

Vancouver restaurant kept serving despite cuts to hydro and natural gas

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Chad Clark, general manager of Hawksworth Restaurant, said dealing with a power failure and a gas line repair over a three-day period made last weekend 'one of the most challenging ever.'

Hawksworth Restaurant was at ground zero during the 2011 Stanley Cup riot. A car was torched and a man was stabbed across the street. Buildings nearby were attacked. Yet the restaurant on West Georgia stayed open and, inside, the evening passed without incident.

By comparison, last weekend was a gong show, said general manager Chad Clark. "It was one of the most challenging ever."

On Saturday, Hawksworth catered a dinner for 80 in a West Vancouver home, one of the more than half a million that lost

electrical power to the midday storm. Then on Monday, gas to restaurant cooktops was cut off after a construction crew hit a gas line across the street.

For the West Vancouver event, staff scoured the city for generators. Cooks wore headlamps. People wore out cellphone batteries using flashlight apps. The house was lit by candle power.

"We had seven generators going. We went to a couple of Home Depots for camping lanterns but they were all sold out," Clark said. The generators powered a fridge, convection ovens and a band's sound system and lights. The host had a gas barbecue. Dinner included pulled pork tacos, braised beef shortribs, albacore tuna and sidestripe shrimp ceviche and several canapés and starters.

"When the lights finally came on, we were able to cook the crispy beef Shanghai noodles and tofu banh mi on the stove," Clark said. "The joke was that nothing stopped the bartenders. They made drinks in the dark."

On Monday, Hawksworth had 80 reservations for lunch. Thirty cancelled but 50 stayed the course, choosing from the cold dishes on the menu.

Guests included the president and vice-presidents of Steinway for the Americas.

"The president said even though it was cold food, it was still one of the best meals he's had," Clark said. "I have a history in show business and I always say, the show must go on."

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