

NEWS RELEASE

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Transmission lines down causing widespread outages

(JACKSON, MN) – The outages for Federated Rural Electric in Jackson and Martin Counties are widespread.

Great River Energy, provides wholesale power and owns the transmission lines that serve most of Federated's substations. In Federated's service area, about 40 69 KV transmission lines poles are broken. GRE has crews on standby to come and work in this area as soon as the weather allows travel, but visibility and travel are severely limited from where they are presently stationed. In addition, GRE has poles down in neighboring utilities' service area as well. Federated hopes that a majority of outages will decrease once these transmission line poles are fixed.

In addition, Federated has hundreds of broken distribution line poles due to the ice and wind. "These outages will likely increase over the next two days as the wind whips the ice laden lines," said Federated's Operations Manager Joe Marthaler. "Be prepared for extended outages."

Federated has called for outside assistance. 16 linemen will be arriving today from the Iowa electric cooperatives. In addition, eight linemen are coming from powerline contractor Karian Peterson. Federated's line crews are also working the outages.

Presently, the substations without power are: Enterprise, West Lakefield, Minneota and Round Lake.

"This ice storm is worse than the April 2013 ice storm as we have outages in both counties and more members without power. For comparison we now have about 2,000 out now and at the worst it was 1,400 in 2013. On a worst case scenario, these outages could last days.

Federated reminds the public to avoid downed power lines and poles. You do not know if the electricity is still on or off. We don't want anyone risking an injury.

Watch for updates on Federated's Facebook page. Phones are busy due to the extent of the outages.

Federated is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative serving 6,700 members in Jackson and Martin Counties.

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