



December storms rock cooperative service territory

Corn Belt Power Cooperative maintains 156 substations across its footprint. Twice in December, lines from many of those substations sustained damage and power outages due to severe weather.

Dec. 10 and 11, Corn Belt Power's control center received 7,021 Supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) alarms. High winds coupled with freezing rain led to outages that spanned 42 substations. These transmission outages were short-lived as crews responded and repaired damage.

Unfortunately, the same can't be said for the summer-like storms that rolled through the cooperative's service territory Dec. 15-16. The line of storms, packing winds of up to 80 miles per hour and tornadoes, led to 8,677 SCADA alarms, 206 broken transmission poles and lines



Extreme winds down line

Above | A long stretch of downed line lays over old highway 20 (D20) near Dumcombe after extreme winds and tornadic activity broke more than 200 transmission poles in the Corn Belt Power service territory December 15 and 16. Corn Belt Power restored the system within five days with help from East River Electric Cooperative (South Dakota) and Northeast Missouri Power Cooperative along with help from Primoris Services and Highline Construction contractor crews.



Line restoration

Above | Corn Belt Power transmission crews repair downed line near Renwick following the Dec. 15 and 16 storms. This line helps serve Boone Valley Electric Cooperative and the surrounding areas.

down throughout Corn Belt Power's service territory.

"This outage ranks in the top 5 for most Corn Belt Power damage," said Kevin Bornhoft, vice president, engineering and operations, Corn Belt Power. "The storm, for the most part, was rare. We don't normally see severe thunderstorms and tornadoes in December."

Storm damage scattered Corn Belt Power's service territory. Lake Cornelia, Snell, Renwick and south of Clarion sustained some of the heaviest damage.

Corn Belt Power received mutual aid from Northeast Missouri Power Cooperative and East River Electric Cooperative (South Dakota). Contract crews from Primoris Services and Highline

Construction also assisted in restoration. In all, it took crews five days to get all lines and poles back in the air.

"We have deep appreciation for the crews that came and helped us with our restoration," said Bornhoft. "You could feel the spirit of cooperation among cooperatives. We are appreciative of their management and board of directors and most of all the families of these linemen who made it possible for them to lend a hand. No one hopes for a mutual aid situation; however, we'll be happy to return the favor should the situation ever arise."

Corn Belt Power's control center was able to isolate many problem areas, helping to minimize outage times for distribution cooperatives. ■



Above | Sen. Tim Kraayenbrink, left, speaks with Midland Power's Lexie Nadler and directors Mike Coleman and Joel Skow at January's legislative breakfast. Senators Jesse Green, Dennis Guth and Representatives Ann Meyer and Mike Sexton were also in attendance.

Cooperatives meet with legislators

On Wednesday, January 5, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Midland Power Cooperative, Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association and Prairie Energy Cooperative hosted the annual Fort Dodge area legislator breakfast.

The group met with Senator Jesse Green, Senator Dennis Guth, Senator Tim Kraayenbrink, Representative Ann Meyer and State Representative Mike Sexton.

The group discussed a wide variety of issues, including rural tax equity.

During the 2018 Legislative Session, among other high-profile legislation like the Energy Omnibus Bill (SF 2311), the Legislature tackled significant tax policy through SF 2417. The 134-page bill included the imposition of a new sales and use tax rate of 6 percent on the sale or use of "specified digital products" in Iowa defined as electronically transferred digital audio-visual works, digital audio works, digital books, or other digital products. From the perspective of a business, this means that essentially any

software purchased, or webinar subscribed to, would now see a six percent tax levied against the purchase. Recognizing that by taxing business and industry on these types of software purchases and digital transactions would balloon revenue, drafters of the bill wrote in an exemption intended to be a catch-all provision covering for-profit companies in the State while also providing for some non-profit entities to receive similar exemption from the sales and use tax. For example, Credit Unions, Community Action Agencies, Legal Aid organizations, Museums, etc. are all non-profits that qualify for the exemption as determined by the bill language.

Unfortunately, electric cooperatives were left off the exemption list. This year, electric cooperatives are working with Iowa State House and Senate leadership to introduce legislation to address the rural-urban inequity and support adding electric cooperatives to the list of exempt institutions.

The group also discussed the cooperative business model, rural economic development and recent storms that led to power outages.

"We want to thank our legislators for taking the time to discuss issues facing electric cooperatives and members at the end of the line," said Ryan Cornelius, vice president, corporate relations, Corn Belt Power. "Having open dialogue is important and we appreciate the relationship we have with these leaders." ■

Iowa's electric cooperatives discuss important issues at legislative reception

More than 160 directors, managers and employees from Iowa's electric cooperatives discussed priorities with nearly 90 state legislators on January 11 during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception in downtown Des Moines. The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives hosted the annual reception in conjunction with the Iowa Biotechnology Association, the Iowa Communications Alliance, the Iowa Institute for Cooperatives and FUEL Iowa.

The event provided a valuable opportunity to meet with state legislators at the beginning of the 2022 Legislative Session to discuss issues that impact rural electric cooperatives and the communities we serve. For example, as the Legislature and Governor prioritize

tax cuts this session, we're asking for a correction to a 2018 legislative oversight that left electric cooperatives out of a tax exemption on digital good and services. This unfair tax burden has resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in increased taxes for rural electric cooperatives.

In the coming months, the Iowa General Assembly will be addressing a multitude of issues, including energy-related matters that are central to Iowa's rural economy. Beginning with the Welcome Back Legislative Reception, electric co-op directors, managers and staff will again be important advocates for a balanced approach in addressing energy issues. Collectively, Iowa's locally owned electric cooperatives provide affordable, reliable, safe and

environmentally responsible power to more than 650,000 Iowans throughout all 99 counties every day. ■



Legislative reception

Above | A group from Corn Belt Power and Franklin REC speak with Representative Shannon Latham during the annual Welcome Back Legislative Reception in Des Moines, Jan. 11.



Stacy Cirks

Cirks begins Corn Belt Power career

Stacy Cirks started her new job as development finance director on January 4. Cirks worked for the USDA Rural Development office for more than six years. She also previously worked in the banking industry. Cirks is a graduate of Iowa State University. Welcome, Stacy!

News in brief

Greenfield meets with co-ops in Clarion

On Wednesday, December 22, Theresa Greenfield, director of Rural Development for Iowa, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), met with individuals from Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Prairie Energy Cooperative and others at Clarion City Hall to amplify the recent USDA announcement of a new water investment of \$8,100,000 to the city. She also highlighted a new USDA rural energy investment of \$91,085,000 to Corn Belt Power Cooperative to help modernize energy infrastructure.



Theresa Greenfield

“We appreciate our long-standing relationship with Rural Utilities Services,” said Karen Berte, senior vice president, finance and administration, Corn Belt Power. “These loan funds will help strengthen our power system. It’s a long-term approach that will help provide reliable and affordable electricity for members at the end of the line for years to come.”

Recent USDA investments in Iowa total \$331 million.

Corn Belt Power annual meeting scheduled

After two years of digital annual meetings, the cooperative’s in-person event is scheduled for Wednesday, April 6 at the Starlite Best Western in Fort Dodge.

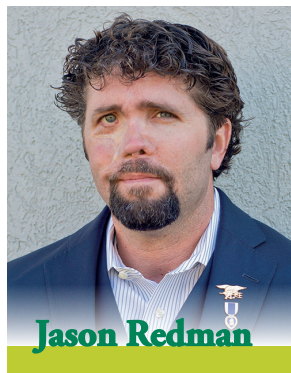
This year’s keynote speaker is retired Navy Seal Jason Redman.

Lieutenant Redman joined the Navy on September 11, 1992 and spent eight years as an enlisted SEAL.

As an enlisted SEAL Redman completed three deployments throughout Central and South America and spent two years as a training instructor before being selected for the Seaman to Admiral Commissioning program in 2000.

He attended Old Dominion University graduating Summa Cum Laude in May 2004 completing his time with the Hampton Roads Naval ROTC as Student Battalion Commanding Officer before he was commissioned as a Naval SEAL Officer.

Over the next four years, Lieutenant Redman completed combat deployments in both Afghanistan and Iraq. On September 13, 2007, outside of Fallujah, Iraq, Lieutenant Redman’s assault team came under heavy machine gun and small arms fire and he was severely wounded in the ensuing firefight. While recovering at Bethesda Naval Medical Center, Redman authored and hung a bright orange sign on his door, which became a statement and symbol for wounded warriors everywhere.



Jason Redman



Orientation day tour

Above | Jon Behounek, chief system operator, explains the Corn Belt Power system map to Orientation Day attendees during a Jan. 13 control center tour in Humboldt.

Large turnout for Corn Belt Power's Orientation Days

Corn Belt Power Cooperative welcomed more than 40 new directors and employees across two days at its Orientation Days Jan. 13 and 19.

Those present learned about Corn Belt Power’s power supply, relationship with Basin Electric, engineering and operations, corporate relations, finance and administration and business development departments.

Attendees also heard from Corn Belt Power’s information technology department and received a tour of the cooperative’s server room and control center. The goal of Orientation Days is to provide new employees and directors basic information on Corn Belt Power and how our systems across all departments integrate with their organizations.

Corn Belt Power hosts its orientation event once every two years. Typically, the event is held in January.

“By hosting the event, we’re able to meet and interact with our new employees and directors from across the system,” said Ken Kuyper, executive vice president, Corn Belt Power. “We’re able to share a little bit about Corn Belt Power’s overall operations. Those who come also learn about our long, impressive history and what it means to rural Iowans in our service territories.” ■



December Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge winner | Kristin Hanson, manager human resources and payroll, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, donated her \$100 prize drawing to the Lakes Area Hockey Association.



Doug Vlasman

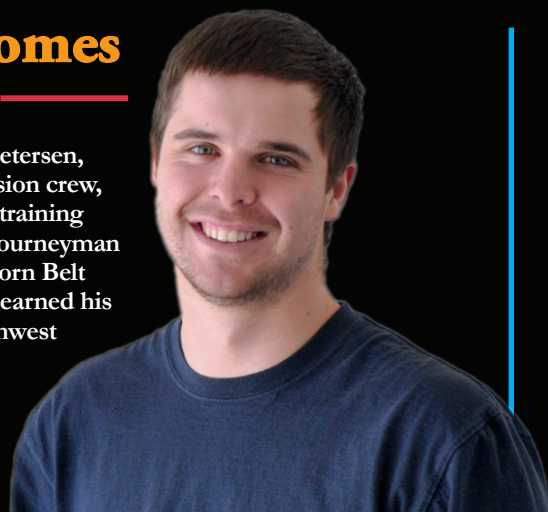
The power of human connections

Congratulations to Doug Vlasman, energy advisor, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, for winning the \$500 yearly Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge grand prize. Vlasman is no stranger to the Volunteer Challenge. Over the years he's donated hundreds of hours of his time to local causes. He donated his \$500 winnings to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

We'd love to hear where you volunteer. Submit your monthly volunteer hours for a chance to earn a donation to your charity of choice. bit.ly/TSEVolunteerChallenge2022

Petersen becomes journeyman

As of January 1, Ethan Petersen, Emmetsburg transmission crew, completed on-the-job-training and coursework to become a journeyman lineman. Petersen started at Corn Belt Power January 4, 2019 after he earned his Powerline diploma from Northwest Iowa Community College. Congratulations, Ethan!



Corn Belt Power Cooperative Watts Watt

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