

# NEWS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release



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Date: March 31, 2006

Subject: Storm Downs 18 Transmission Poles

The early spring storm that hit Siouxland Thursday afternoon downed 18 high-voltage electric transmission poles owned by Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative southeast of Sergeant Bluff.

The 69,000-volt line went down across 240<sup>th</sup> Street and near 220<sup>th</sup> Street, causing outages ranging from 19 to 40 minutes.

Tim Harrison, NIPCO's transmission superintendent, said 18 60-foot wood poles were broken off by what appeared to be straight-line winds. Fourteen consecutive poles were broken on either side of 240<sup>th</sup> Street, leaving the high-voltage conductor lying on the gravel road. The road was closed and remained closed to traffic Friday while NIPCO line crews installed two temporary poles on either side of 240<sup>th</sup> Street to get the conductor off the road. The Bronson Fire Department, Woodbury County Sheriff's Office and Woodbury County Highway Department all aided in traffic control.

NIPCO's control center at its Le Mars headquarters noted trouble on the lines at 3:52 p.m. as the storm hit the Siouxland area. Electric service to NIPCO's Concord, Lawton and Luton substations went out. Those substations provide electricity to customers of Woodbury County Rural Electric Cooperative.

Service was restored to the Luton substation by NIPCO's control center 19 minutes later. Service to the Concord and Lawton substations was restored after 40 minutes when the switch was manually opened.

Harrison said that the broken poles will be replaced after the ground dries out. The fields where the poles are broken are deep in mud from the storm and last week's snow.

The same storm caused outages at two other NIPCO substations. Later that evening, crews secured a cracked pole near Remsen. There was an outage lasting less than a minute. At Schleswig, the storm tangled a line. A lineman was sent to the scene to manually untangle the power line. Service was restored after an outage of one hour, 13 minutes.

NIPCO, a Touchstone Energy cooperative headquartered in Le Mars, is a wholesale electric generation and transmission cooperative owned by six rural electric cooperatives and a full-service municipal electric cooperative serving six western Iowa towns. Touchstone Energy is a national

alliance of local, consumer-owned electric cooperatives providing high standards of service to customers large and small. More than 620 Touchstone Energy cooperatives in 44 states are delivering energy and energy solutions to more than 22 million customers every day. Touchstone Energy cooperatives serve their members with integrity, accountability, innovation and a long-standing commitment to communities.

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