

BREMCO Says Local Demand at All-Time High

Written by Renee R. Whitener
Tuesday, 07 January 2014 07:41

Linemen with Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation are restoring the final outages that occurred Tuesday morning in Caldwell, Watauga, Ashe and Alleghany counties.

Record-cold temperatures combined with high winds affected power for about 500 members this morning. As of noon, linemen were working to restore the final 53 members: 49 members in Ashe County, two in Caldwell, and one in Watauga. Outages have been scattered across the system, beginning at 2:30 a.m.

With temperatures dropping to their lowest in years in the cooperative's service area, demand for electricity--primarily due to heating needs--is more than 10 percent higher than normal for this time of year.

"Our load today reached a new all-time peak of 383 megawatts of usage, which is 12 percent above our previous peak of 340 megawatts which occurred January 16, 2009," said Lee Layton, chief operating officer of Blue Ridge Electric.

BREMCO Says Local Demand at All-Time High

Written by Renee R. Whitener
Tuesday, 07 January 2014 07:41

"Even with the high demand, our electric system was very dependable," said Layton. "We were very lucky there was no ice or heavy, wet snow during this cold front," he added "Ice and heavy snow, along with high winds, are the most damaging threats to power systems," he explained.

"I'm also very proud of our crews and all our employees who respond rapidly when outages occur," said Layton. "They have a huge commitment to getting the heat and lights back on for our members and they don't hesitate to respond, no matter the hour. They take a lot of pride in getting power restored as quickly and safely as possible."

Members should report all outages to the cooperative's PowerLine: 1-800-448-2383.

The cooperative provides an online outage map at www.BlueRidgeEMC.com to check outage status at any time. During major outages, information is also shared on the cooperative's social media sites: [ww](#)

w.facebook.com/blueridgeemc

and

www.twitter.com/blueridgeemc

The public is also reminded of the danger of downed power lines. Downed power lines can still be energized and therefore dangerous or even deadly and only a trained line technician should ever go near a downed line. Please report downed power lines to Blue Ridge Electric as quickly as possible.

Blue Ridge Electric serves some 74,000 members in Caldwell, Watauga, Ashe, Alleghany, Wilkes, Avery and Alexander counties. For more information, visit www.BlueRidgeEMC.com.