

Corn Belt Power sees record peak demand

It was a hot summer, and Corn Belt Power has the data to prove it. The cooperative set new records for peak demand in June and July. June's peak of 319.8 megawatts and July's 324.2 megawatts each set new monthly records. Jacob Olberding, vice president, power supply, Corn Belt Power, says prolonged high temperatures played a role in the record peaks.

"There were multiple days at or above 90 degrees leading up to the peak day in July," Olberding said. "The overnight low temperature during July's peak was in the mid-70s and the high temperature for the peak day was in the mid-90s, with high humidity. When members have their thermostats set in the low 70s, air conditioners rarely shut off. All of that adds to peak demand."

Olberding also says Corn Belt Power's commercial and industrial loads continue to grow.

"There was pretty strong load from our larger commercial and industrial members," he said. "Following a significant decrease in load caused by the pandemic, the ethanol plants on our system had not fully recovered by July 2020. As a result, our ethanol load was about 8.7 megawatts higher in July 2021 compared to July 2020. We also had new commercial and industrial loads on our system which accounted for an additional 6.5 megawatts in July 2021 compared to July 2020."

Jon Behounek, chief system operator, said the system worked as it was designed to.

"When we see these higher loads, we also tend to see lower voltage," he said. "That's caused by more resistance on the line

because everything from ethanol plants to air conditioning systems and water heaters are using power at the same time. We're able to use our SCADA system to close capacitor banks to help maintain system voltage. While this may have been a record for us, our system held up just fine."

Using its load management system, Corn Belt Power's membership realized more than \$300,000 worth of savings between June and July.

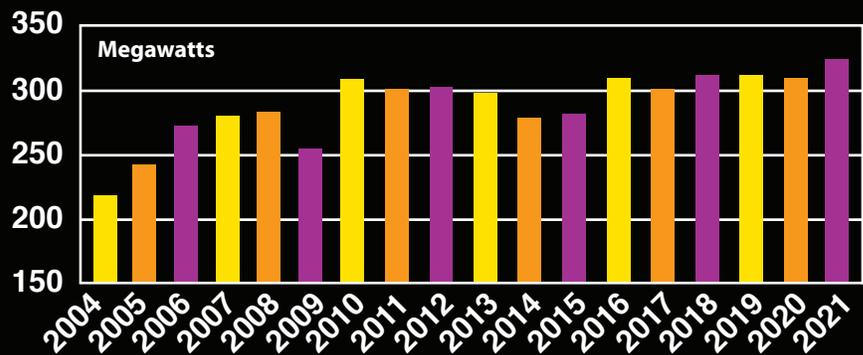
"We were able to shave 7.9 megawatts off the June peak day and 8.4 megawatts off July," Olberding said. "We appreciate the patience of our members and their efforts to try and reduce demand costs for their cooperatives. We know there can be a high volume of peak notifications on these days, however, we are able to see big benefits when we all work together to

reduce the peak."

High temperatures were not exclusive to the Corn Belt Power system, Southwest Power Pool (SPP) called a resource alert for its entire 14-state footprint on July 26-31. It also called for conservative operations on July 29. A resource alert is declared when severe weather conditions, significant outages, wind forecast uncertainty and/or load forecast uncertainty are expected. Conservative operations, the next step up on the reliability event chart, is called when SPP determines that there is a need to operate its system conservatively based on weather, environmental, operation, terrorist, cyber or other events. Neither event led to an energy emergency alert in July.

A full recap of system loads will be available in the cooperative's 2021 annual report. ■

Power in High Demand (July)



Above | Corn Belt Power saw record electricity demand in June and July. Prolonged high temperatures were the major contributing factor, leading to a July record of 324.2 megawatts.



Above | The Iowa Area Development Group honored Corn Belt Power with an IADG Impact Award for site development at the cooperative's August board meeting. Jim Vermeer, vice president, business development and Brittany Dickey, development finance director, Corn Belt Power Cooperative accept the award from Bruce Hansen, president, IADG and Carl Hanson, vice president, value added agriculture, IADG.

Corn Belt Power recognized for rural site development efforts

Iowa's rural electric cooperatives actively foster and utilize strategic partnerships to make significant contributions to economic sustainability and community vitality statewide. Iowa Area Development Group (IADG) annually recognizes its electric utility members for outstanding commitment, support, and participation in business development projects and community initiatives. During the recent Corn Belt Power Cooperative board meeting, the cooperative was recognized for its economic development accomplishments and commitment to the

distribution cooperatives and communities it serves.

Corn Belt Power Cooperative was presented with an IADG Impact Award for site development. Recent examples of Corn Belt Power's commitment to site development include support for the Calhoun County Business Park, the first in the county.

Corn Belt Power provided funding to aid in the purchase of 134 acres of property near Humboldt for future commercial and industrial growth, as well as additional property near the Butler Logistics Park. Corn

Belt Power also assisted with the expansion of the Estherville Industrial Park with a 40-acre expansion and is helping to answer the housing need in Spencer by supporting the Westfield housing development. This is a two and three-bedroom home development at the former Jacobson Trailer Park. Corn Belt Power also operates an estimated \$8 million Revolving Loan Fund to support business and community development projects across north-central Iowa.

IADG gave special recognition to Corn Belt Power's Vice President of Business Development, Jim Vermeer, for 23 years of service to the cooperative and the members they serve. Vermeer has been an integral part of the business support and community outreach efforts that account for much of the growth that continues to occur. In total, Vermeer was a part of the development or expansion of 16 industrial parks and the construction of 20 speculative buildings.

"We commend Corn Belt Power Cooperative for being an active supporter of business growth and community vitality," said IADG Vice President of Business Development, Bruce Hansen. "Corn Belt Power Cooperative's economic development efforts, led by Jim Vermeer, are shining examples of the active involvement and impactful support they provide to both existing and new businesses in their region and Iowa." ■

Graettinger benefits from REDLG program

Corn Belt Power Cooperative, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative and Homeward, Inc. each loaned \$50,000 to Graettinger Economic Development Council (EDC) on August 27th.

The loan funds are being used to purchase a house from Homes for Iowa, Inc., which are the homes built by Iowa Prison Industries in Newton. The three-bedroom, two-bath house will be brought to Graettinger in September and then finishing touches will be completed shortly after so they can put it up for sale.

Graettinger EDC has brought in over 20 new homes to the community and assisted with renovation on several others.



New Graettinger housing opportunity

Above | Corn Belt Power and Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative loan funds to Graettinger Economic Development Council for the purchase of a house built by Iowa Prison Industries in Newton. Photographed from left, Cheryl Rhead, Homeward, Inc.; J.R. Brown, Graettinger EDC; Jed Skogerboe, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative; Karen Spies, Graettinger EDC; and Brittany Dickey, Corn Belt Power Cooperative.

News in brief

Handlos elected to RVEC board

Raccoon Valley Electric Cooperative has a new board member. Members elected Adam Handlos, Glidden, to a three-year term during the September 7 annual meeting. Raccoon Valley Electric held a board/staff-only annual meeting and accepted ballots via mail.

Handlos replaces Mark Adams on the cooperative's board. There were no bylaw changes at the annual meeting and eight bill credits were given away as prizes.

Following the meeting, officers were elected as follows:

- Dave Onken, president
- Jeff Cranston, vice president
- Mark Ludwig, secretary/treasurer
- Karen Wener, assistant secretary/treasurer



Grundy holds annual meeting

After missing last year's annual meeting, Grundy County Rural Electric Cooperative held an in-person annual meeting on Thursday, September 9 at the co-op's headquarters.

Members in attendance ate pork burgers provided by the local pork producers, baked beans, potato salad and ice cream.

During the business meeting, Kevin Pruisner, treasurer, gave the financial report; Larry Rohach, president, provided a report; and Mike Geerdes, general manager, gave his first manager's report. Geerdes replaced Vicki Daily as general manager last year.

Norbert Boyle and Nick Strohbahn, both incumbents, ran unopposed and were re-elected for another three years. Officers were elected following the meeting as follows:

- Larry Rohach, president
- Jason Paper, vice president
- Nick Strohbahn, secretary
- Kevin Pruisner, treasurer
- Matt Kopriva, assistant secretary & treasurer
- David Schmidt & Norbert Boyle, directors



Grundy annual meeting

Above | On Thursday, Sept. 9, Mike Geerdes, executive vice president and general manager, Grundy County REC, gives his report as Larry Rohach, board president and Corn Belt Power secretary/treasurer; and Kevin Pruisner, board treasurer, watch. The meeting marked Geerdes's first report to Grundy County REC's membership. Geerdes took over for Vicki Daily following her 2020 retirement.

Corn Belt Power remains in strong financial condition

Kroll Bond Rating Agency (KBRA) affirmed its 'A' issuer credit rating for Corn Belt Power Cooperative and noted the outlook is stable.

In its ratings report, KBRA noted the stable rural economy of the Corn Belt Power service area is supportive of demand. Regional unemployment remains well below the national average and has shown relatively low volatility during periods of economic stress. The co-op's rural service base, which is dominated by the agricultural sector, has proven resilient to recessionary downturns. A recent trend of regional economic development is expected to support increased electricity sales and a stable load. CBPC added 12.57 MW of new and/or expanded load in 2020 to meet the continued expansion of businesses and industries.

KBRA noted the following as positive rating factors:

- Corn Belt Power's members are required to purchase essentially all power requirements from Corn Belt Power subject to take and pay contracts extending through 2075.
- Corn Belt Power is not state-regulated. It sets its own rates which it can implement within a monthly period. Corn Belt Power's firm service territory boundaries are statutorily set.

KBRA noted the following as potential credit challenges:

- Although Corn Belt Power and Basin have taken steps to diversify their respective energy portfolios, both remain highly dependent on coal-fired power.
- The number of ultimate customers is small relative to Corn Belt Power's peers.

Rating sensitivities include:

- Ongoing load growth that results in consistently stronger financial metrics would be a positive credit factor.
- Significant reductions in average cost to members resulting from generation efficiencies on the part of Basin and/or Corn Belt Power would be a positive credit factor.
- Debt service and TIER that are consistently lower than 1.1x and 1.2x, respectively would be a negative credit factor.
- Regulatory costs that necessitate non-competitive or unaffordable rate increases would be a negative credit factor. ■

Collin Weber, energy services engineer, Corn Belt Power, demonstrates the cooperative's new acoustic imaging camera to a group of co-op energy advisors. The camera identifies air leaks and can also pinpoint corona, or electrical discharge in the atmosphere, at substations. This will help Corn Belt Power identify potential issues inside substations.

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September Touchstone Energy Volunteer Challenge winner | Jeremy Madden, energy advisor, Iowa Lakes Electric Cooperative, donated his \$100 prize drawing to the Emmetsburg Booster Club. Congratulations!



Jon Myer

The power of human connections

Jon Myer, IT administrator, Corn Belt Power Cooperative, demonstrates the Touchstone Energy value of commitment to community by helping with various youth sporting events. "I enjoy getting to spend time with not only my kids but their friends and teammates, too. Being a part of a tight-knit community has led to many great volunteer opportunities."

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OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

Corn Belt Power Cooperative **Watts Watt**

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