

Fall 2006

*In this issue:*

Mutual Aid Honor	2
Employees Recognized	3
Venture Award to Ethanol Plant	3
Crews Hit Maintenance Trail	4
Record Amount for United Way	5
Beacons Go on the Blink	5
On the Generation Trail	6
Director Spotlight	7
Last Switches Installed	8

## New Substations Needed to Serve Increasing Commercial & Industrial Load

NIPCO crews may be building new substations for some time to come.

Since 2004 NIPCO has built four new substations and doubled two existing subs. Three other subs are in the planning and construction stages. Requests for several more new substations remain a distinct possibility as plans for economic development projects — particularly ethanol and other alternate energy plants — move forward throughout western Iowa.

Siouxland Sub located west of Sioux Center and serving both an ethanol plant and an egg-breaking facility, went online as a 10 MVA

sub at the end of September, doubling its capacity. It was built as a 5 MVA sub in 2002.

At the other end of the system, Southern Sub, a newly constructed 10 MVA facility serving an Oakland meat processing plant, went into full service over the Labor Day weekend.

Although construction has not yet started, at least three new substations will be completed in 2007. A 5 MVA sub — to be named Pleasant — will be constructed south of Interstate 80 in Shelby County for a large Menard’s manufacturing and warehousing complex. The second sub will serve a new Verasun ethanol plant near Hartley. The size of the Hartley Ethanol substation has yet to be determined. The third sub, authorized at the NIPCO board’s November meeting, will be constructed about five miles north of Sioux Center in Sioux County to serve growing demand, including a possible anaerobic digester plant. This sub will be constructed as a 5 MVA sub with the possibility of being expanded when need arises.



*Linemen from North West REC and NIPCO rewire Siouxland Sub as it is doubled in capacity to 10 MVA. From left are Rob Driesen and Phil Elgersma, both of North West REC, and NIPCO’s Steve Harringa and Chad Marcotte.*

See “Construction” page 5

## East River Honors Utilities for 2005 Storm Damage Assistance

East River Electric Power Cooperative recognized Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative and eight other utilities for helping to restore power after the devastating Nov. 27-28, 2005 ice storm in eastern South Dakota. The utilities all received East River's Eminent Service Award.

The award recipients were honored by the East River Board of Directors during the regional power supplier's 56th annual meeting on Sept. 6.

East River Board President Wayne Wright presented the awards to the utilities that sent employees and equipment, which were instrumental in helping East River replace 1,200 destroyed power poles and repair hundreds of miles



*NIPCO's Tim Harrison, left, and Steve Ver Mulm, right, accept a plaque from East River's Wayne Wright, board president.*

of transmission lines impacted by the ice storm and blizzard.

"These dedicated professionals from seven electric cooperatives

and two neighboring utilities battled through ice, deep snow and subzero temperatures, helping East River's workforce to restore power following the worst storm in East River history," Wright said. "In recognition of your exemplary service in providing mutual aid after the disastrous ice storm and in helping to restore our transmission system, the East River Board is pleased to bestow its highest recognition — The Eminent Service Award."

Accepting the award for NIPCO were Steve Ver Mulm, vice president of engineering and operations, and Tim Harrison, transmission superintendent. Six of NIPCO's line crew members spent 10 days helping East River restore power last November and December. ❖



*Construction workers pave the southbound lanes of U.S. 75 in NIPCO's front yard in mid-September. Access to NIPCO headquarters has been via a temporary road since April. In late October, construction crews began rebuilding NIPCO's driveway on County Road C-38.*

## Amaizing Energy Tapped for Venture Award

Amaizing Energy, an ethanol plant located near Denison, is one of 10 distinguished Iowa companies honored with the Iowa Venture Award.

The winners are selected for their commitment to Iowa through capital investment and job creation.

Amaizing Energy, a member of Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative, produces 60 million gallons of ethanol each year. Local leaders and 383 investors have helped fuel Amaizing Energy's success as it contributes to Iowa's national leadership role in the ethanol industry.

The new plant employs more than 30 people and has already exceeded performance goals as the facility managers actively seek new technologies and efficiencies to enhance and expand production. Amaizing Energy was nominated for the award by Harrison County REC.

Since 1988 IADG has recognized more than 150 of Iowa's leading companies with the Iowa Venture Awards.

The 2007 Iowa Venture Awards ceremony was held at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting in Des Moines. ❖



One of 10 Iowa Venture Awards was presented to Amaizing Energy of Denison. From left are Representative Clarence Hoffman; Kay Anderson, Economic Development Director, Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative; David Reisz, Director, Amaizing Energy; Dave Stevens, Director, Amaizing Energy; John Burbridge, President, Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative; Joe Farley, Manager, Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative; Becky Constant, Director, Amaizing Energy; Sam Cogdill, President, Amaizing Energy; Marvin Klein, Director, Harrison County Rural Electric Cooperative; Bill Hammit, Director, Amaizing Energy; Ann Delanty, Director, Amaizing Energy; Gene Gochenour, Director, Amaizing Energy; and Rand Fisher, President, IADG.



Three NIPCO employees were recognized at the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives' annual meeting for 25 years of service. From left are Gerry Freml, Harlan crew foreman; Gerald Klemme of Le Mars, IAEC board president, who presented the awards; Elvira Nielsen, receptionist, and Doug Nemmers, senior accountant. ❖

## Crews Focus On Maintenance

While construction of new substations occupied NIPCO crews during spring, summer and early fall, completion of some new projects and a change of seasons has turned work toward maintenance of the transmission system.

A dozen damaged or rejected poles have been changed out in Plymouth, Sioux, Woodbury and Cherokee counties. Crews also are straightening leaning poles before freezing ground makes that task impossible.

Trees are an ongoing maintenance issue and line workers fired up their chainsaws to cut down trees and trim branches.

Apparatus crews replaced 230 kv lightning arrestors on one Eagle Substation transformer.

On the southern half of the NIPCO system, the outpost crews have concentrated on strengthening the grounds on fiber optic cable. Many of the straps securing the ground wire have been broken by strong winds. Heavier straps are being installed to merge the fiber grounds with the pole top ground wire.

The Onawa outpost crew painted and made improvements this fall on the Salix Junction substation building, preparing it to become NIPCO's emergency control center. They also poured a cement pad for the substation's new standby generator.

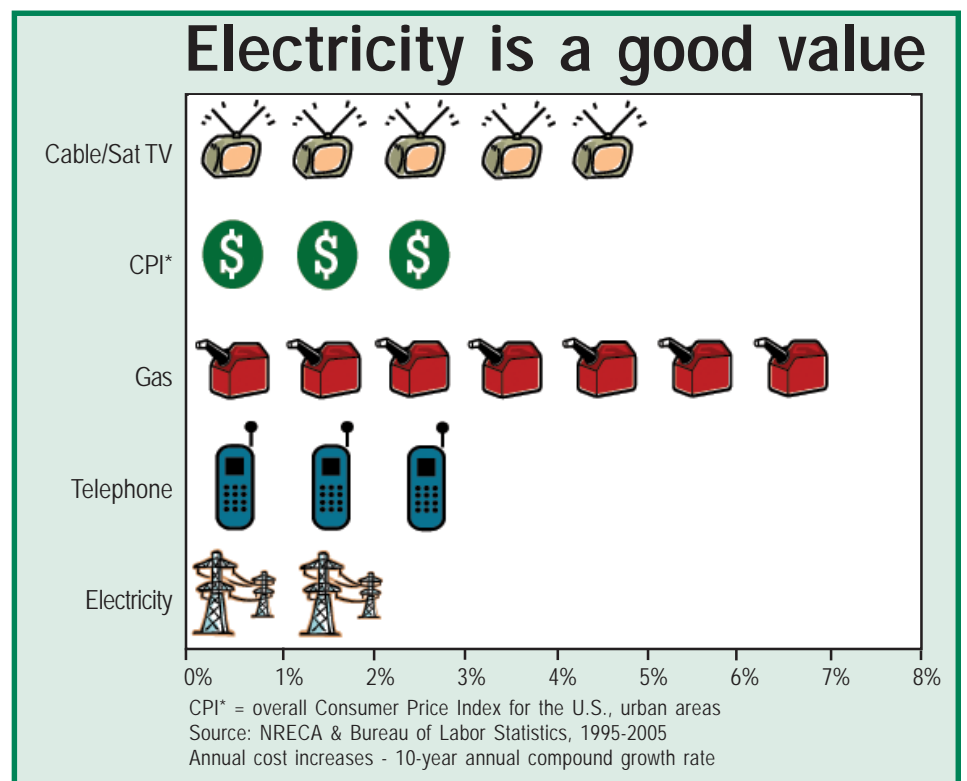


NIPCO crews replace a damaged transmission pole along a dirt road in Cherokee County before winter makes the repair impossible. From left are Steve Harringa, Chad Marcotte, Tom Berkenpas and Roger Armstrong (hidden by the crossarms).

Crews also replaced bearings at K stations in Plymouth and Shelby counties.

The crews assisted two municipal systems with projects this fall. NIPCO crews installed the mobile

sub at Aurelia where they helped the municipal crew replace the town's 2,500-KVA transformer with a 3,500-KVA model. In Sioux Center, NIPCO crews installed the mobile sub while a load tap changer was rebuilt. ❖



## NIPCO, Employees Raise Record For United Way

NIPCO and its participating employees increased giving to United Way more than 18 percent for the coming year.

The employee campaign, conducted during October, raised \$3,754. NIPCO added \$1,100 for a total \$4,854 raised for the agency which supports a variety of community services in Plymouth County. Eighty-two percent of NIPCO employees contributed to the campaign.

NIPCO employees who contributed to the campaign are eligible for drawings for NIPCO garments and extra vacation time.

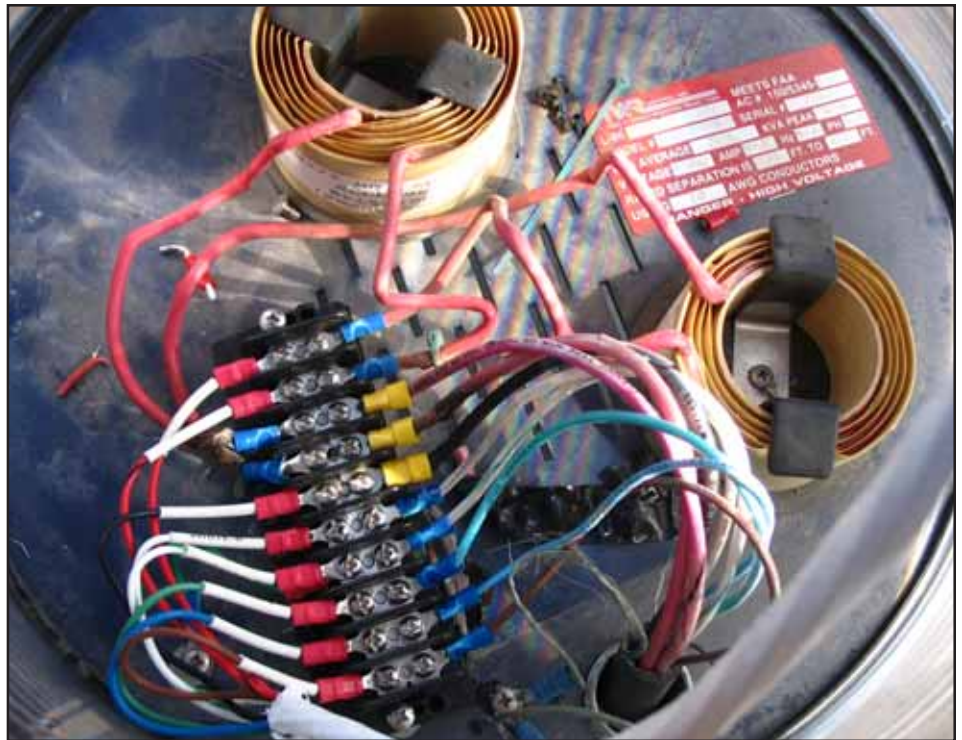
NIPCO and its employees have participated in the campaign since 1995 and together have raised \$38,147 for the United Way.❖

## Construction

*continued from page 1*

In addition, plans are underway for the Adaville tap line in Plymouth County to be rebuilt.

NIPCO currently has 73 distribution substations. Four are 10 MVA, five are 7 MVA, 33 are 5 MVA and 30 are below 5 MVA, ranging from 2.5 to 3.75 MVA. One substation in Pottawattamie County is not currently in use.❖



*The third and fourth wire connections from the top show arcing damage, which prevented some NIPCO radio tower beacons from working properly.*

## Flashing Lights Go On the Blink

New flashing red-and-white beacons atop NIPCO's nine radio towers in western Iowa have been on the blink.

Installed in 2003 and 2004 to replace original 45-year-old aircraft warning lights on the towers, some of the new lights began failing to produce the daytime flashing white lights.

Dennis Hill, NIPCO vice president of telecommunications services, said that a design flaw within the lights' circuitry allowed power to arc, melting portions of the wiring and shorting out the lights.

The manufacturer of the lights has modified the design and supplied NIPCO with new replacement pieces. NIPCO has contracted with Calhoun Com-

munications of Sioux City to install the modifications. In the past NIPCO crews would have climbed the towers to make the repairs. However, only one current NIPCO employee climbs towers. Hill explained that for safety, climbers should work in pairs, so NIPCO now will contract with tower service companies for work that requires climbing.❖

## Renewable Energy Update

Renewable energy block sales in NIPCO's service territory continue to climb. In October, 688 100-kWh blocks were sold compared to 552 the previous October.❖

## Electric Co-op Members Go to Source of Power

Members of the NIPCO-area cooperatives went right to the source of their electric power this summer.

Three educational power supply tours were sponsored by NIPCO and its member cooperatives. Tour participants traveled 1,400 miles by bus to learn more about how their electric power is produced.

In addition to the educational portion of the tour, members enjoyed good food and fellowship.

At the Oahe Power House near Pierre, S.D., participants had the opportunity to try their skill at controlling the Missouri River during adverse weather condi-

tions. The interactive display shows the many different considerations the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has to take when operating the dams.

On the second day of the tour in west-central North Dakota, the members were amazed at the number of products that are made from lignite coal at the Great Plains Synfuels plant. Electric power and natural gas are the principle products, but there are also many other chemicals, fertilizers, and adhesives, as well as CO<sub>2</sub> which are piped to Canada and used for oil recovery.

Another highlight of the tour is a visit to the adjoining coal mine.

Seeing some of the largest equipment in the United States in operation is spectacular. Most groups have the opportunity to ride the tour bus right into the mine for a close-up view of coal being loaded onto gigantic coal hauling trucks. The members were pleased to know there is enough coal for generations to come and to see the successful results of reclamation of the land after mining is complete. The land is carefully returned to either natural prairie or cropland, depending on its original use. Often members catch a glimpse of the herd of antelope that graze on the reclaimed acres.

The tour participants also had the opportunity to tour Antelope Valley Station, part of Basin Electric's network of coal-fired electric generating stations. They learned how coal is used to produce electricity, and how Basin Electric safeguards the environment.

In addition to the tours, the members get a brief look at electric cooperative history, and gain new understanding and pride in their ownership of the cooperative. The tours are part of the Cooperatives' commitment to provide education for directors, employees and member-owners. ❖



*An electric cooperative member snaps a photo of the huge dragline which uncovers lignite coal near Antelope Valley Station in North Dakota, one of several coal-fired generating stations providing power to NIPCO-area cooperative members.*

## NIPCO's Board President Grew Up on Co-op Served Farm

NIPCO board president Alan Lucken has been involved in cooperatives a long time.

The Akron-area farmer was appointed to fill an unexpired director term of his distribution cooperative in 1985 when it was Plymouth Electric Cooperative. Before that he spent about 15 years as a member of his local farmers' cooperative.

Lucken served as vice president of Plymouth Electric in 1992, and the following year, was appointed as Plymouth's NIPCO representative. He was elected president of NIPCO's board in 1996.

When Plymouth Electric and Ida County REC became parts of North West REC in 1998, he became vice president of the North West board. North West REC was formed by the consolidation of O'Brien County REC and Sioux Electric Cooperative Association in 1993.

The electric cooperative was always a presence in Lucken's life. He grew up on the family farm northeast of Akron. The land had been owned first by his grandfather, and later by his father. The third generation of his family on the farm, Lucken is semi-retired but still raises corn and soybeans on its 400 acres. In addition, he is Plymouth County zoning administrator. He and his wife Marjorie have a son, Kent, and two grandchildren, in Boston.

Lucken said he thinks the electric lines were built in his area about 1939. Before the electric lines were built in that area his parents had a small generator which provided some electricity for just the house.

Always interested in the electric cooperative business, Lucken considered the opportunity to be a co-op director both interesting and challenging. The biggest change during his tenure as a distribution cooperative director has been the increase in size as Plymouth Electric merged with three other counties.

"Everything is on a larger scale now," he said. "At Plymouth Electric we had a closer relationship with the employees. Now, spread out as far as we are, we don't know all the employees. That's just one of the issues when you're a larger organization."

The merger itself was beneficial for all the distribution co-op patrons in the four counties, Lucken added. "We've had rate stability for 22 years, which is a major accomplishment."



*Alan Lucken has served as president of NIPCO's board since 1996. He represents North West Rural Electric Cooperative.*

One thing Lucken has found surprising is the emphasis on economic development in recent years. "It's a huge focus for us now," he said. Both the distribution cooperative and NIPCO have been heavily involved in providing financial assistance to both start-up and expanding businesses. In the future, Lucken said, he expects the cooperative directors to be involved more heavily in environmental issues and wind power.❖

**Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative**  
**P. O. Box 240**  
**Le Mars, Iowa 51031-0240**

## **NETWORK NEWS**

*Published by*  
Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative  
P. O. Box 240, 31002 County Road C38  
Le Mars, Iowa 51031-0240  
712-546-4141  
[www.nipco.coop](http://www.nipco.coop)

**Kent D. Pauling**, *Executive Vice President and General Manager*  
**Cathie Shively**, *Editor, Member & Public Relations Manager*  
**Ken Klaver**, *Asst. Editor/Design, Graphic Designer*

## **Last Load Management Transmitters Installed**

The last of 13 new load management transmitters has been installed at stations across the NIPCO system. The new transmitters—containing transistors and integrated circuits—replaced 25-year-old transmitters made with tubes. These new transmitters, like the one here, relay load control signals sent via fiber optic cable from NIPCO's control center to the individual consumer load management switches. The new transmitters can be tested remotely from the NIPCO headquarters to determine if they are working. ❖

