



PHOTOS BY DANIELLE PETERSON/STATESMAN JOURNAL

Portland General Electric crews finish repairing a power line near Faragate Street and Brown Island Road on Sunday. The crew also cleared debris and fixed broken insulators.

Area recovers power after storm

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Efforts continued Sunday to reverse damage from a windstorm that battered the Pacific Northwest over the weekend when remnants of a typhoon surged over the region, downing trees and cutting electricity for thousands.

Crews worked through the night restoring power to Portland General Electric customers after strong winds caused more than 70,000 people to experience outages around Oregon on Saturday.

Early Sunday morning, only about 4,000 customers were still without power, the electricity company said in a statement. In Marion County, outages affected only 194 people, down from the more than 7,000 Saturday. In Polk County, power outages affected 70, down from more than 2,400.

"Salem was hit early and hard," said Stan Sittser, a PGE spokesman. Four electrical feeder lines, which serve entire neighborhoods and hundreds of people, were down in Salem during the worst part of the day. Now, as 52 crews work to restore power across the state, outages are mostly relegated to remote areas like the foothills of Mt. Hood. Sittser said the company hoped to have power fully recovered by Monday.

Mike Gotterba, a spokesman for Salem's public works department, said crews would be out removing woods from downed trees from Saturday's storm.

"We're having a much quieter day

(Sunday)," he said. While Public Works had received calls in South Salem of drinking water brownage, causing the department to flush lines, Gotterba said that problem could happen independently of a storm.

Winds of 52 mph were reported Saturday at McNary Field station in Salem, said Matthew Cullen, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service. At higher elevations, they reached more than 60 mph. Damage was fairly evenly distributed from south to north along the Oregon coast and from Marion County up to Portland.

Storm systems like Hurricane Matthew that surge over the Southeast of the country tend to differ structurally from those here in the Northwest. While hurricanes usually have a denser concentration of high winds, storms that break off from tropical typhoons over the Pacific generally have winds spread out over a broader area, said Cullen.

It's rarer that the continent is hit by the same typhoon that pushes across the Pacific. Rather, a typhoon will dissipate as it sweeps northward and transition into another system. "It's not the same system that tracks all the way across," said Cullen, though there have been exceptions.

Forecasts for Saturday's storm were mostly accurate, he said, though the system ended up tracking more westward than expected. Salem residents rode it out in their own manners, though, with some saying it wasn't so bad after all.

Steven Harrington, a homeless veteran, described the storm in two words:



Steven Harrington, 62, a homeless veteran, finds shelter from the rain under an awning in downtown Salem. Harrington was accompanied by his dogs Archie and Hanky.

"Cold, wet." He weathered it under an awning at the Marion Parkade parking garage. He has two dogs — Archie and Hanky — and a shopping cart, which he said didn't flood with the rain. On a scale of one to ten, Harrington gave the storm an eight. "I've seen a lot of storms," he said, but guessed the weather would've hit Portland harder.

Andrew Rice, a math teacher at Regis High School in Stayton, went to Portland around 1 p.m. and didn't return until Sunday. His roommates told him they lost power for about an hour, though. The wind picked up and trees fell near his South Salem home, but "I thought it was

gonna be a lot worse," he said.

He wasn't the only one who braved the drive north. Melissa McGuire, 39, had a concert to go to at Portland's Moda Center. Sugar Hill Gang and Ludacris were playing the venue, and rain on the highway didn't stop her going.

The roads were fine, the concert was packed, she said. Plus, her tickets were free.

"When life throws you a free concert, you've gotta get there," she said.

Send questions, comments or news tips to jbach@statesmanjournal.com or 503-399-6714. Follow him on Twitter @JonathanMBach.

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