



CURTIS INSTRUMENTS PUERTO RICO WITHSTANDS HURRICANE MARIA!



On September 20, 2017, following on the heels of the Category 4 Hurricane “Irma” which narrowly missed Puerto Rico, a Category 5 Hurricane “Maria” directly hit the Caribbean island with devastating force. The new Curtis factory in Carolina, located in the Sabana Abajo Industrial Park, near the San Juan airport, was only marginally impacted. The Curtis plant withstood the force of the storm incurring only very minor damage. Unfortunately, a number of our employees and their families suffered great personal loss. The calamity knocked out the island’s power grid, but Curtis was well prepared. The entire island suffered devastating damage to people, homes and infrastructure, a disaster for which recovery will take a long time. Despite this, Curtis customer product deliveries were essentially unaffected.

Curtis is immensely grateful to our customers, whose cooperation, understanding, patience and support was instrumental in allowing Curtis to mitigate this situation.



HERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW:

What advance hurricane-protection planning did Curtis have in place?

Hurricanes are a way of life in the Caribbean, with a predictable annual hurricane season. Accordingly, Curtis equipped the new facility with numerous protective measures to plan for the eventuality of direct storm impact, but even then, the ferocity and power of Hurricane Maria caught the island by surprise, as the storm took a sudden turn directly over Puerto Rico. Curtis was prepared because our plant is set up and equipped with:

- Robust, stormproof building construction.
- A powerful 1,500 KVA diesel generator capable of powering the entire plant.
- A 6,000 gallon diesel tank, holding a week’s supply of fuel to power the generator.
- Three water tanks supplying potable water, water for chillers and fire suppression supply.
- Hurricane rated window glass and metal storm shutters.
- Safety stock for customers, which is increased before every hurricane season.
- Underground data and telephone lines were not affected.

Additionally, our ERP system gave us full visibility of available inventory on a global basis, as well as plant loadings. This permitted us to quickly reschedule production and supply chain globally.



What was the damage to the Curtis plant?

The new facility suffered only minor damage and several small leaks. Debris from neighboring buildings and the electrical system landed on our parking lot. No manufacturing equipment or inventory was damaged. The power outage was compensated with our generator and a steady supply of diesel. Shipping goods in and out of the island's ports, as well as by air transportation, were temporarily disrupted.

How did the Curtis Puerto Rico team react?

With resilience, preparedness and fortitude. Even on the first day after the hurricane, when all power was out, Curtis teams immediately went into recovery action – implementing an effective and efficient recovery operation:

- The high capacity generator was fired up to provide power for the entire 60,000 square foot plant.
- All manufacturing equipment was inspected and recalibrated.
- We took immediate measures to provide our employees and their families with essential water and food.
- Curtis communicated status reports to all affected customers and internal staff.
- The Curtis PR operational team examined the status of the manufacturing supply chain of both raw materials and finished goods. Since no shipments were coming in or out of the ports, and since local suppliers were also affected by the storm, there were critical inventory needs to be resolved.
- We mitigated all supply chain issues. Once we helped ourselves, we helped our local suppliers. One important local supplier was supported by loan of a Curtis backup generator. Another local supplier was unable to operate and we managed to get supplies directly from their mother company in New Jersey.
- Rather than wait for the local power company, Curtis replaced all downed wooden utility poles leading to our plant with new, concrete poles, at our initiative and expense. At the time of this writing, all power supply infrastructure issues affecting our plant are resolved and the plant is wired to the existing substation. We are fully certified and ready to go once the power is turned back on, and in the meantime our generator is fully functional.



One of the small damages incurred was to the sign in front of our factory building. Company president Stuart Marwell said, "Let's leave it that way to show that there is no "I" in Curtis, because we work together as a team."



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While the Curtis building was relatively unscathed, with only minor damage, debris from neighboring building was blown into the Curtis parking lot. Curtis wasted no time to remove the unwanted addition to our property.



Minor damage to the AC ducts on the roof is what we call “getting away relatively unscathed.”



No finished goods, stored parts, or machinery were damaged.



Luckily there was only minor damage to the building. Only several leaks were found, damage to an AC duct on the roof, and clean up of debris in our parking lot was required.

How did the storm impact Curtis deliveries?

No Curtis customers were left in a lurch. Curtis PR was able to meet 80% of its production targets, with the other 20% being picked up as the company was able to quickly leverage its worldwide organization to help compensate for the temporary manufacturing capacity loss. The production of some open orders was shifted to our two other manufacturing plants, each with identical equipment and processes. While there were slight initial delays, we communicated openly and promptly and came to agreement with our customers, advising new delivery dates – all of which we met. No customer production line schedules were affected and we were able to meet all promises made to customers. Within three weeks Curtis PR was back to full operational schedule and within 30 days all obligations were met.



Despite the calamity, even at the first daylight after the hurricane’s impact, 21 people showed up to work. Now that’s fortitude!

How did Curtis people manage?

Thankfully, there was no loss of life of any of our 260 Curtis PR employees. Eleven employees incurred major damage; and of those, four suffered total or partial destruction of their homes. Despite the calamity, at the first daylight after the hurricane’s impact, 21 people showed up to work. The longtime commitment by Curtis to create a high quality workplace, to be a good employer and to treat people fairly and decently has been repaid by the extraordinary commitment by our team in these difficult times. Curtis people worked diligently from day one to protect the plant, to bring our lines back up and to meet our customer commitments. The result of that effort is that we caught up with all commitments within a month, through self-reliance and a “bootstrap” self-help mindset. Even when the island power was still out, Curtis was operational. The ports are now back open, supplies are moving again and the plant has rapidly normalized operations.



What did Curtis do for its employees?

Curtis immediately took measures to help its employees with essentials, starting with providing provisions of bottled water and food basics, the most urgent need in an emergency situation. We provided unlimited access to clean running water and set up shower facilities and commercial grade clothing washers and dryers for employees and families. We installed a commercial icemaker capable of producing 1,000 pounds of ice daily for employees to take home. We provided charging stations for telephones and other devices. Curtis even set-up an in-house barbershop for colleagues who desire grooming after weeks without power at home. To provide all employees with much needed cash, the company paid a generous statutory bonus early, typically scheduled for the year-end. Our employees had the benefit of air conditioning the entire time in the plant. Additionally the company organized a Curtis Puerto Rico Relief Fund for our colleagues in Puerto Rico. Employees from all worldwide Curtis operations contributed, with Curtis double-matching each dollar donated 2:1. The result is a fund well into the six figures to be distributed by a Curtis Puerto Rico emergency committee, with 75% of contributions to be dispersed to employees who sustained the most damage to their homes, the rest to a general fund.

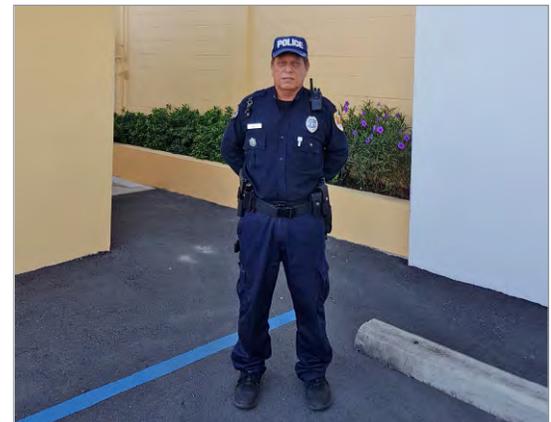
Curtis Ten Points numbers 1 and 2 fully evident:

1. Our people are our most important resource.
2. Our customers are the source of our well-being: every person in the company is responsible for exceeding customer expectations.

Curtis is proud of the preparedness, resilience, and “pick yourself-up by the bootstraps” actions of our team in Puerto Rico!



One of the employees, who also happens to be a barber, even set up an in-house barbershop for men to receive haircuts while at work.



The security guard, Luis Aulet, at Curtis Puerto Rico stayed with the building even during the peak of the storm and worked tirelessly around the clock to protect the building and property.



The Curtis Puerto Rico factory stands, now as before, in full splendor.