid
 - October Snowstorm \$247,000,000 paid



POST-IRENE POWER OUTAGES



UI Outage Map 09/01
Source: reptonhwang.com



CLP Outage Map from 08/29. 765,000 customers lost power

Last updated at:
Information is updated every 15 minutes.

CT has 1.5 million power customers. Between Irene and the October snowstorm 1.7 million customers lost power.



PLANNING, RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

- After Irene CT Gov Dan Malloy convened a panel to investigate the massive power outages
- The panel's mission was reinforced by the October Snow storm
- In early November articles about the testimony began appearing online



Municipal Officials Air Concerns Over CL&P's Response

by Christine Stuart | Nov 15, 2011



At one point, feeling pretty much on their own with little help from CL&P, Tolland's public work crews went out and assessed the damage and overlaid that damage on a GIS map which it gave to CL&P, Werbner said.

The CL&P municipal liaison told Werbner the mapping information has never been provided before.

"I can't believe that little Tolland is providing information that the utility can not provide to us in terms of the assessment and charting that on a GIS map," Werbner said

Somers First Selectwoman Lisa Pellegrini said her crews did something similar. They went out and counted the 28 damaged transformers and 116 utility poles and gave CL&P the information about where each was located. She said the CL&P's liaison told her the information was fabulous and no town has done that before.

http://www.ctnewsjunkie.com/ctnj.php/archives/entry/storm_concerns_over_clps_response_amplified_by_municipal_officials/



PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS

- After reading that article I started a discussion about data sharing with the utility companies on the CT GIS list serv
- Then I altered my 11/17 GIS day presentation on how GIS was used during Irene to continue the discussion
- At the end of GIS Day at the CT Capitol I attended a CT GIS Council meeting and volunteered for a working group to study and report on how GIS was used before, during after the storms



WHY UTILITY POLES?

- Poles are a point of reference between government and utility
- Pole data is time consuming to collect, work has been done already
- By state statute CT municipalities own space on poles



STORM PANEL HEARINGS

- After GIS Day I contacted the members of the Storm Panel to talk about GIS
- Panel Chair asked that GIS professionals come testify on Nov 19
- Contacted Milford's State Senator Gayle Slossberg and Representative Dick Roy



SB 426 AN ACT CONCERNING GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS DATA SHARING.

- Sen Slossberg's office met with me and Aaron Nash of Vernon, both members of the Storm Assessment Working Group
- Explained the value of sharing data back and forth with utility companies
- Outlined barriers
- Legislation was drafted



TEXT OF BILL – EMPHASIS ADDED

- ***AN ACT CONCERNING GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS DATA SHARING.***
- Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:
- Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) For purposes of this section, "regional planning agency" and "regional council of elected officials" have the same meanings as provided in section 4-124i of the general statutes, "regional council of governments" has the same meaning as "council" in section 4-124i of the general statutes and "electric company" and "electric distribution company" have the same meanings as provided in section 16-1 of the general statutes.
- (b) Upon the request of the geographic information systems or geospatial information systems analyst or coordinator, or any equivalent official, of any municipality or of any regional planning agency, regional council of elected officials or regional council of governments, **an electric company** or electric distribution company **shall provide** to such analyst, coordinator or official any geographic information systems or geospatial information systems data for such electric or electric distribution company's service area identifying **utility pole data** for poles owned or jointly owned by such company. **Such data shall include pole ownership, identification number, XY coordinate location, pole height, pole classification and wattage size of street lights or post lights** for such municipality or for the area served by such regional planning agency, regional council of elected officials or regional council of governments.
- (c) Upon the request of a municipality for public safety reasons during an emergency, an electric company or electric distribution company may provide to such municipality the location of electric service accounts that are coded by such company as medical hardship accounts within such municipality.
- (d) Prior to receipt of data from an electric company or electric distribution company under this section, a municipality, regional planning agency, regional council of elected officials or regional council of governments shall demonstrate to such company that it has implemented appropriate procedures to protect the confidentiality of the information. Any data provided by such company to a municipality, regional planning agency, regional council of elected officials or regional council of governments pursuant to this section shall be used by such entity for internal use only, and shall not be publicly disclosed by the municipality, regional planning agency, regional council of elected officials or regional council of governments or be subject to any public disclosure requirement without the prior consent of the electric company or electric distribution company, as applicable, and shall be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in section 1-200 of the general statutes.



SB 426

- Public Hearing on the bill held on 3/21
- UI and CL&P offered no opposition to the bill and stated that they would share pole data
- 19 government agencies wrote letters of support
- Bill went all the way to the House of Representatives but did not make it to the floor before the Legislative Session closed



VOTING

- Bill did not make it to the floor of the House of Representatives in time
- Data sharing being worked out between state agencies and utilities for an emergency preparedness exercise
- Next legislative session begins in January

