



CURRENT CONNECTION

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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August 2022 Volume 74 Number 8

Clearing the Way – Meet Crow Wing Power’s Brushing Crew >>>

The abundance of trees and lakes in our service area makes it a desirable place to live, however, we’ve learned if you want reliable and efficient electricity, you need an aggressive Rights-of-Way (ROW) maintenance program.

To do that we have six full-time employees in the ROW Department, and we’ve contracted with New Age Tree Service for the past 15 years, to help maintain clear corridors for our approximate 2,100 miles of overhead power lines. We strive to sustain a six to seven-year rotation schedule where we revisit and maintain power line corridors.

The recent powerful storms have made us all more conscientious of ‘danger’ trees, as is evident by the number of tree concerns called in by members, lately. Historically, we receive 50 to 60 tree orders a month — lately that number has tripled.

To maintain a reasonable right-of-way, 30 to 40 feet of ground to cloud clearance is needed around powerlines — (15 to 20 feet on each side of the power line).

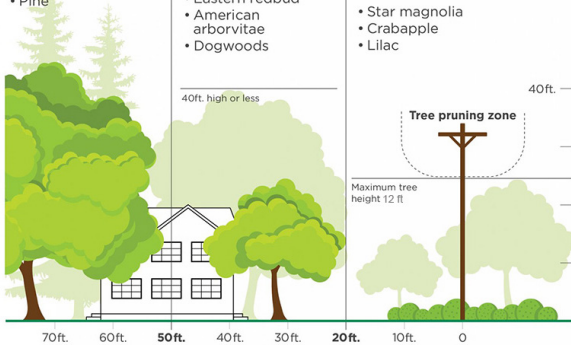
>> Land of 10,000 Lakes and *362.4 million trees – Pequot Lakes fire tower (*USDA Forest Service)

When we’re preparing to be in your area to clear the rights of way, we’ll send you a letter and encourage you at that time to call and share any special needs or concerns you may have.

Trees provide great value for conserving energy, by acting as winter wind barriers or creating summer shade. When planting trees, be aware of their placement and growth potential. >> *Continued on Pg. 3*

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| LARGE TREES | MEDIUM TREES | SMALL TREES |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Height/spread of more than 40 feet, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maple • Birch • Oak • Sweetgum • Spruce • Linden • Pine | <p>Height/spread of 25 to 40 feet, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington hawthorn • Goldenrain tree • Eastern redbud • American arborvitae • Dogwoods | <p><i>Avoid planting within 20 feet of power lines. When planting within 20 feet is unavoidable, use only shrubs and small trees.</i></p> <p>Height/spread of no more than 12 feet such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Star magnolia • Crabapple • Lilac |
|  | | |
| <p>Be safe! Always call 811 before you dig to locate any buried utility lines.</p> <p><small>Source: The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association</small></p> | | |



A WORD FROM YOUR CEO

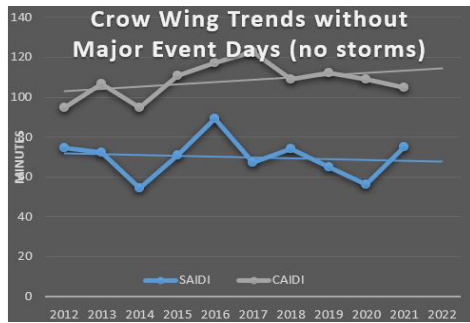
Converting Overhead Power to Underground – Why or why not? >>>

We fully understand the frustrations that a number of members may have after four substantial storms hit our service area since Mother’s Day, knocking out power multiple times for some.

These major storm events are not ‘normal’ and for many, the number of outages so far this year may be more than they’ve had all together in the past five to six years.

The recent storms have caused a great amount of damage from downed trees and wind. It certainly begs the question, ‘Why don’t you just bury all the power lines?’

Generally we install underground power in new greenspace real estate developments because it’s cost effective. Converting existing power lines to underground is a different story.



There are many factors that come into play when looking at converting overhead power lines to underground. Location, distance, how certain power lines connect to the rest of our system and the amount of real estate in an area are just some of the considerations. For instance in areas with numerous homes and paved driveways, directional boring is required, which is much more costly than using a direct-bury cable plow.

Some areas are already congested with other utilities’ underground fiber, cable and gas and adequate above ground space is needed for large green boxes such as pad mount transformers, cabinets and switch gear.

A little under 50% of our power lines are overhead. We calculate it would cost over \$200 million to convert our overhead lines to underground, which would require a significant rate increase for all members.

It’s not only conversion costs. Underground power lines can make routine maintenance of the system more difficult, and underground outages usually take much longer to determine the cause and restore, particularly in the winter.

We track our system reliability using a standard utility-wide outage reporting program that measures duration and frequency of power outages.

(This article references storms prior to July 25 - press time.)

I’ll keep you informed,

Bruce L. Kraemer, CEO

Join Us October 4-6 for a Trip to Bismark, ND >>>



It’s back — the Basin Electric Tour. You’re invited to a 3-day, 2-night trip to Bismark, ND to see where some of your electricity is generated. The trip is scheduled for October 4 -6. The cost is \$150 per person and includes two nights lodging, four meals and an educational and interesting tour. Seating is limited to 48 people. To sign up, come into the office to pick up a registration form, or find a printable form at www.cwpower.com. No phone reservations—mail only please.



Board Meeting Highlights

Crow Wing Power’s Board of Directors conducted its regular monthly meeting Thursday, June 16, 2022.

A quorum of directors was present.

President Bob Kangas opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following reports were given:

- CEO report
- Finance Committee report
- Directors shared highlights of meetings attended on behalf of the cooperative
- May storm review

The following actions were taken:

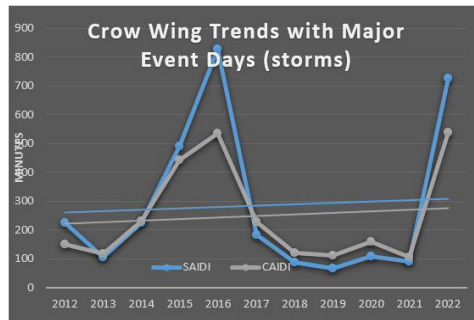
The Board approved:

- June Consent Agenda
- Minutes of the May 19, 2022 regular board meeting
- Minutes of the June 11, 2022 Board of Directors reorganization meeting
- Director expense reports for May 2022

Members can review detailed minutes by

logging into their SmartHub account. Log in is located on the home page of our website.

July minutes will be published after approval in August. The next board meeting is August 18, 2022.



This chart clearly represents what happened during the major storms of 2015 - 2016 and now 2022.

SAIDI: System Average Interruption Duration Index describes the total duration of the average customer interruption in minutes.

CAIDI: Customer Average Interruption Duration Index describes the average time in minutes required to restore service. Unlike SAIDI, CAIDI includes only customers who actually experienced an interruption

Celebrating YOU at the Zoo!

Crow Wing Power Members are invited to the Safari North Wildlife Park with a **FREE** admission which includes a Safari Train Ride and additional attraction discounts.

September 17 or 18

Park Hours 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

for admission, please choose one day to attend and let park staff know you are a Crow Wing Power member to receive your wristband



Pancakes were Flying and Cooperative Members were Appreciated >>>



Breakfast and a show? While those two typically don't go together, pancakes and Crow Wing Power do. This year's member appreciation event looked different than it has in years past, but Crow Wing Power welcomed back Chris Cakes, the world-famous pancake flipper extraordinaire, after a three-year pause due to concerns around the pandemic.

The event was held on July 23, at the Curling Club located at the Crow Wing County fairgrounds. Members young and old attended where they were happy to connect over pancakes and smiles. Thank you to all our members, we appreciate you. Our next member celebration event will be held in September at Safari North Wildlife Park.

Clearing the Way – Meet Crow Wing Power's Brushing Crew >>>

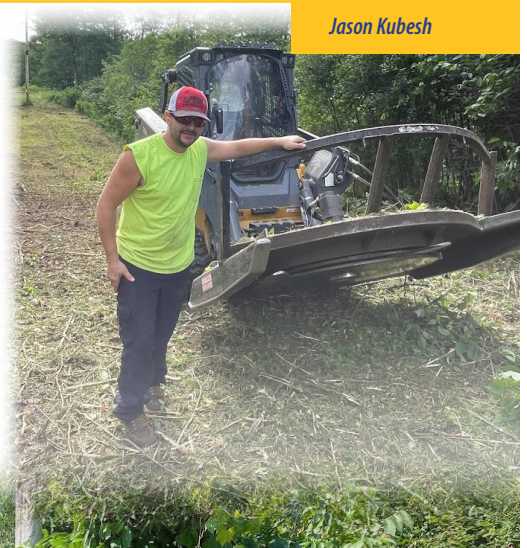
Continued from Pg. 1

On a day-to-day basis, ROW crews use chainsaws, skid steers, a brush hog mower deck, a tree shear, bucket trucks, trimmers and a wood chipper. Working around power lines is dangerous so they work diligently as a team.

During storm restorations where wind has toppled trees and power lines – the ROW crews many times lead the way ahead of linemen – clearing areas of downed trees, so line workers can safely and efficiently repair power lines.

One might ask, if we have wide powerline corridors why do trees and wind cause 10,000 people to lose power? It would be unreasonable to clear back to the point where trees won't hit power lines. That would be as much as 140 feet wide.

If you want to see the crews in action – we have a video on our website under the Environment tab showing the right-of-way maintenance process.



Jason Kubesh



Grant Wilkins

Tim Kish

Hey Puzzlers – Here’s some Trivia for You – Worth \$25 in a random draw >>>

We have quite a few loyal cruciverbalists out there, so we’re tossing you some puzzle trivia questions. Enter your answers online for your chance to win \$25 in an extra trivia drawing. (We’ll put the questions and answers in our next October puzzle newsletter.)

- How many members do you think regularly enter the newsletter puzzle contest?
- Of that, how many do you think are mailed either with bill payments or separately?
- How many do you think are scanned and sent electronically to info@cwpower.com?
- What is the newest way to complete and submit a puzzle?
- Any suggestions to improve the Puzzler experience?

Go to cwpower.com/current-connection-newsletters and click on Trivia Contest – the questions will be on an online form to submit by September 15. One lucky Trivia entrant will win \$25.



SCAM ALERT

Be cautious with your personal information. Crow Wing Power will not ask for your banking or credit card information. Go to cwpower.com for more information.

Puzzlers – Enter to Win one of Three \$25 bill credits! >>>

Yes, because puzzlers are so loyal, we’ve increased your chances from one drawing to three! Complete the bi-monthly puzzle below and send it back to us by September 15. Scan and email to info@cwpower.com. Send it in with your bill. Or go to cwpower.com/current-connection-newsletters and click on August Online Puzzle.

Our winner for the last puzzle: James Mitchell, Fridley

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Acct number _____

CURRENT CONNECTION

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Editor: Char Kinzer

Board meetings are held the third Thursday of each month beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Directors. Here to Help!

Following is a list of directors and their telephone numbers:

- Bob Kangas218-587-4453
- Paul Koering.....218-851-9954
- Ric Larson.....218-546-5781
- Bryan McCulloch218-821-8390
- LuAnn Nelson612-400-4627
- Giles Radtke218-839-9182
- Gert Roggenkamp218-562-4566
- Mark Ronnei.....218-821-4050
- Dwight Thiesse.....218-831-8605

Use the clues to fill in the words above. Words can go across or down. Letters are shared when the words intersect.

ACROSS

2. How many Crow Wing Power Board Members
5. CEO
9. Month of zoo day
10. Number of puzzle drawings we used to have
11. Rights-of-Way crews use

DOWN

1. Chris Cakes flips
3. What costs \$150/person
4. Number of Tour days
6. Crow Wing Power website tab for ROW video
7. Admission to Zoo
8. Substantial storms since this day
9. Number of Rights of Way employees

June Crossword



June Puzzle Answers:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 4. Pancake Breakfast month | 1. Oldest age allowed in Twins clinic |
| 5. Brainerd Fire Chief | 2. Rolling blackouts are this type of power outage |
| 7. Month of second member appreciation event | 3. Number of years solar agreement is for |
| 11. Required to participate in Youth Clinic | 6. Number of fire departments received training |
| | 7. Twins have provided Youth Clinic for this many years |
| | 8. Acronym for our regional electric grid operator |
| | 9. Winner of Impact Grant |
| | 10. The April Puzzle was Word |