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WA-18

Manager's Message

I want to use this article to thank your PUD employees for their efforts and dedication in January.

From January 20-31, your line crews and the staff that supports them were working in the worst frost conditions anyone can remember, as far back as 1985.

This frost started to build on the power lines in the area south of Bickleton, which is a common occurrence. However, as the days went on, the frost area affected expanded west to Centerville and then as far west as Appleton and Snowden.

Crews and support staff worked 16 hours a day knocking frost off power lines and repairing damaged poles, cross-arms and lines. Our line crews and staff fought the freezing fog for 10 days.

Just when we thought it was going to pass by, we were hit with freezing rain. Ice built up on our lines. Crews and staff continued on, battling more outages.

At one point, I counted 32 separate outages on the call response board in our operations area. Open the magazine to pages 4 and 5 to get an inside look at what conditions were like for the crews.

Our operations management team called in crews from our neighbors—Northern Wasco PUD, Skamania PUD and Cowlitz PUD—to help repair the damage. On January 29-30, our crews worked more than 36 hours straight to get power back on to as many customers as possible. This was after working 16-hour days the previous week.

We had many of our staff answering phones around the clock, delivering

food to the crews, troubleshooting outage reports, ordering and preparing materials for the repair jobs, and doing the many logistical support processes necessary during emergency situations.

Fortunately, the freezing rain passed and we had power restored to 99 percent of our customers by Friday night, January 31.

Roosevelt was especially hit hard due to protection issues at Bonneville Power Administration's Rock Creek Substation. The town experienced multiple outages three days in a row, one of which lasted 14 hours. Throughout the weekend, our technical staff assisted as BPA corrected problems.

I am proud of your Klickitat PUD team. When weather gets bad and most folks hunker down at home as school and services are canceled, many times your PUD employees are heading the other way—back toward work to ensure problems are repaired quickly and efficiently, leaving their families home without them.

Thank you also to our customers for the many, many calls of support for our employees. We pass along those thoughts to the people who are working out in the field and in the office, and I know they thank you for your support as well.



Jim Smith, General Manager