

**COUCILMEMBER FLOREEN STATEMENT TO THE PRESS
PEPCO/SEPTEMBER 12, 2003**

This was a difficult but productive meeting. On the one hand, I and my Council colleagues have heard from so many constituents who went without power for just too long, many of whom are too vulnerable to withstand such circumstances. On the other hand, we have a large utility company trying its best under strained circumstances.

This was not a session to blame or bash but rather to get some assurances for us and for our residents that procedures will definitely be reviewed and improved well before Mother Nature's next surprise.

We commend all those PEPCO employees who worked around the clock and through the Labor Day holiday weekend. But we needed a lot more of them. And PEPCO needs to set clear, sensible priorities for restoring power while at the same time creating a better stream of information for its customers. So much of the frustration out in the community resulted from lack of, or misinformation.

And as much as we all love trees in Montgomery County, those limbs and branches surrounding our power lines have got to be priority material.

We have had two large weather crises in the past couple of years, and things went badly during both. They say the third time's the charm. I hope this meeting and the September 18th hearing before the Public Service Commission will help Pepco get it right the next time.

Let's keep the lights not the candles burning.