



Flooding devastates communities Corn Belt Power's employees lend a hand

The last two weeks of June will be remembered across Corn Belt Power's service territory for historic flooding. Water levels surged across many rivers, including the Little Sioux River and the East and West fork of the Des Moines River, leading to the evacuation of thousands of residents and the loss of numerous homes and businesses. Despite the widespread devastation, Corn Belt Power's buildings and infrastructure largely escaped damage.

While Corn Belt Power's Wisdom Station was not directly impacted by the flooding, operations personnel were stranded at the height of the event due to floodwaters cutting off all access to the plant. Throughout this challenging period, employees ensured the continuous operation of Wisdom Station and the cooperative's transmission system.

"The weather has thrown us a few curve balls this summer," said Jacob Olberding, executive vice president and general manager, Corn Belt Power Cooperative.



Co-op employees volunteer

Above | 1) Tom Hanrahan, second from left, system operator, helps build a wall around a Humboldt home on the river June 23 in anticipation for 17-foot record river levels. The past record level was 15-feet, 4-inches, set in 1969. **2)** Ryan Cornelius, vice president, corporate relations, shovels sand while Tyler Baxter, engineer III, packs the bags. Corn Belt Power employees volunteered to sandbag in Humboldt living out the cooperative value of Commitment to Community June 24. **3)** Wisdom Station employees rally to support Carla Hofmaster, environmental/safety coordinator, front row, second from left, and her husband Dale, at their residence following torrential rainfall and flooding that devastated the Spencer area June 21.



Flooding downs one pole

Above | A 69-kV structure on the Emmetsburg-to-Ayrshire transmission line, fell due to high water June 17.

"Between May's storm damage and June's flooding, it's been a busy time. I was impressed by the immediate response and coordination displayed in the control center. I felt a tremendous amount of pride in the hard work and dedication of the outside crews throughout both events. Corn Belt Power's values of integrity, accountability, commitment and teamwork were on display everywhere I looked. You can see those values in action as our communities and many of our employees are impacted by the recent flooding."

While many parts of the G&T's transmission system experienced extensive flooding, only one structure was damaged. A structure on the 69-kilovolt Emmetsburg to Ayrshire transmission line fell due to high water.

Corn Belt Power's employees across all

locations rose to the occasion during the flood event. Staff in Spencer, Emmetsburg, and Humboldt volunteered hundreds of hours filling sandbags, assisting at damaged residences and businesses, and helping to clean up impacted communities.

"It's comforting to know that our employees live out our cooperative's values away from the office," said Olberding. "We live in the communities we serve, and nothing is more important than the folks at the end of the line."

Governor Kim Reynolds declared a disaster for 21 counties in northern Iowa, including many within Corn Belt Power's service territory. Several highways were closed, including a key stretch of Interstate 29 south of Sioux Falls, which received more than 7 inches of rain in three days. ■

Policy Perspective:

Keeping the lights on in the heat of summer



Antelope Valley Station

Above | Basin Electric Power Cooperative owns and operates Antelope Valley Station, a coal-based power plant near Beulah, ND. AVS has two units, each rated at 450 megawatts.

As we head into August's dog days of summer, electric reliability and the nation's electric grid come into focus.

This spring, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation released its 2024 Summer Reliability Assessment, raising concerns about several regional transmission organizations and their challenges related to electric generation and transmission this summer.

Good news: Corn Belt Power Cooperative's service territory is not in one of these regions. Nevertheless, we continue to work with industry partners to safeguard reliable and affordable electricity.

NERC's Summer Reliability Assessment

Thankfully, Southwest Power Pool (SPP), of which Corn Belt Power is a participant, is not listed in a risk category this summer. However, our neighboring regional transmission organization (RTO) to the east, Midcontinent Independent System Operator, is in an "elevated risk" category for electric generation and capacity shortfalls this summer.

SPP and Corn Belt Power have worked diligently over the years to maintain reliable electric service, even during drastic weather

changes.

What this means for Corn Belt Power

This is great news. However, our work is far from complete. The way Corn Belt Power generates electricity is rapidly changing. More and more, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power are coming online, while traditional sources like coal, nuclear and natural gas are retired. We believe and advocate for an all-of-the-above energy approach.

This approach promotes the idea that the United States depends on a reliable and sustainable fuel supply, incorporating domestically produced renewable energy resources to supplement baseload generation that includes biofuels, natural gas, nuclear, hydropower and coal.

It's important to remember that the electric grid is made up of thousands of generating stations and millions of miles of lines. A power plant outage or natural disaster could impact SPP's projections. Corn Belt Power and our primary power provider, Basin Electric Power Cooperative, are well-positioned to meet peak demand.

What are we doing?

Corn Belt Power continues to work with

policymakers and regulators on state and federal levels for a sensible all-of-the-above generation approach. The ongoing energy transition must recognize the need for time and technology development while including all energy sources to maintain reliability and affordability. A resilient and reliable electric grid that affordably keeps the lights on is the cornerstone of our rural economy.

Electric cooperative families and businesses rightfully expect the lights to stay on at a price they can afford. To maintain a reliable power supply, cooperatives must adopt an all-of-the-above strategy that includes renewable energy as well as dependable resources like coal, natural gas, nuclear and hydropower. This diverse energy mix is essential to meeting those expectations day in and day out.

Rural electric cooperatives are aware that the sun doesn't always shine, and the wind doesn't always blow. While Corn Belt Power supports and encourages the development and use of renewable energy, the intermittent nature of renewables means there may be times when there isn't enough power to keep the lights on all the time. Renewable energy should supplement a reliable and affordable baseload generation mix. That's why all of us must continue to recognize the value of and operate baseload generation plants now and into the future.

Our mission remains the same: to provide members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity. Corn Belt Power will continue to advocate for our members and do everything we can to continue to live up to that mission. ■



Wisdom Station

Above | Wisdom Station, Spencer, IA, is a dispatchable generation source with a 118 megawatt generating capacity.

Teaming together to enhance local economy

On June 19, Corn Belt Power Cooperative and Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative closed loans with the Iowa Lakes Corridor Future Fund, LLC for the speculative building that will be located in the Spencer Technical Park South.

Corn Belt Power loaned \$240,000 from its revolving loan fund. Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative loaned \$240,000 from its RLF and sponsored a REDG loan for \$360,000 (\$300,000 USDA grant, \$60,000 match).

Additional funding partners include Spencer Municipal Utilities sponsoring a REDG for \$360,000 and Clay County with an RLF for \$300,000. Construction is under way and a ribbon cutting is planned for a later date, upon project completion. ■

Daycare in Sumner receives funds

Butler County REC requested Corn Belt Power Cooperative's partnership with a revolving loan fund application request to the Sumner Daycare & Learning Center, Inc. for the construction of a new daycare facility in Sumner.

Multiple RLFs came together to fund \$700,000 towards the new \$2.1 million daycare facility. Corn Belt (\$200,000), alongside Butler County REC (\$100,000), Dairyland Power Cooperative (\$200,000) and Allamakee Clayton Electric Cooperative (\$200,000) closed their RLFs on May 28. ■

Trucking company receives funding through RLF

Prairie Energy Cooperative and Corn Belt Power Cooperative partnered together and closed a new revolving loan fund request with Phillip and Michelle Dornbier for the construction of a new building in the Touchstone Energy Park in Garner May 29. The building will be the new home of Phil Dornbier Trucking, an existing business in Garner. Prairie Energy and Corn Belt each loaned \$250,000 from their respective RLF's for the project. ■



Spec building closing

Above | Stacy Cirks, Corn Belt Power Cooperative; Curt Strouth, Iowa Lakes Corridor; Jed Skogerboe, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative; close June 19 on a speculative building to be constructed in Spencer Technical Park South.



Sumner Daycare

Above | Stacy Cirks, third from left, development finance director, Corn Belt Power Cooperative and Katie LaBree, second from right, business development manager, Butler County REC, present loan checks May 28 to Sumner Daycare board members, Madelon Reed, secretary; Stephanie Duhrkopf, president; and Kristy Oberbroeckling, treasurer.



Trucking company

Above | Second from left, Chris Jones, manager, business/community development, Prairie Energy Cooperative and Stacy Cirks, development finance director, Corn Belt Power Cooperative present loan funds to Michelle and Phil Dornbier, of Phil Dornbier Trucking at their loan closing May 29.

SEVEN ON 7.

Touchstone Energy Cooperatives

EPISODE 20

bit.ly/IntegrityE20

CORE VALUES IN ACTION, INTEGRITY AT THE HEART

Flood waters near Corn Belt Power Cooperative's 161 kilovolt switching station following devastating rainfall in the Spencer area June 21. Rod Stephas, assistant plant manager, captured this view from the eighth floor of Wisdom Station looking West toward Evely June 22. Water never reached the switching stations.

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July Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge winner | Richard Hall, energy advisor, Calhoun County Electric Cooperative Association, donated his \$100 prize to the City of Manson's Parks Department.

Join us at the Iowa State Fair!

The Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of Iowa are pleased to once again sponsor the 4-H Exhibits Building at the 2024 Iowa State Fair. Corn Belt Power is proud to be a Touchstone Energy member, which means we're part of a nationwide network of locally owned co-ops that provides resources and leverages partnerships to help member-consumers use energy wisely.

If you're planning Fair from August by and see us in the Exhibits Building on of the fairgrounds.

Electric co-op state will hand out suckers for the kids Kids can also try on some and take fun photos in our co-op safety selfie station.

We look forward to connecting with our cooperative members at the Iowa State Fair this summer. Please stop by our booth and say hello! ■



a visit to the Iowa State 8-18, make sure to stop air conditioned 4-H the southwest corner

staff from across the plastic hard hats and while supplies last. lineworker safety gear

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