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## Isabel packed powerful punch

### Countless stories left in storm's aftermath

Isabel may be history, but the hurricane that swept through Northern Virginia last week has everyone still talking. As residents clean up and try to get back to normal, the questions fly: Did you lose power, trees? What did you do about drinking water? Is everyone and everything OK at your house?

In the City of Fairfax, the toppled trees and large limbs snapped by Isabel's high-velocity winds did a lot more than provide a surplus of firewood. At least 15 houses were severely damaged Thursday.

Officials from the city's fire department restricted six of those homes to "limited access," meaning the dwellings are no longer habitable but are safe enough to enter to retrieve belongings.

Five homes were declared "damaged but habitable," and two sustained damage only to their exterior electrical boxes, which feed electricity to the homes from nearby power lines.



**DAMAGE DONE:** Part of a large tree fell on the enclosed porch of this home at the corner of Newbury Road and Spring Lake Terrace in the Country Club Hills neighborhood of Fairfax City.

ing Gross's home and office. And for one

### Lack of electricity left entire neighborhood in darkness

The water is out, and electricity has been knocked out. Most neighborhoods have been cleared away.

Looking around, it's hard to believe that a week since Hurricane Isabel's crushing one-region, first strike which then stopped.

The wind and rain delivered by Isabel according to local reports.

Impacts were part of daily life (hotels using bottled water) to the tragic people suffering from power outages from using generators inside.

Damage to property is estimated to be at least \$1 billion, which is sure to go up as the flooded region continues to be cleared.

Times Staff Photo/Frank Mustac



At about 1:00 p.m. Thursday, what "sounded like an earthquake," a large tree smashed into the side of Melvyn and Beverly Andrews' home at the corner of Spring Lake Terrace and Newbury Road in the Country Club Hills neighborhood of Fairfax City.

Uprooted by Isabel's high winds, the 2-foot-diameter tree that once stood about 40 feet high ripped part of the Andrews' roof and storm gutters. Inside, the impact opened a 5-foot-wide hole in the Andrews' living room ceiling, exposing bare wooden beams, duct work and fiberglass insulation. Sheets of black tar paper dangled from the gash.

Beneath the cavity, sheetrock laid in a pile of rubble about a foot high, only feet away from a Kimball baby grand piano.

"There was a little hole, and a few minutes later it came down," Melvyn Andrews said.

At the moment of impact, Beverly Andrews was in another room on the same floor, practicing the guitar, while her husband was downstairs on the basement level. No one else, except for the family cat, was in the main rooms of the house.

"We slept down here last night," said Beverly Andrews, referring to the basement.

The first person the couple called was a representative from their insurance company.

An official from the City of Fairfax Fire Department visited the house at about 1 a.m. Friday to assess the damage and inspect the house, making sure it was still habitable.

"They put a sticker on the house saying the house was not condemned," Melvyn Andrews said.

"We're happy about that," his wife added.

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Mason District Supervisor Penny Gross was in her office all day Friday, fielding calls and questions from people. "Did she know they were without power? Did she know they were without water?"

Her office also made calls to several elderly and other residents who they keep in touch with regularly.

Most of Mason District's residents were without power and water, includ-

large Annandale family it almost led to tragedy.

At approximately 1:15 a.m. Friday, police officers responded to a 911 call for help on Linda Lane. When officers arrived, they found 13 residents—six children and seven adults—passed out in rooms throughout the house. All were suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning caused by a gasoline-operated generator used inside the house.

Four police officers carried the residents out of the house, while another officer provided first aid in the front yard until Fairfax County Fire and Rescue could arrive. Eleven of the residents, as well as the four officers, were taken to Inova Fairfax Hospital for treatment. Two family members were transported to George Washington Hospital in Washington, D.C., to undergo decompression treatment.

But, for the most part, Gross said, "People are in pretty good shape [in her district]. People are concerned but calm."

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In Springfield on Friday, residents were out in force, surveying Isabel's damage.

"Want to see my tree?" Lynne Pippin yelled from across the street.

Stepping around to the backyard, Pippin's neighborhood audience came face to face with the root system of three double-trunked trees. The trunks had smashed a swing set, leaving Pippin's two children with a new, nature-made playground.

As Rebecca, 5, and Wesley Pippin, 7, climbed atop the massive tree trunks with five neighborhood children, the adults surveyed the damage.

The uprooted tree yanked up a white picket fence in its wake, but, beside the swing set, no serious damage was done.

"If this could fall, just imagine what else could have happened," Lynne Pippin said. "My hair stands on end just thinking about it."

A 20-minute-long gust of wind toppled the tree, Pippin said. She heard the crack, looked out the window, and then opted to move the family to the basement.

As Sara Beatty inspected Pippin's

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Times Staff Photo/Brian Price

**SURREAL SCENE:** A kayaker paddles along a sidewalk in Founder's Park in Alexandria Friday where waters from the Potomac flooded the banks leaving some of the town under water.



Times Staff Photo/Frank Mustac

**UNEXPECTED HOLE:** High winds from Hurricane Isabel downed a large tree that fell on the home of Melvyn and Beverly Andrews in Fairfax City last Thursday evening creating this hole in their living room ceiling. The Andrews live at the corner of Spring Lake Terrace and Andover Drive.

Alexandria com: southern Potom: county Spok: Fitzgerald.

Damage to public parks and schools is estimated at \$10 million. Public schools were closed Monday afternoon. Dominion Vir

## Damage to property is be at least

saw a peak of 1. without power st "the worst storm i year history."

As of 10:30 a.m. 50,000 customers the lights to return

Despite the loss many, property, I was to the water more than 1.2 mi Virginia served by Water Authority.

Never have a water treatment fions been without time.

Although water late Friday, residents water as a precaution that might back into the system pressure.

The boil order Sunday night at tests revealed that never contaminat

Of course, the water problem.

Residents ev homes near the Potomac to return late Sunday reportedly told had raised everything a foot off the ground flooding but missing eight feet.