

# Hurricane estimates in millions

BOSTON (AP) - While damage experts try to put the official tab on Hurricane Bob, New Englanders are starting to grasp the full financial impact, from lost customers at Cape Cod eateries to whopping overtime bills paid by utilities.

At first glance, the hurricane seemed relatively timid as it swept through New England a week ago.

But the toll in Massachusetts alone has been pegged at nearly \$1 billion, covering not only includes destruction of homes and yachts but also damage to tourism and fruit farms — plus the cost of cleaning up the mess.

"You never put a hurricane in your budget," said David Matthews, spokes-

man for Commonwealth Electric Co. The utility, based in southeastern Massachusetts, used dozens of outside crews and put its own workers on 16-hour shifts to restore power to customers who were among 2 million to lose electricity.

In the Northeast, the trail of damage could be seen from New York to Maine.

Rhode Island shellfishermen feared they could lose up to \$500,000 after 100 million gallons of raw sewage overflowed from treatment plants into Narragansett Bay during the hurricane.

In Westbrook, Maine, flooding from the storm idled the S.D. Warren Co. paper mill. Full production was not

expected to resume until this week. On Long Island, winds leveled corn fields and wiped out apple and peach orchards, causing losses estimated in the millions.

The most expensive hurricane on record, in terms of damage to insured property, was Hugo, which devastated \$4.2 billion worth of property in the Caribbean and southeastern United States in September 1989.

Around New England, damage estimates varied. In seeking federal disaster aid, Massachusetts estimated that it suffered \$69 million in damage to public property, \$10 million to farmland and \$900 million to homes, boats, businesses and other private property.

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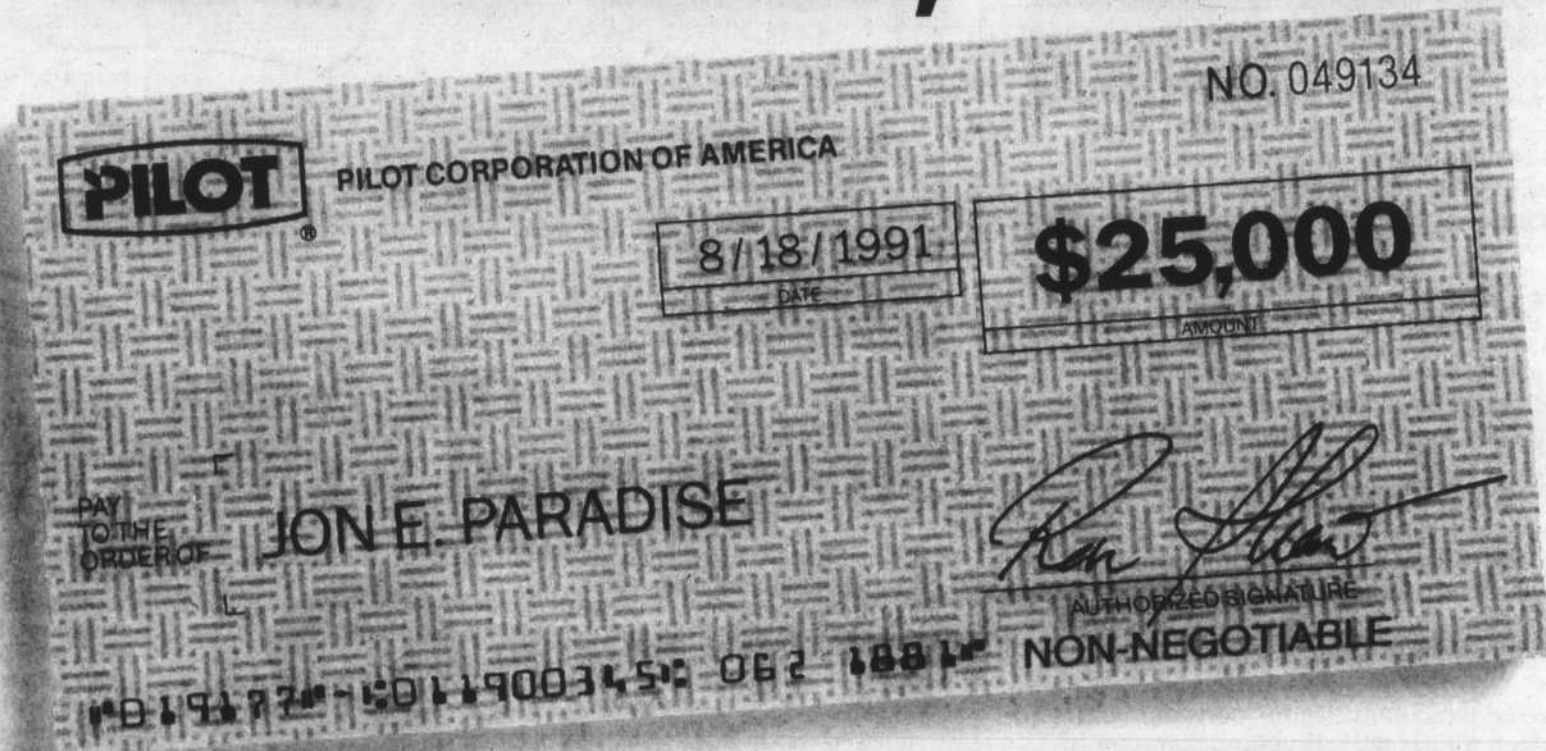
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