



Winter reliability forecast shows adequate resources for 2024-2025

In November, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation released a report outlining its 2024/2025 Winter Reliability Assessment.

In the report, Southwest Power Pool, our regional grid operator, is noted to have sufficient electric generation capacity to meet expected demand under normal winter operating conditions.

Electric utilities nationwide are members of one of nine regional transmission organizations and independent system operators, also called power pools. These entities are federally regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and work on a regional scale to coordinate, control, and monitor supply and demand on the electric grid. RTOs do not own the power grid, but they work as “air-traffic controllers” of the grid to ensure reliable power supplies, adequate transmission infrastructure, and “day-ahead” electric market coordination of wholesale electricity prices on behalf of their members.

While NERC is not listing reliability as being at a high risk for the upcoming winter season, our industry continues to navigate significant long-term challenges in maintaining a resilient and reliable electric grid.

“The immediate outlook is stable, but we’re seeing unprecedented changes in how electricity is both generated and consumed across our region,” said Jacob Olberding, executive vice president and general manager, Corn Belt Power. “As our society becomes increasingly electrified and we see rapid growth in sectors like data centers, demand for electricity is growing at a historic pace.”

The changing energy landscape presents both opportunities and challenges. While the SPP region has made substantial progress in bolstering its transmission infrastructure

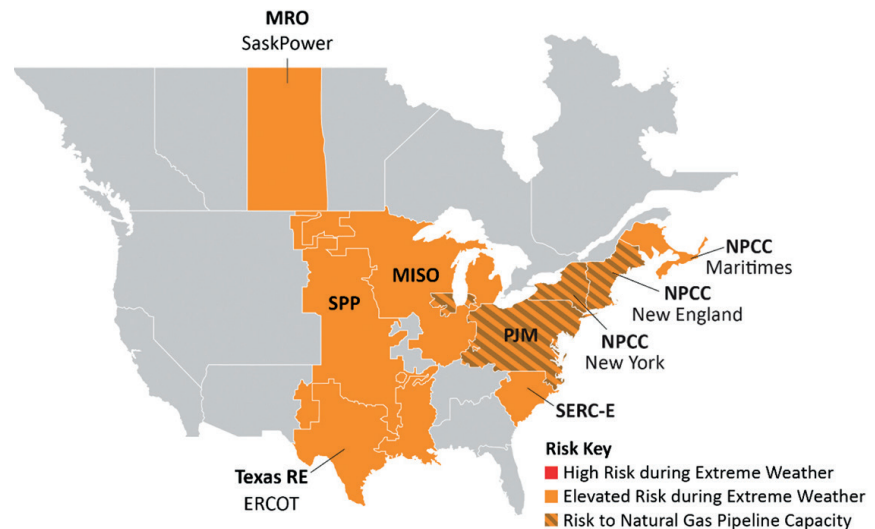


Figure 1: Winter Reliability Risk Area Summary

Seasonal Risk Assessment Summary	
High	Potential for insufficient operating reserves in normal peak conditions
Elevated	Potential for insufficient operating reserves in above-normal conditions
Normal	Sufficient operating reserves expected

and adding renewable energy resources like wind and solar, the variable nature of these resources requires careful planning to maintain reliability. Additionally, SPP has approved an increase in its required Planning Reserve Margin.

What's a planning reserve margin?

SPP, Corn Belt Power and its member-cooperatives must plan for times of extreme power use through what is called a reserve margin. Reserves are resources that are held back, standing by to provide additional energy when needed. Reserve margins are the amount of unused available generating capability of an electric power system (during peak demand for a utility system) as a percentage of total capability needed to meet peak demand. These margins are

shrinking in SPP and across the country. Tighter reserve margins mean there’s less room for error when we experience unexpected events or emergencies, increasing the risk of forced outages.

“We need a diverse mix of power resources to keep the lights on 24/7,” Olberding explained. “That includes having dispatchable generation like coal, natural gas and nuclear, available when renewable resources aren’t producing at full capacity. However, many of our traditional generating facilities are being targeted by federal legislation aimed to curb emissions by implementing unproven or unavailable technologies, forcing them to retire before their end of life if they cannot comply with emissions standards.” *Continued on page 2...*



Winter reliability forecast

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Proactive Steps to Ensure Reliability

Corn Belt Power is taking decisive action to maintain grid reliability for our members through several key initiatives.

■ **Advocating for Reliability and Affordability:**

Electric cooperatives across the country are owned by you, the members we serve. This means that our cooperative works together with other electric cooperatives to educate lawmakers and advocate on behalf of our members to ensure that reliable power is also competitively priced.

■ **Resource Diversification:** Nationally, there is increasing reliance on renewable energy sources, and at the same time, we're seeing fossil fuel plants taken offline, often ahead of schedule. Additionally, we're seeing more pressure on the electric grid due to the ever-present severe weather events and historic rising demand, as we begin to electrify more sectors of our economy in the form of electric vehicles, data storage and cryptocurrency. Corn Belt Power and its power supplier Basin Electric Power Cooperative believes and advocates for an all-of-the-above energy approach. The "all-of-the-above" approach promotes the idea that the United States relies on a reliable and sustainable fuel supply. There is great value in maintaining a diverse mix of fuel sources—fossil fuels and renewables- to ensure reliability and resiliency and meet the growing demand for electricity.

■ **Grid Infrastructure:** As a member of

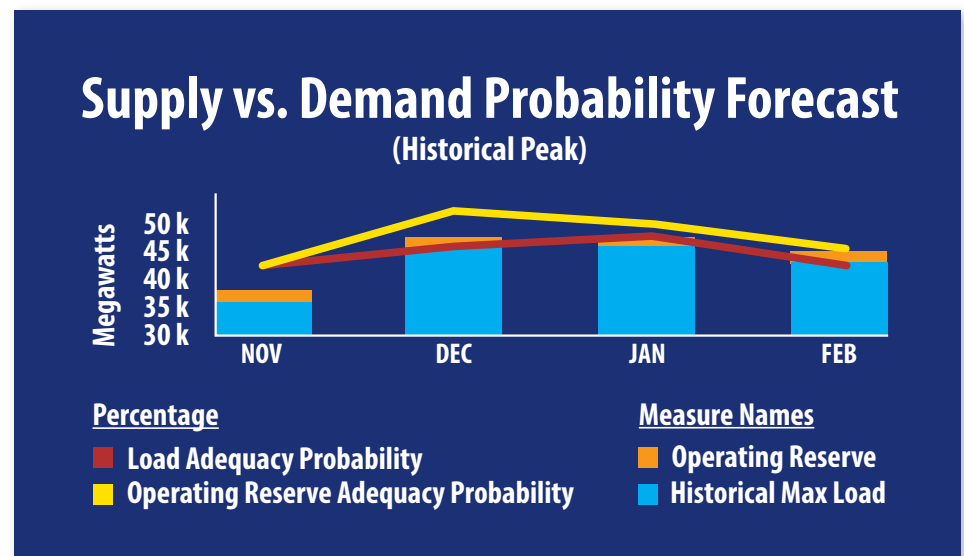
Basin Electric, we pool resources and expertise to invest in technology, security, and infrastructure to deliver reliable and cost-effective power. Our operations are dedicated to strengthening our electric infrastructure through targeted upgrades and new construction projects, which will enhance regional connectivity and resilience.

■ **Emergency Preparedness:** We work closely with SPP and neighboring utilities

to protect our members from potential energy shortages and price spikes associated with having to purchase more power when demand is elevated. By having detailed response plans in place, we can take steps to reduce electricity demand during critical periods – helping avoid the need to purchase expensive power from the market when prices are at their highest. This coordinated approach helps keep your electricity both reliable and affordable.

■ **Regional Coordination:** We actively participate in SPP's reliability initiatives and maintain close coordination with neighboring utilities to support regional grid stability. By working to prepare for and respond to energy shortfalls, we can follow protocols to reduce electric demand and prevent us from having to purchase excess energy from the markets or avoid the need to interrupt power supply.

Corn Belt Power and our wholesale power provider, Basin Electric, works closely with SPP and other regional partners to address these long-term challenges while maintaining reliable and affordable electric service for our member-consumers. As we dedicate ourselves to powering your homes and communities throughout the winter season, know we are committed to doing everything we can to maintain your trust and find solutions to keep your power reliable and your rates stable. ■



Above | The chart emphasizes the grid's capacity to handle peak electricity demand with a high degree of reliability, as well as slight variations in supply adequacy across four winter months. The blue bars show historical maximum load for each month. The orange indicates available operating reserves, highlighting extra capacity available beyond peak load. The yellow line represents 98.5% probability forecast to meet peak load demand and maintain operating reserves. The red line represents 99% probability forecast of meeting all peak load demands throughout the season.

Brusseau chairs Minnesota Power Systems Conference

Each year, utility professionals from across the country gather in Minnesota for the Minnesota Power Systems Conference.

This year, Larry Brusseau, compliance director, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, served as chairman of the conference. Brusseau's involvement with the event spans an impressive 27 years as a committee member.

"This conference keeps industry professionals abreast of today's power system technology in a three-day conference that emphasizes the unique challenges faced by electric utilities in the Midwest," he said. "Concurrent sessions include substations, utility industry futures, delivery systems, project management, relaying, distribution automation/communications, safety and security, metering, power generation and tutorials."

As chairman, Brusseau led the planning committee and played a key role in selecting speakers and exhibitors for the event and overseeing the conference.

"One of our founding principles is training, education and information," Brusseau said. "This conference is well attended by co-ops across the Midwest and many other utility entities. It's a great way to stay up-to-date with today's power system technologies and learn how we can better serve our members and their members at the end of the line." ■



Larry Brusseau



Conference Chair

Above | Larry Brusseau, far right, compliance director, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, watches on as Clair Moeller receives a plaque on behalf of the Minnesota Power Systems Conference planning committee for his years of service to the industry and depth of knowledge. Brusseau served as chairman for this year's MIPSYCON in St. Paul, Nov. 12-14.

Sorenson begins Corn Belt Power career

We are excited to welcome Nick Sorenson to Corn Belt Power as a control operator at the cooperative's Wisdom Station power plant in Spencer.

Nick previously worked for Don Pierson Ford in Spencer. He has a degree in automotive technology from Iowa Lakes Community College.

Welcome, Nick, to Corn Belt Power. ■



Sorenson begins at Wisdom

Above | Nick Sorenson is a new control operator at Wisdom Station power plant in Spencer. Sorenson began his Corn Belt Power Cooperative career Oct. 28.

Corn Belt Power to host annual meeting at Briggs Woods

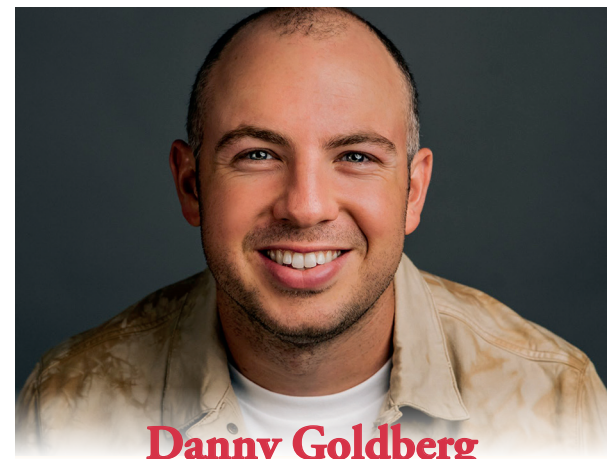
Corn Belt Power will host its annual meeting at Briggs Woods Conference Center, Webster City, Wednesday, April 2 beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Attendees will hear an update on Corn Belt Power's operations and finances as well as a keynote address from Danny Goldberg.

Goldberg knows what it takes to transform high turnover and low performance into connection, innovation, retention and results.

Acclaimed speaker and award-winning entrepreneur Danny Goldberg built an eight-figure business in a few short years, all before the age of 30. Along the way, his desire to learn what makes great organizations great led him to spend nearly 10 years decoding exactly what it takes to be an effective leader.

Danny's Modern Leadership Framework gives leaders at all levels actionable insights that will help them foster depth, personalize their leadership approach, and lead in a way that inspires loyalty. ■



Danny Goldberg

Above | Danny Goldberg will keynote Corn Belt Power's annual meeting in Webster City, April 2, 2025.

Jena Blackett, building custodian, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, delivers food Nov. 4 to the Humboldt County Food Pantry that Corn Belt Power employees collected and gave in support of the 12 Months of Giving Initiative.



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November Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge winner | Gary Doehrmann, accountant, Butler County REC, donated his \$100 prize to St. Jude Children's Hospital.

Corn Belt Power supports community through 12 months of giving

Corn Belt Power Cooperative proudly participated in Humboldt's 12 Months of Giving initiative, an ongoing effort to support the Humboldt County Food Pantry in its mission to address food insecurity. This collaborative program partners with local businesses each month, designating a "corporate sponsor" to rally employee contributions of essential food items.

For the month of October, Corn Belt Power stepped up to the plate. Employees at the Humboldt headquarters accepted the challenge, gathering donations of canned goods and non-perishable items. Contributions included a variety of staples like spaghetti, ravioli, cream soups, and canned beans.

At the end of the month, employees delivered the collected donations to the Humboldt County Food Pantry.

"This program offers an incredible opportunity for our employees to embody one of the core cooperative principles: commitment to community," said Jennifer Arndorfer, human resource specialist, Corn Belt Power. "We're proud to do our part in supporting neighbors in need and making a positive impact right here in Humboldt County."

Through this initiative, Corn Belt Power continues to strengthen its dedication to the communities it serves, demonstrating that even small acts of kindness can help fuel big change. ■



Left | Jon Zeman, warehouse clerk, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, loads up employee food donations for a delivery to the Humboldt County Food Pantry, Nov. 4.

Corn Belt Power Cooperative **Watts Watt**

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