

Cambridge Housing Authority
Executive Office
Interoffice Memoranda

To: Robert Healy, City Manager

From: Daniel J. Wuenschel, Executive Director 

Date: November 13, 1997

Re: *Calendar Item #002, dated 10/6/97*
re: *Additional Information on Power Failure at Cambridge Housing Authority Buildings*

It is and has been CHA standard operating procedure that senior management staff is notified in the event of emergencies like the power failure that occurred last August. The process begins with the CHA's answering service which responds to any emergency calls to CHA's main telephone number after normal business hours. The answering service operator normally refers such calls immediately to the authority's Emergency Maintenance Crew which covers weekday hours 6:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. and weekends from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. A Senior management staff person is "on call" during all non-business hours both during the week and on weekends. Both the answering service and the emergency maintenance personnel are instructed to phone the "on call" senior management person in the event of a situation beyond a normal emergency maintenance repair. If for some reason, the "on call" staff can't be reached, the chain runs to: the Director of Management, the Assistant Director of Management and the Executive Director. In addition, CHA security personnel are reachable by cellular phone.

On the evening in question optimum coverage by Senior staff was not attained because of the widespread nature of the blackout. Numerous CHA elderly facilities were reduced to emergency generator service, but because of a failure of the emergency generator at the Manning Apartments it was totally without power and most senior staff attention was directed there until lights and elevator service were restored by the repaired generator. Miller's River Apartments was visited by a CHA Area Maintenance Supervisor as well as the Emergency Night Crew. The CHA's Security Administrator devoted his attention to Washington Elms, Newtowne Court, the Kennedy Apartments and the Lyndon B. Johnson Apartments.

Since the emergency lighting and/or generator systems at the Putnam School and the Truman Apartments did function those sites were not visited by Senior Staff; however, I agree that they should have been.

As a result of the events of that particular blackout and your request, the CHA is in the process of augmenting its emergency procedures to insure that, at a minimum, each affected elderly development will be visited by senior management staff in such severe cases. We appreciate your concern and that of the Council and share your desire to assure that all residents of CHA property ----particularly our elderly residents ----receive prompt attention in calls of emergency.



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19.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

November 17, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 14, regarding a report on additional information requested by the City Council on what policy the Cambridge Housing Authority follows when serious power failures happen at Housing Authority buildings, received from Daniel J. Wuenschel, Executive Director of the Cambridge Housing Authority.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

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Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number
Fourteen, regarding a report on additional
information requested by the City Council
on what policy the Cambridge Housing
Authority follows when serious power
failures happen at Housing Authority
buildings.

S-739

In City Council November 17, 1997

Charter Right
exercised by
Councillor Toomey

November 24, 1997
No action taken
Placed on file under
Rule 19 of the City
Council Rules.