

STATE OF ILLINOIS
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

COMMONWEALTH EDISON COMPANY :
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 :
Petition to determine the applicability of : No. 11-0662
Section 16-125(e) liability to events caused by the :
February 1, 2011 storm systems. :

Direct Testimony of
THOMAS R. PIAZZA
Certified Consulting Meteorologist
and President and CEO
Murray and Trettel, Inc.

1 **Q. What is your name, title, and business address?**

2 A. My name is Thomas R. Piazza. I am a Certified Consulting Meteorologist and the
3 President and CEO, of Murray and Trettel, Inc. My business address is 600 N. 1st Bank
4 Dr., Palatine, Illinois 60067.

5 **Q. What is Murray & Trettel, Inc.?**

6 A. Murray and Trettel, Inc. is a private meteorological consulting company. Founded in
7 1946, we are one of the oldest and most respected private meteorological consulting
8 companies in the United States. Murray and Trettel is a long-standing corporate member
9 of the American Meteorological Society, of which I personally am also a member. Over
10 the past half-century, we have received many awards including the American
11 Meteorological Society's Award for Outstanding Services to Meteorology by a
12 Corporation.

13 Murray and Trettel's mission is to provide sound advice, information and service
14 to our clients on past, current, and future weather conditions; on meteorological and air
15 quality instruments and measurement; on meteorological data quality assurance and
16 reporting; and on atmospheric modeling and deposition at and near nuclear power
17 stations. We accomplish this through traditional weather analysis and forecasting,
18 ambient and in-situ measurement, instrument services in the field, remote data
19 acquisition, studies, and reports. Our Weather Command® Operational Forecast
20 Division operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and employs a total of sixteen
21 professional meteorologists on staff at Weather Command®.

22 **Q. What is your personal professional experience?**

23 A. I have a BS in Meteorology and have more than 36 years of experience as a professional
24 meteorologist. I joined Murray and Trettel in 1975 after four years of experience as a
25 Weather Officer in the U.S. Air Force. In 1987, I was named President of the
26 Operational Forecast Division, in 1991 Executive Vice President of the company, and in
27 2001 President and CEO. Through a rigorous certification process administered by the
28 American Meteorological Society, I became a Certified Consulting Meteorologist (CCM)
29 in March 2010. I hold Certification Certificate 661. A resume is attached hereto as
30 ComEd Exhibit (“Ex.”) 4.01.

31 **Q. What is the purpose of your rebuttal testimony?**

32 A. The purpose of my testimony is to present to the Illinois Commerce Commission (“ICC”)
33 a report prepared by Murray and Trettel, under my direction and control, which is
34 attached hereto as ComEd Ex. 4.02. This report provides a detailed description of the
35 weather events that occurred during the February 1st and 2nd, 2011 blizzard and
36 demonstrates, using surface weather reports, local storm reports and radar images, how
37 the electric service interruptions occurring during the February 1st and 2nd, 2011 blizzard
38 correlated directly with the severe weather that occurred during this event.

39 **Q. What, in sum, does your report conclude?**

40 A. The February 1-2, 2011 storm system was a major snowstorm event that was classified as
41 a blizzard. A blizzard is an extreme snowstorm in which the visibility is reduced to ¼
42 mile or less due to snow and/or blowing snow, the winds are 35 mph or higher, sustained
43 or gusts, and these conditions last for approximately three hours or longer. This blizzard
44 event caused the following severe weather and extreme weather related events across
45 ComEd’s service territory: damaging winds of 50 to 70 mph; prolonged whiteout

46 conditions; cloud to ground lightning; record snowfall of 10 to 24 inches; snow drifts 2 to
47 5 feet with a few drifts 10 feet and higher; counties and municipalities declaring snow
48 emergencies; numerous roads closed due to whiteout conditions or heavy snow
49 accumulations. The blizzard began during the late morning hours on February 1st and
50 continued through approximately 12:00 p.m. on February 2nd. It affected all of ComEd's
51 service territory. The most intense part of the storm was between 3:00 p.m. on February
52 1st and 3 a.m. on February 2nd when crippling whiteout or near whiteout weather
53 conditions occurred over much of ComEd's service territory. There were numerous 50 to
54 70 mph wind gusts during this period of time. After 3 a.m. on February 2nd, winds slowly
55 subsided through the remainder of the morning and afternoon. There was a second
56 period of heavy Lake Effect snow that caused whiteout or near whiteout conditions
57 between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on February 2nd, from the Fox River Valley eastward.
58 When considering the amount of snowfall, strength of the winds and the geographic area
59 of coverage, this blizzard was one of the most powerful snowstorms to affect Northern
60 Illinois in the past 125 years bringing crippling whiteout conditions to many areas for a
61 prolonged period of time. Finally, as demonstrated in the surface weather report and
62 radar images in my report, the areas of severe weather that occurred during the February
63 1-2, 2011 blizzard are consistent with the resulting damage reports and outages. (ComEd
64 Ex. 4.02, Images 3-140).

65 **Q. Do you adopt the report as part of this testimony?**

66 A. Yes, I do.

67 **Q. Does this complete your direct testimony?**

68 A. Yes, it does.