

100 mph winds down trees, knock out power to 370 EDH homes: First winter storm of 2008 pounds El Dorado Hills

By *Andy Laughlin, Village Life staff writer*

[01.09.08] El Dorado Hills residents are picking up the pieces after enduring the most severe storm to hit the area this year.

Powerful gusts of up to 100 miles an hour felled entire trees, many of which landed in such inconvenient places as the roofs of cars, houses and fences. Torrential rain flooded neighborhood streets and temporarily closed lanes of traffic in El Dorado Hills, Folsom and Sacramento.

The El Dorado Irrigation District reported nearly an inch of rainfall in a 24-hour period. The El Dorado County Department of Transportation reported 150 fallen trees on county roads.

Local marketing representative and El Dorado Hills resident Jan Wilcox was among several of her Waterford neighbors to have trees fall in their yards. "We lost our giant live oak," she said. "It crashed down, completely uprooted. Luckily, it fell away from the house and didn't hit any cars."

Several Serrano homes also lost trees, including a Klee Court residence where a smashed wrought iron fence resulted from three fallen oaks.

El Dorado Hills firefighters were especially busy Friday, clearing roadways of fallen trees, tarping damaged roofs and providing sandbags for homes in danger of being flooded. "The people did really well," deputy chief Dennis Planje said. "A lot of terrible calamities can occur with a storm like this. People paid heed to warnings and took proper measures."

Pacific Gas and Electric crews worked day and night to repair power lines throughout the company's service area. According to PG&E spokesperson Nicole Tam, over 2 million customers lost power Friday from damage to miles of power lines and 250 downed poles.

"We're in full restoration mode; we have all available hands on deck," she said. "We have more than 600 crews working literally around the clock, with a hundred more in mutual aid from Washington, Oregon and Nevada."

Tam said that by Monday, 96 percent of all PG&E customers had been restored power. All of the 370 customers in El Dorado Hills were restored power by late Sunday night.

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