

# POWER PROFILE

**Customer:** Hospital Auxilio Mutuo, Neolpharma Puerto Rico

**Location:**

Puerto Rico

**Customer Business Issue:**

Critical power needs after Hurricane Maria knocked out electricity to the entire island, affecting 3.4 million people

**Solution:**

Cat® XQ20, XQ100, XQ800, and XQ2000 generator sets

**Cat® Dealer:**

Rimco



*After Hurricane Maria caused massive damage in Puerto Rico and destroyed the island's power grid, staff at Cat® dealer Rimco worked tirelessly to support essential power needs at hospitals and other critical facilities. Pedro Jimenez, power systems sales manager at Rimco, attributed their ability to overcome these extraordinary circumstances to Caterpillar's global network of support.*

**POWER NEED**

Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico on September 20, 2017 with sustained winds of 155 mph – the strongest storm to come ashore in 85 years. The Category 5 hurricane completely destroyed the island's fragile power grid, leaving all 3.4 million residents without electricity. This devastation took place in the midst of recovery from Hurricane Irma, which demolished buildings and left many without power just two weeks before.

Three months later, nearly half of the island's residents remained without power. It would be recorded as the longest blackout in U.S. history. Hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, government agencies, data processors, restaurants, hotels and countless others were in desperate need of a solution to meet critical power needs.

As the exclusive Cat dealer for Puerto Rico, Cuba, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Barbados and other islands of the Eastern Caribbean, Rimco stepped up with the highest level of dedication in these extremely adverse circumstances.

"This devastating storm was something we had never experienced. Customers called us with a sense of urgency, and in some cases, desperation," recalled Hector Rivera, rental manager for Rimco. "Our job was to reassure them that we were a helping hand and they were not alone."

**SOLUTION**

From mid-September after the hurricane through the end of 2017, Rimco sold more than twice as many generator sets compared with the entire previous year. Rental power accounted for more than 200 additional units, virtually all of which were leased out on extended contracts. The most popular pieces of rental equipment were the Cat XQ20, XQ100, XQ800 and XQ2000 generator sets.

"It gave us the opportunity to show the difference a distributor that has been in business for more than 35 years can make, backed by a company like Caterpillar," said Rimco power systems sales manager Pedro

Jimenez. "In a situation like this, what really made the difference to our customers is the fact that we built an infrastructure, a team of people and products that nobody else in this market has."

With inventory depleted due to the unprecedented need, Rimco received assistance from Caterpillar. Demonstrating the broad reach of the network, rental power was delivered not only from Cat dealers throughout the United States, but also Latin American countries including Colombia and Panama. Roughly 300 generator set deliveries were expedited to the island, along with more than 100 rental generators from the dealer rental power network. An additional 349 rental generator sets were also sent to Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands from Caterpillar Defense & Federal Products, one of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) major suppliers.

The demand for maintenance personnel also increased significantly, and technicians from other Caterpillar dealerships arrived to assist with generator maintenance and repair.

"With the help of Caterpillar, we were able to fly in technicians to help us deal with enormous customer demands," said Jimenez. "That is an attribute the competition cannot match."

**RESULTS**

According to protocol established by FEMA, hospitals receive the highest priority in keeping their standby generators running during a widespread power outage. With 650 beds, Auxilio Mutuo is the largest private hospital in San Juan. The facility has seven standby generator sets that produce a combined total of 10 MW.

"We cannot operate this hospital if we don't have power," said utility director Wilson Colon. "Rimco was instrumental to us during those days in which we needed to maintain these machines to run continuously, and they had to run for many days in succession."

For 13 days straight, two Rimco technicians were always onsite at the hospital to help with machine maintenance.

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"We were able to keep running because the Cat generators are reliable and the design is excellent. We don't want any other equipment except Caterpillar in our hospital," said Colon. "The people from Rimco were instrumental in maintaining them, so we are very grateful for their service."

Rimco staff worked 14 to 16 hours a day to deliver the results their customers needed, dealing with dire situations they had never before faced.

"We had to deal with customers that were about to lose their businesses, and people who were sick at home that needed power generation for their machines in order to stay alive," said Jimenez. "We listened to the customer and stayed calm. We explained what alternatives they had, and helped them make a decision that was best for each of them."

Rimco technicians were also called to remedy a problem with a generator set that was not running at an elder care facility at 9 p.m. one evening after the hurricane.

"In an emergency like that, a lot of people depend on you," preventive maintenance supervisor Jose Reyes said. "We got the generator running, and the older people started to applaud like we were heroes. It made me feel proud because the customer feels like they can rely on Rimco in an emergency."

Another instance required Rimco staff to help maintain a constant power supply for Neolpharma Puerto Rico, a pharmaceutical company in the central mountain city of

Caguas. While the company didn't resume operations until a month after the hurricane, it was critical to preserve inventory in a climate-controlled environment to minimize the impact on operations and avoid rejection of pharmaceutical lots. Rimco supplied a Cat XQ2000 generator set.

"It was important to have power available to protect our product onsite during the hurricane, and resume operation as soon as possible afterward," said Geraldo Delgado, facilities manager for Neolpharma. "We received excellent service from Rimco. They demonstrated a real sense of urgency to make sure that we had our unit in operation as soon as possible."

As a result of the storm, Rimco headquarters also suffered loss of power, and two portable Cat generator sets (225 kW and 325 kW) were utilized for more than two months after the hurricane. Staff along with their families, were dealing with damage at their own homes. Despite the circumstances, the Rimco team did everything possible to ensure that customers received essential products and services to restore power service or keep it running throughout the crisis.

"Right after Maria, everybody gathered here at the dealership to do whatever had to be done to serve the customers," said Jimenez. "It was the attitude of our people that made the difference."

For more information, please visit [cat.com/rentalpower](http://cat.com/rentalpower)



*A Cat XQ2000 rental generator set helped maintain a constant power supply for Neolpharma Puerto Rico, a pharmaceutical company with a need to preserve inventory in a climate-controlled environment. To supplement Rimco's inventory, hundreds of rental generator sets were sent to the island from Cat dealers throughout the United States and Latin America.*