

NEWS RELEASE

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Outage counts increase due to wind & ice

(JACKSON, MN) – The bad news is that outage counts are increasing due to the wind and ice. However, ice is melting and falling off in spots as well, which lightens the load on the lines.

The good news is that the number of linemen coming to assist is increasing too. Federated appreciates help from four Iowa electric cooperatives that are sending a total of 18 linemen. Contractor Karian Peterson is sending nine linemen. Federated anticipates they will arrive early this evening, depending on the roads and weather.

Great River Energy (GRE) provides wholesale power and owns the transmission lines that serve most of Federated's substations. In Federated's service area, about 51 transmission lines poles are broken. GRE expects restoration to take three to five days for the transmission lines. 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.

The bad news is that Federated has about 300 poles down, mainly on the north south roads. Semis with poles will be arriving today, along with other materials to rebuild the lines.

Stretches of line that are down include:

- Eight miles from north of Lakefield to the Wilder substation.
- North of the Round Lake substation
- South of Okabena four miles and three miles west of Okabena

The number of substations without power increased to six: Enterprise, West Lakefield, Minneota, Round Lake, Wisconsin and Ceylon. The outage count was at 2,700, but is now at 2,500 as of 2:30 p.m.

“For the line crews it feels like one step forward and two steps back,” stated Operations Manager Joe Marthaler. “They get an area on and then another one goes off. It will likely take days to get all power restored. Please plan accordingly.”

Federated will bring their line crews in by 6 p.m. Thursday to get a good night's sleep as they have been working for nearly 48 hours. If you do not have power restored by 6 p.m. it probably won't occur today. Crews will start at 6 a.m. Friday morning restoring power again.

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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