

Thousands left in the dark during NYC power outage

July 14 2019



Pedestrians cross the street near emergency response vehicles at 50th Street and 8th Avenue during a power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens and darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)

On the anniversary of a 1977 blackout that hit most of New York City, a massive power outage brought the curtain down on Broadway shows and stalled traffic on Manhattan streets. Underground, the power outage affecting 73,000 customers for hours also left the subway system in disarray.

Con Edison CEO John McAvoy said a problem at a substation caused the 6:47 p.m. [power failure](#), which stretched 30 blocks from Times Square to 72nd Street and Broadway and spread to Rockefeller Center. Electricity was restored to customers and businesses in midtown Manhattan and the Upper West Side by around midnight, according to a statement from the utility.

McAvoy said the exact cause of the blackout would not be known until an investigation is completed.

The outage affected the entire subway system, closing four Manhattan stations to the public—Columbus Circle, Rockefeller Center, Hudson Yards and Fifth Avenue at 53rd Street. But Metropolitan Transportation Authority spokesman Maxwell Young said train operators were able to manually change the signals and bring at least one car into stations so passengers could disembark.

New York City's Emergency Management Department said the A, C, D, E, F, M, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 trains had resumed running in both directions by around 2 a.m. Sunday, following service disruptions from the blackout. Multiple street lanes between the Hudson River and Fifth Avenue had also reopened by 1:30 a.m.



Screens in Times Square are black during a power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens and darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)

The temperature was in the low 80s as the sun set just before 8:30 p.m., treating those who had streamed into the streets to one of the city's famed "Manhattanhenge" sunsets. While hot, the temperature didn't reach the highs of Manhattan in July, which often challenges the city's power grid.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo said no injuries were reported and

praised emergency officials for their response to the blackout, which he called "unacceptable."

"You just can't have a power outage of this magnitude in this city" Cuomo said. "It is too dangerous, the potential for public safety risk and chaos is too high, we just can't have a system that does that, it's that simple at the end of the day."



Pedestrians look at their cellphones during a power outage in midtown Manhattan, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens and darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)



Screens in Times Square are black during a widespread power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in the Manhattan borough of New York. Authorities say a transformer fire caused a power outage in Manhattan and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)



A man makes his way through a dark Times Square during a power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens and darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)



Traffic lights hang without power in Times Square during a power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens and darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)



A subway station is in the dark during a widespread power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens, darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)



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Commuters use their phones as flashlights during a widespread power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens, darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)

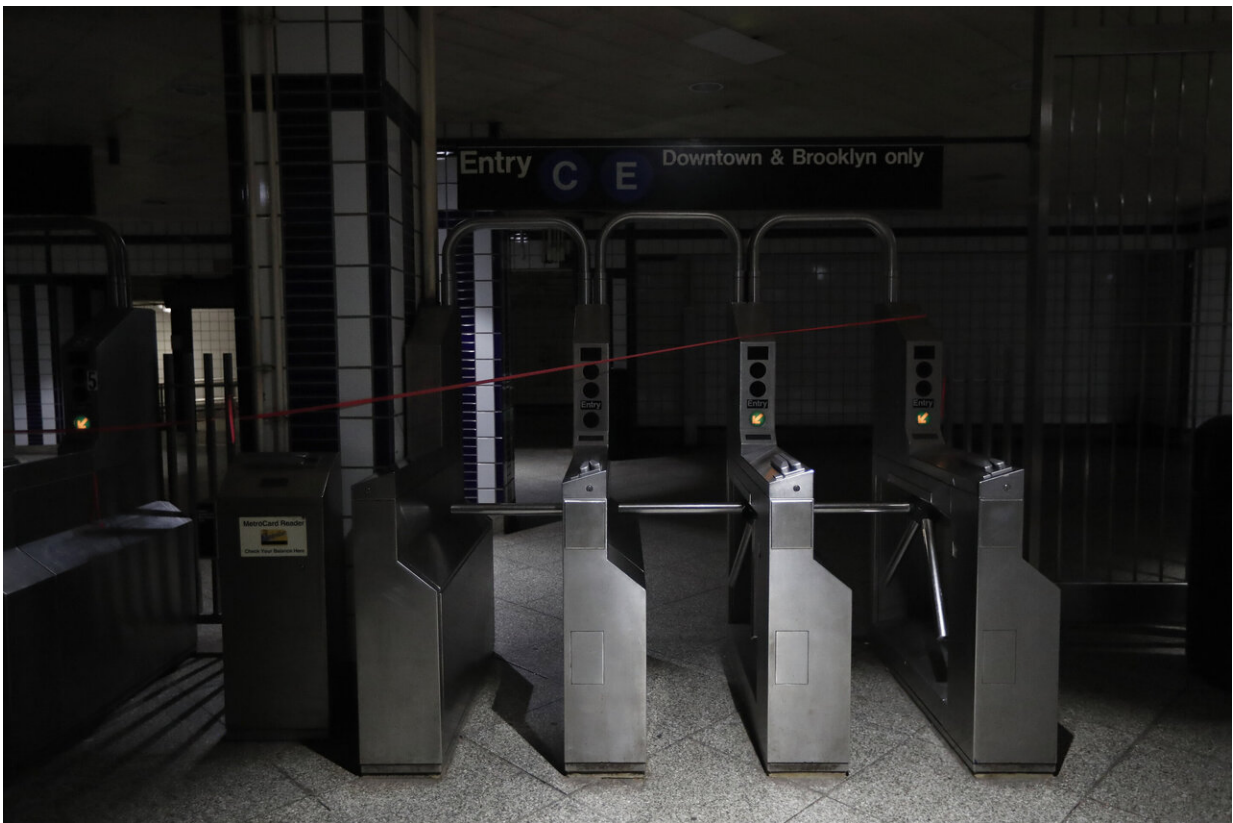


Stairs leading down to the C and E trains at the 50th Street Subway Station are dimly lit during a power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens and darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio was campaigning on the presidential trail in Waterloo, Iowa, when the [power outage](#) struck. His press secretary, Freddi Goldstein, tweeted just before 10 p.m. that de Blasio cut short his Iowa visit and was headed back to the city.

The mayor commended New Yorkers for handling the blackout "with that trademark NYC grit and toughness" in a tweet.

For hours before the power flickered back on, doormen stood with flashlights in the darkened entrances of upscale apartment buildings along Central Park West, directing residents up flights of stairs. Police and deployed troopers directed traffic at intersections to the soundtrack of sirens and horns, while people in the neighborhood known as Hell's Kitchen took it upon themselves to guide traffic in the absence of stoplights and walking signals.



An entrance to the C and E trains at the 50th Street Subway Station is dimly lit during a power outage, Saturday, July 13, 2019, in New York. Authorities were scrambling to restore electricity to Manhattan following a power outage that knocked out Times Square's towering electronic screens and darkened marquees in the theater district and left businesses without electricity, elevators stuck and subway cars stalled. (AP Photo/Michael Owens)

In the theater district, marquees darkened just before evening performances were set to begin. Most Broadway musicals and plays canceled their Saturday evening shows, though some cast members staged impromptu performances in the street.

Jennifer Lopez's concert at Madison Square Garden was cut short in the middle of her fourth song of the night, although officials at Penn Station below used backup generators to keep the lights on. Madison Square Garden, Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts were all evacuated. Lopez later tweeted that she would reschedule the stop on her "It's My Party" tour for Monday night at the same venue.

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