



REC Responds after HISTORIC SNOWSTORM INFLICTS MASSIVE DAMAGE

Brian MacAdam of the Chilesburg area of Caroline County surveyed the storm damage, eyed the line crews and just looked on in wonder.

“I’m with law enforcement,” said MacAdam, a member-owner of Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC). “So I understand what these guys go through. I can’t thank them enough – being out there in the cold, being away from their families, and so many of them have come from different states. It is much appreciated.”

After Winter Storm Frida shook the electric grid to its core, nearly 100,000 REC members lost power, including the families of many of the linemen working to restore service.

REC Line Foreman Thomas Bailey said the thought of members sitting in the dark and the cold kept his crews motivated to restore service as quickly and safely as possible.

“We thank all the members so much for being so patient,” Bailey said. “We were not going to stop until everybody’s power was back on.”

Casey Hollins, Managing Director – Communications and Public Relations, said the storm was historic in terms of its damage and the number of outages.

Besides mutual-aid crews, REC also welcomed back some recent retirees to support workers in the field. “I retired back in 2019,” said Kevin Jordan. “I was on the construction and operations side for 44 years, and this is probably as bad as I’ve seen.”



Winter Storm Frida: One for the History Books

| Winter Storm Frida will be talked about for decades to come:

- At times, **heavy wet snow fell at a rate close to 3 inches per hour**, totaling more than a foot in some places.
- REC's field **work force swelled to more than 1,200 linemen, construction crews, tree crews and others**. REC maintains mutual-aid contracts year-round, which made this massive and speedy response possible. Mutual-aid crews came from 13 states and 55 other electric cooperatives.
- At the peak of the storm, **more than 98,000 member-owners had lost power**. REC deployed a helicopter in some locations to speed up the damage assessment process.
- The **storm caused damage that broke more than 600 poles**. Pole replacements take anywhere from a couple of hours to several hours, and many required specialized heavy equipment to reach snow- and mud-covered rights of way.
- The storm created **more than 1,200 individual damage sites**. Each of those sites required at least one crew visit, often several, and some of the repairs related to each event took a half day or more to complete. In one Louisa County outage, for instance, **an outage affecting two members required nine pole replacements**.
- The **heavy wet snow toppled thousands of trees**. Dozens of tree contractors and mutual aid workers assisted REC's foresters and tree crews to clear all the damage as fast as possible.
- Ground conditions and other obstacles **required specialized equipment** such as track machines and all-terrain vehicles.
- Field workers spent **16-hour shifts** walking mile-long rights of way, climbing poles and restoring service for 9 straight days.
- Because REC plans in advance, **your Cooperative had plenty of resources** such as poles, transformers and wire to make needed repairs. Additional deliveries during storm restoration replenished those supplies so that REC remains prepared for future outage events.

