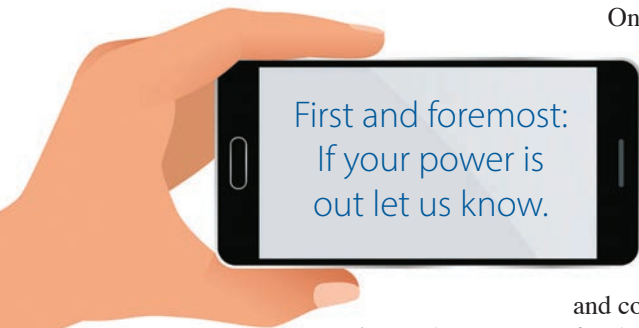




KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON



It has actually been a pretty good year for outages to date and yes, we know that mentioning that probably means we will pay for it. However, we've had a few localized outages in the last month and one loss of power from the mainland. With fall storms likely on the way, we figure it is a good time to go over the outage reporting procedure with all of you.



First and foremost: If your power is out let us know. You would think that this goes without saying; however, we don't necessarily know that the power is out unless someone calls and it is entirely possible that it could be only you. If you have a generator, don't just roll over and go back to sleep when you hear it running and then call us the next day because you have burned a whole bunch of propane (yes, this has actually happened). We are here to keep the lights on and coming out to get them back on is part of our job, but we can't do it

unless we know you are out.

Calling the cooperative at 920-847-2541 after hours will result in you getting our answering machine. On the machine you will have two options, #1 to leave a message and #2 to report an outage. Choosing #2 will forward the call to all four of our cell phones and whoever picks up first will dispatch the others to correct the problem.

Once you have reported the outage, we will be on our way. We won't know what the problem is or how long it will take to fix it until we find the problem on the lines. I won't speak for Mike, Don, or Mary, but I generally need to get dressed before I can get in my truck and come into the plant to start looking for the trouble.

In the case of an Island-wide outage, everyone will be out of power until we start the generators. This process generally takes between 20 to 30 minutes (and yes, this includes getting dressed). It is likely that many folks will be calling so it might be difficult to get through. Please be patient and try again a bit later if the lights do not come back on.

The bottom line is that we want you to call. We may sound short on the phone, or provide a quick answer and then hang up; however, rest assured we

are working to get the lights back on. Believe me when I tell you that we love getting a full night's sleep, but it is our job to get the lights back on no matter what time of day it is.


One additional word of advice: Before you call the second, or third, or fourth time to check progress, try turning a light on first. Believe it or not, we have had late afternoon outages where we restored the power shortly after dark and had to go out because someone's power was "still out," only to find that it was in fact on and they did not realize it. We would rather find this and laugh about it rather than have to deal with another issue, but it doesn't hurt to try a light switch or check your main breaker before calling.

That all-Island power outage? A tree went across lines just North of Ellison Bay at around 1:30 a.m. on Monday, September 12. We had the Island back on using generators approximately 30 minutes later. We ran on generators until just prior to 7 a.m. Wisconsin Public Service had numerous outages during the wind and rain and our particular outage involved 714 customers (our 1,084 meters count as only 1 of those customers). While we are lucky to have had power after 30 minutes while the rest waited 5 1/2 hours, we burned over 270 gallons of \$5-per-gallon fuel during that time.

ANNUAL MEETING AND OTHER UPDATES

By the time you read this (but not at the time of this writing!) our annual meeting and election will have been complete. We are back to our traditional format and location for this year and hopefully everyone who could enjoyed the brats and the chance at a door prize. We had a visitor this year, Rob Richard from the Wisconsin Electric Cooperative Association. We hope to have brief synopsis of the meeting as well as some photos in the November issue of the magazine.

After several requests from members, with the help of Courtney Cauldwell, we have now begun posting these middle pages on the cooperative's website, www.wiecoop.com. This way, when you are having difficulty sleeping, you will be able to go back and review this so called writing back to the first issue in January of 2020. We have also included on the website Mary Erickson's wonderful story of Dick Sheehy's experience being shot down over Yugoslavia in WWII.



Michels, cooperative, and Quantum crews running strand along main backbone.

Fiber Update:

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

At our urging, Nsight switched directions and hired Michels Construction to do the Island work, which meant that work began as soon as the fiber reached Northport. By the time you read this, the main backbone and co-location with Nsight should be complete from the Cellcom tower to the fiber shore landing and we may have even kept them on a bit to help us get ahead after all the delays. We facilitated the work at Northport as well as here on the Island with our equipment, material (to be replaced), and manpower. This made the job go pretty smoothly. Interestingly, other than the gravel crushing work Michels has done for the town over the years, the last time they did work here of any note was for GTE running phone cable in the 1960s. We would like to welcome them back!



Top row, left to right: Vacuum excavator begins opening the trench after the blacktop was removed. Conduit and duct safely located. Fiber duct cleaned and recoupled. Right: Filling the trench with gravel. Below right: Fiber being fed into the now cleared duct.

The work on the mainland went smoothly until they got to Northport and had to feed the fiber from the hand hole on the north side of the dock through the duct under the parking lot to the hand hole on the south side of the dock. These hand holes and ducts were installed in October of 2018 along with the 25kV cable to connect the new submarine cable that was energized in February of 2019. During installation, because of the amount of sand present, the tunnel created by the horizontal boring machine collapsed and KS lost the head to the bore. Not only did this need to be recovered, but we had to couple the conduit together and complete the pull back to the south. Bentonite is used to try and keep the tunnel open (much

At the time of this writing, Nsight has scheduled the splicing to occur on the mainland with their crews for the week of the 19th.

like drilling a vertical well) and the conduit and duct took on a fair amount of it. This caused us to later have to dig up the coupled location at Northport and clean out the conduit so that the cable could be pulled through it. This was done with the fiber duct as well, but after sitting for the last four years, evidently some residual bentonite settled in a low spot and caused difficulty again.

We brought a vacuum excavator truck in and attempted to suck water through the duct, hoping to dissolve the bentonite and clean it out quickly.

Unfortunately, this was not to be the case and we had to excavate the same hole that we opened in 2018. Because of how this equipment functions, using water to liquify the ground and then vacuuming it up, we were able to do this safely without de-energizing the cable running adjacent to the duct. Once we were down to the duct and opened it up, the equipment was able to make quick work of clearing the plug and we filled the hole and pulled the fiber through.

At the time of this writing, Nsight has scheduled the splicing to occur on the mainland with their crews for the week of the 19th. You will recall that the mainland route ran from the Cellcom tower in Gills Rock to the Ferry Dock. In addition, they have contracted with Quantum to accomplish the necessary backbone splicing here on the Island and they will begin as soon as they have the material. With any luck, we will have light here at the cooperative by the time you are reading this. Headend equipment has been programmed, tested, and shipped from NRTC's facility in Huntsville, AL, at the time of this writing as well and we expect to have it installed in the racks shortly after it arrives. We have a bit of material that has been





Left: Michels crews framing poles to pull up the strand.
Above: Michels, Quantum, and cooperative crews.

delayed because we missed signing a quote (we are blaming it on the Internet black hole, which really means it is my fault). This material is for the patch panel in the headend room and hopefully this issue will also be resolved by the time you read this. Calix and NRTC as well as Nsight will be here for startup and testing of the headend shortly after all the equipment has been installed and terminated.

In the meantime, we will be running drops to homes and businesses. For the grant that we have partnered with Nsight on, we need to have 25 drops complete in order to complete the work under the grant and we hope to have that done in October as well. Some of these will be the anchor institutions for which we accomplished network installation with Quantum and will have failover systems to existing connections while we test and finalize our system. We will then steadily begin

connecting all the other homes and businesses along the grant route as described in the bigger grant.

This will all take time and we will again have Karcz here helping us with running underground drops.

We have been warned that once we have the equipment up and running it will take a while for us to get all the connections stabilized, and those first connections will need to be patient with the service while the bugs are worked out. This is why those failovers will be critical and maintaining existing connections, no matter how bad, will be important for the very short term as we work out the issues that are inherent in anything new.

But...we are getting there! And, we should be making progress every day now rather than waiting...and waiting.... and waiting....



DC Power Supply and racking awaiting equipment being shipped from NRTC.

BROADBAND FUNDING AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEED TESTS

One last call for speed tests locally here on the Island and participation in the WISER survey. The links are on the cooperative's website and Facebook page.

We encourage everyone to participate in the State of Wisconsin's WISER survey to document service and document speeds.

The link for this survey is: <https://maps.psc.wi.gov/apps/WISER/index.html>

You can also take the survey by calling:
608-267-3595

<https://www.fibernetdoorcounty.org/>

Robert Cornell, Manager

1157 Main Road, Washington Island, WI 54246

920-847-2541

info@wiecoop.com

Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

