Social Media and Hurricane Sandy

NYU Rudin Center for Transportation
November 27, 2012
Transportation During and After Hurricane Sandy

Report & Interactive Timeline:
NYURudinCenter.com/sandy
Upcoming Event at NYU Rudin

Short Talks, Big Ideas
December 12

Register here:
http://wagner.nyu.edu/rudincenter/
Social Media’s Role in #Sandy
When the Power Goes Out
City Website Crashes Under Pressure From Irene

By Michael Howard Saul

New York City's government website — a platform Mayor Michael Bloomberg has strongly encouraged the public to use for information about Hurricane Irene — has crashed amid overwhelming volume, city officials confirmed Friday morning.

"It is at the moment experiencing a very, very high volume of folks trying to get on," said Nicholas Sbordone, a spokesman for the city's Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications. "We are working to unclog it as quickly as we can."

Sbordone said the city will be adding additional web and application servers to bring NYC.gov back online. One official said the site has been intermittent, noting that it was down at some point Thursday night as well.

"It's just a matter of extraordinarily high volume," Sbordone said.

The site was very sluggish for a good portion of Thursday, frustrating many New Yorkers. During a public appearance Thursday, the mayor encouraged the public to use its website for Hurricane Irene information.
Using Twitter to Amplify

NYC Mayor's Office

All East River bridges are now open: Brooklyn, Manhattan, Williamsburg and Ed Koch Queensboro bridges all open. #Sandy

David Stearns 708@david
1,063 followers

Misha-BeyJayBlue @QueenBKC_4Evav
714 followers

BlossomFlwr @BlossomFlwr
274 followers

Sinead @Sorpen
28 followers

TheRealNexusSphere1 @TheRealNexus1
437 followers

Martin Gelin @M_Gelin
RT @NYCMayorsOffice All East River bridges are now open: Brooklyn, Manhattan, Williamsburg and Ed Koch Queensboro bridges all open. #Sandy

Lisa Guido @lsguido
@lashedm333 @nycmayorsoffice it allows people to get out of downtown, come stay w friends in Bilyn & Qns! Huzzah!

Details
Highlighting Recovery
The NYC Department of Transportation is playing a significant role in preparation and recovery from Hurricane Sandy.

121 photos | 1,325 views
Items are from between 01 Nov 2012 & 10 Nov 2012.

Children from the Auburndale Soccer Club, based in Queens, load donated goods into a DOT vehicle bound for the Rockaways on November 17, 2012.

DOT’s Queens Arterial Emergency Response Unit, based out of Harper Street Yard, delivered the goods.
Challenges

• Message coordination
• Approvals
• Risk versus speed
• Creating a more open communications culture
Where do you want to find information in an emergency?
Keep in Touch!

Robin Lester Kenton
Director of Strategic Communications, NYC DOT
rlesterkenton@dot.nyc.gov

facebook.com/NYCDOT
twitter.com/NYC_DOT
nyc.gov/bikeshare
MTA & Social Media

• Updated Information via Twitter
• Video via YouTube (Joe Chan)
• Still Photos via Flickr+Twitter & Facebook
  – Before: Preparation
  – During: Storm Hits
  – Aftermath, Part 1: Damage
  – Aftermath, Part 2: Restoration
• Public Response
Latest Updates via Twitter

• RTs of Major Announcements by Governor
• Status of our Infrastructure
• Service Updates
  – Subway, Buses, LIRR, MNR have separate accounts
• Links to Updated Maps
  – RT’ing self every hour
• Responses to Questions
  – “For everyone asking about …”
Still Photos

• Uploaded to Flickr & Facebook
• Tweeted Links to Flickr
  – Whole galleries or individual stills
• Four Basic Categories of Photos
  – Before: Preparation
  – During: Storm Hits
  – Aftermath, Part 1: Damage
  – Aftermath, Part 2: Restoration
Photos: Preparation
Workers Block Subway Vents

Action designed to reduce flooding, not prevent.
Generator Placed at Bus Depot

Generator will ensure power throughout the storm.
Sandbags & Plywood Barricade Bus Depot
Action designed to reduce flooding, not prevent it.
Express Buses Stored on Higher Ground

Express buses removed from low-lying depots.
Last Passenger Boards Last Train

Last train to depart from Grand Central Terminal: A local to Stamford shortly after 7 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 28.
Grand Central Terminal on Lockdown

Metro-North Assistant Station Master locks Grand Central in advance of the storm.
LIRR Ticket Machines Shrink Wrapped
To protect them from wind-driven rain.
Photos: During Storm
MTA ‘Takes Over’ New Digital Ad Screens

The MTA “takes over” digital screens normally used for advertising. Helps customers avoid walking into closed stations.
Chairman Inspects Flooding
MTA Chairman Joe Lhota inspects flooding in Lower Manhattan with NYCT President Tom Prendergast
Empty Grand Central Terminal
Terminal Closed in advance of the storm.
Governor and Chairman Downtown

Governor and Chairman Lhota are on scene at Hugh L. Carey (Brooklyn-Battery) Tunnel.
Subways Connect to Free ‘Bus Bridge’

Buses take the place of subways while tunnels are flooded.
Photos: Damage
Hugh L. Carey (Brooklyn-Battery) Tunnel Flooding

Most-seen photo on Flickr is from a traffic camera.
Washed Out Tracks

Ballast washed out from under the A line to the rockaways.
Boat on Metro-North’s Hudson Line

Pleasure craft washed onto tracks.
Trees Down Across Tracks

Trees on Metro-North tracks.
Tracks Flooded
Near Garrison on Metro-North Hudson Line
Queens-Midtown Tunnel Flooding

Water and ceiling become one in distance.
LIRR West Side Yard Flooded

LIRR yard floods; trains had been moved to high ground.
Boat Attached to Dock on LIRR Parking Lot

Boat attached to its dock floats to LIRR parking lot.
Damaged Signal Components

Damaged vs. pristine version
South Ferry Station Flooding

Platform, tracks, totally flooded.
Photos: Restoration
Boat Lifted Off of Tracks
Crane puts boat onto flatbed freight car.
Pumping 14th Street Tunnel (L)
Used on Front Page of NY Times
Pumping 14th Street Tunnel (L)

Some water remains.
LIRR Customer Reps Greet Commuters
They provide info on abridged service.
Public Response

Charlse @just_jotter
With God as my witness, I will never take the subway for granted again! @MTAInsider @NYCMayorsOffice #NYC #mta #subway #manhattan #Sandy
Expand
Hurricane Sandy, still hours away from making landfall in New Jersey, was already causing floods and destruction across the Mid-Atlantic region on Monday. Even as thousands fled the storm, officials urged those who stubbornly remained in its path to get out of the way and tried to prepare for a devastating storm surge expected at high tide Monday night. Transit shutdowns and school closings were expected to last at least into Tuesday.

**Highlights**

- 2:01 pm  Parts of Atlantic City Are Flooded
- 12:42 pm  President Urged People to Heed Evacuation Orders
- 12:35 pm  Considering the Storm's Impact on Election Polling
- 11:39 am  New York City Schools Will Remain Closed on Tuesday
- 11:30 am  Video: Mayor Bloomberg Gives Update

**4:16 pm  Bridges Around New York to Close**

Andy Newman

Half a dozen bridges in and around New York City are closing, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo announced Monday afternoon.

The Tappan Zee Bridge over the Hudson River, about 20 miles north of New York City, closed at 4 p.m.

The George Washington Bridge, the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, the Throgs Neck Bridge and the bridges to the Rockaways are closing at 7 p.m., the governor said.

The Holland and Brooklyn-Battery Tunnels closed earlier in the day.

For now, the Lincoln and Midtown Tunnels will remain open, along with the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge and the Bayonne, Goethals and Outerbridge crossings.

But he added, “If the winds continue to increase, and the weather conditions get worse, they can close on very, very short notice.”
A collapsing crane on a West 57th Street skyscraper in New York.

Hurricane Grows in Strength, Imperiling a Swath of States
By JAMES BARRON and BRIAN STELTER 2:40 PM ET
Hurricane Sandy, a storm that historians say is on a scale with little precedent along the East Coast, is hours away from a landfall that is expected to paralyze life for millions of people.

Crane Dangling Over West 57th Street
By ANDY NEWMAN 34 minutes ago
The boom on a crane at a luxury skyscraper under construction at 157 West 57th Street was collapsing.

Storm Prompts Candidates to Curtail Campaigns
By MICHAEL D. SHEAR and MARK LANDLER 1:08 PM ET
President Obama returned to Washington, and Mitt Romney canceled campaign events through Tuesday.

Updates from @NYTMETRO on Twitter

As #sandy nears landfall on the southern Jersey Shore, the power just went off here on the northern part, in Monmouth county. #NJsandy

3 minutes ago
The Holland and Brooklyn-Battery Tunnels closed earlier in the day. For now, the Lincoln and Midtown Tunnels will remain open, along with the Robert F. Kennedy Bridge and the Bayonne, Goethals and Outerbridge crossings.

But he added, "If the winds continue to increase, and the weather conditions get worse, they can close on very, very short notice."

**Governor Cuomo News Conference**

**4:07 pm**

**Atlantic City Official: 'City Is Under Siege'**

**4:04 pm**

**Storm Conditions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>WIND SPEED</th>
<th>RAINFALL LAST DAY</th>
<th>TIME OF LAST OBSERVATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central Park</td>
<td>28 m.p.h.</td>
<td>0.22 in.</td>
<td>Mon. 3:51 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.F.K. Airport</td>
<td>41 m.p.h.</td>
<td>0.35 in.</td>
<td>Mon. 3:51 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islip, N.Y.</td>
<td>36 m.p.h.</td>
<td>0.63 in.</td>
<td>Mon. 3:56 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic City, N.J.</td>
<td>38 m.p.h.</td>
<td>4.57 in.</td>
<td>Mon. 3:54 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown, Del.</td>
<td>26 m.p.h.</td>
<td>3.23 in.</td>
<td>Mon. 3:54 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Updated 4:40 PM ET**
A DAUNTING RECOVERY
Power Failures and Transportation Systems Crippled by Storm May Take Days to Repair

Spread of Power Failures Across the Northeast

Customers without power
- 10,000
- 100,000

10/30 5 p.m.

Live Updates
6:37 PM New Jersey and New York Start to Address Price Gouging
6:02 PM A New York City Religious Group Seeks Aid

Buses
Bus service is operating on a near normal schedule. Current status via MTA.info.

In Storm Deaths, Mystery, Fate and Bad Timing
By N. R. KLEINFIELD and MICHAEL POWELL 9 minutes ago
In its howling sweep, the storm claimed at least 39 lives, expressing a full assortment of lethal methods.

Flames Destroy Scores of Homes in Queens Enclave
By SAM DOLNICK and COREY KILGANNON 9:42 PM ET
Few predicted that some of the worst destruction would come from Hayden Street.

To Our Readers
The Times is providing free unlimited access to storm coverage on nytimes.com and its mobile apps.
- Financial markets in New York are closed due to the storm.

Northeast Suffers Huge Damage in Storm’s Path

The Opinion Pages
EDITORIAL
Marriage on the Ballot
Voters in four states could make progress on equality for gay Americans.

OP-ED CONTRIBUTORS
Illogical Housing Aid
Mitt Romney’s dad had the right idea on housing aid. His son should listen.

MORE IN OPINION
- Dowd: The ‘I’ of the Storm
- Friedman: Minnesota Mirror
- Campaign Stops: What Too Close to Call ReallyMeans
- Letters: Hurricane Sandy
- Fixes: When Tragedy Strikes, Come Together
- Room for Debate: Would States Outperform FEMA?
With Mayor Ringing the Bell, Wall Street Gains

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg rang the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange on Wednesday to reopen trading on Wall Street after a historic two-day closing.

The Dow Jones industrial average added 0.4 percent as it came out of the gate.

Traders were expecting unusual volatility on pent-up demand. Read more.

New York Area Services

NYC TRANSIT
- Taxis
  Taxis allowed to pick up multiple passengers at multiple points. Livery cars can be hailed.

- Subways
  Restoration likely to come in stages; no certain date for full service.

- Buses
  Buses run on regular routes on Wednesday, but expect delays, detours and crowding.

INSTITUTIONS
- N.Y. State Courts
  Some courts in the Bronx and Queens will reopen Wednesday. Others remain closed.

- NYC Schools
  Closed Wednesday.

- New York Public Library
  The New York Public Library will remain closed on Wednesday.

COMMUTER RAIL
- Long Island Rail Road
  No opening estimated at this time.

- PATH
  No service until further notice.
# New York Area Service Updates

## NYC Transit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buses</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Buses run on regular routes on Wednesday, but expect delays, detours and crowding. Fares waived on Wednesday. Dedicated bus lanes will be created to help buses travel from Brooklyn into Manhattan on Thursday. For more information, visit the <a href="https://www.mta.info">M.T.A. Web site</a>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subways</td>
<td>Suspended</td>
<td>Limited service to return on Thursday at 6 a.m.; no certain date for full service. (<a href="https://www.mta.info/map">Map</a>). Service will be supplemented by buses between Manhattan and Brooklyn. No subway service below 34th Street in Manhattan because of a lack of electricity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxis</td>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>Taxis allowed to pick up multiple passengers at multiple points. Livery cars can be hailed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Commuter Rail

| Category       | Status   | Details                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Links |}
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amtrak</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Some Northeast Regional service resumed Wednesday. Modified service to and from New York City was to begin Friday.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Island Rail Road</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Limited hourly service resumed at 2 p.m. on Wednesday. Shuttle buses from Barclays Center to Manhattan will run Thursday.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro North</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>Limited service on the Lower Harlem Line at 2 p.m. on Wednesday. Hudson Line and New Haven Line remain suspended. For rush hour Thursday, regular service returns from Mt. Kisco to Grand Central Terminal on the Harlem Line and from Stamford to Grand Central Terminal on the New Haven Line.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ Transit Rail</td>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>River Line light rail service resumed, mostly, 3 p.m. Wednesday. River Line service suspended between Walter Rand &amp; Entertainment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The New York Times

New York Area Services

NYC TRANSIT

- **Taxis**
  - Taxis allowed to pick up multiple passengers at multiple points. Livery cars can be hailed.

- **Subways**
  - Restoration likely to come in stages; no certain date for full service.

- **Buses**
  - Limited service on some lines.

INSTITUTIONS

- **NYC Schools**
  - Closed Wednesday.

COMMUTER RAIL

- **NJ Transit**
  - Bus, light rail and Access Link also
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Short Summary</th>
<th>Expanded</th>
<th>ExternalLinks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>Electricity New York City</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Visit Con Edison's <a href="#">Web site</a> or see their <a href="#">interactive map of outages</a>. Rockland Electric Company and Pike County Light &amp; Power Co.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@ConEdison @ORUConnect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>New York City tap water is safe to drink.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>Electricity New Jersey</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td><a href="#">PSE&amp;G.com</a> Jersey Central Power and Light. Atlantic City Electric. Check outages on PSEG's <a href="#">interactive</a> as well as outages on <a href="#">Jersey Central Power and Light's map</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>Electricity Long Island</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Visit <a href="#">Long Island Power Authority's Web site</a> or check their <a href="#">outage map</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@LIPAnews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>Electricity Connecticut</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Visit Connecticut Light and Power's <a href="#">Web site</a> or check their <a href="#">outage map</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@CTLightandPower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYC Transit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYC Transit</td>
<td>Subways</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td><a href="#">Service Status via MTA.info</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@MTAInsider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYC Transit</td>
<td>Buses</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Bus service is operating on a near normal schedule. <a href="#">Current status via MTA.info</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@MTAInsider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYC Transit</td>
<td>Taxis</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Normal rules have resumed.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@NYCTaxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Supplies</td>
<td>Food and Water</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>A <a href="#">list of emergency food and water</a> via nyc.gov.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@NotifyNYC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter Rail</td>
<td>NJ Transit Rail</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>More information on <a href="#">NJtransit.com</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter Rail</td>
<td>PATH</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>More information on <a href="#">Port Authority of New York and New Jersey</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@PATHTweet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter Rail</td>
<td>Long Island Road</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>More information on <a href="#">MTA.info</a>.</td>
<td></td>
<td>@LIRRScoup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter Rail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Supplies</td>
<td>Wildfire</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Checking for wildfire.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Media and Hurricane Sandy

NYU Rudin Center for Transportation
November 27, 2012