

**FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF JLEEPER@ROYALSOLVES.COM**

From the Kansas City Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/kansascity/news/2017/10/13/sprint-hurricane-maria-puerto-rico-royal-services.html>

## Local company helps Sprint restore phone service in Puerto Rico

Oct 13, 2017, 11:59am CDT Updated: Oct 13, 2017, 3:11pm CDT

A small Kansas City-area company with a quick, long reach is supporting Sprint Corp.'s effort to restore phone service wiped out in Puerto Rico on Sept. 20, when Hurricane Maria destroyed much of the island's transportation, electrical and communications infrastructure.

"We went active upon the request of the client on Sept. 26," said Chris Salva, director of the networking department for Royal Services Inc., based in Johnson County's Stilwell community.

In this case, the client was CBRE, which provided project management for a Sprint (NYSE: S) effort that involved sending 30 engineers from the continental United States to Puerto Rico.

"They needed a place to put the engineers because the hotels are damaged," Salva said, "and right next to their large switch station in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, (just south of San Juan) was an empty warehouse.

"So they leased that warehouse space, but it was also damaged from Hurricane Maria. That's when they reached out to us to see if we could do some repairs on that building to get it watertight and airtight and make some rooms available for these engineers to be housed."

Royal Services employs only 30 in Stilwell. But the project and facility management firm has become a go-to contractor for many large companies with pressing, far-flung projects due to the nationwide network of 18,000 vendors it has developed relationships with during its 23-year history.

Known for its high-velocity national rollout projects, Royal Services was able to pull together a site supervisor and 10 technicians in Puerto Rico for the Sprint support job, Salva said.

"And once they saw how quickly we were able to respond to their original request (to make repairs to the Bayamon warehouse), then other requests started rolling in," he said.

In addition, Salva said, the Royal Services team also helped secure and install bedding materials, an electrical generator, a propane stove, a supplemental water system, showers, a washer and dryer, and air conditioning for the warehouse.

"It just kept snowballing to the point where I'm running about 17 different requests," he said.



ROYAL SERVICES INC.

The air-conditioning units were needed to allow the Sprint engineers and about 40 Army National Guard personnel who have joined them at the warehouse to sleep.

But the units the Royal Services crew procured weren't powerful enough to cool the entire warehouse. So Salva and his crew in Puerto Rico brainstormed and arrived at a solution. They procured three large catering tents that are now serving as air-conditioned sleeping quarters within the warehouse.

Among challenges the Royal Services crew has faced in procuring essentials for the warehouse has been navigating the island's heavily damaged road network while complying with a curfew imposed after the hurricane.

"Most of the time, you can get from San Juan down to the southern part of the island in a four-hour drive time," Salva said. "But on that northern tier of the island, there was such extensive road and bridge damage, you have to take side roads. It ends up killing an eight-hour day to drive to the south part of the islands, and then you have to stay the night there because of the curfew."

Another challenge has been paying for equipment and supplies, such as the 3,200 gallons of water that Royal Services has to have delivered to the warehouse every 72 hours, and gasoline, which had spiked to \$7 a gallon by the time Royal's crew was engaged.

Due to the widespread power and communications outlets, Puerto Rico has become a cash-only island, Salva said, so he has to wire all needed money to his site supervisor via his bank.

Although nearly 90 percent of Puerto Rico remains without electricity, Salva said Sprint has completed reconnaissance on nearly all of its infrastructure on the island and conducted repairs on the majority of its sites. But Royal's Puerto Rico assignment is far from over.

"They've leased that place for at least four months," Salva said, "so they've asked us to maintain it for another four months."

**Rob Roberts**

Reporter

*Kansas City Business Journal*

