

NORA News



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Inclement Weather Decimates Transmission Poles



In December 2021, the service area for Northern Rio Arriba Electric Cooperative experienced a series of winter storms which featured blizzard conditions including record breaking winds and heavy, wet snow. Unfortunately, these acts of Mother Nature had a devastating effect upon a number of transmission poles throughout the service area causing power outages.

The first outage occurred December 15th at approximately 5:30am. In troubleshooting the outage, Tri-State, NORA's not-for-profit cooperative power supplier, informed NORA that the outage was related to the transmission line. Upon patrolling lines for the source of the outage, two snapped poles were discovered in the Cebolla area. At 7:30am, the line crew returned to Chama to load up two new poles and other necessary materials to replace the broken poles.

By 4:30pm that afternoon, NORA had successfully replaced the two damaged poles in Cebolla, however, when Tri State attempted to energize the line, a different fault was discovered thirty miles from Coyote Junction. A patrol of the line from the south end of the Spills to the north end revealed five more transmission poles down.

The line crew headed back to Chama, again, to load more replacement poles and materials to begin work replacing the next set of damaged poles. Executive Vice President and General Manager, Anthony Mercure, and Director of Operations, Richard Tafoya, reached out to Tri State to request assistance from any available line crews that would be willing to help. Fortunately, there were two crews willing to help from Las Cruces and the Bernalillo area. NORA was also contacted by Los Alamos County who offered their assistance as well.

Throughout the day on December 16th, NORA, the Tri-State and Los Alamos line crews, replaced and erected the five new transmission poles. At approximately 2:22pm, the Canjilon and Cebolla areas were energized after nearly thirty three hours, and the remainder of the service area was energized at around 3:32pm.



After power was restored, line crews continued to work on areas of need that the storm had caused on the distribution side. This included replacing distribution poles and lines damaged from debris and trees falling on lines. By 2:00am December 17th, there were only a couple of members without power due to meter loops in need of an electrician to repair before NORA could connect their power.

NORA, Tri-State, & Los Alamos Line Crews Replaced Multiple Downed Lines Due to High Winds

Another outage occurred on the morning of Christmas Day around 8:00am, again caused by inclement weather with high winds and heavy, wet snow and ice. Three poles were down along State Highway 29 north of St. Patrick's Church in the government camp area. There was also a tree that had fallen on a line in the Brazos area and a broken phase near Spills Ranch that needed repair. By approximately 10:00pm that night, the assorted repairs had been completed and power was restored.

As high winds continued in the following days in the Ghost Ranch and Canjilon area, the NORA crew continued to diligently monitor lines that needed stabilizing and did their best to minimize any subsequent outages.

Mercure would also like to express his gratitude to all the community members of NORA for being so supportive and understanding throughout these catastrophic events we encountered from those horrific winds. "This is something beyond our control that we cannot stop from happening as Mother Nature does what she wants," he noted.

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Mercure also personally stated, "I, as General Manager of NORA Electric Co-op, also want to thank everyone who supported us and were grateful enough to understand the situations we encounter. Sometimes it gets frustrating for most of us having these outages, as I myself get frustrated, but as General Manager, I do my best to keep everyone happy and try my best to keep the members content."



Poles Damaged by Christmas Day Storms

Anthony Mercure also commends his team of employees at NORA for their hard work and dedication particularly during outages who strive to do their best to respond to the community and keep them informed. In addition to the line crew responding in the field, the office staff works countless hours as well answering calls, documenting outages from members and returning every phone call when power is restored.

He added, "I want everyone to know what they go through when members call them to harass them about the outages and when power is going to be restored. So just to let everyone know, as General Manager please... I know at times things can be frustrating during power outages, but we are doing our best every time to get everyone's power restored during outages. Please know we are doing our due diligence to get everyone's power up. Also, as General Manager, I have personally assisted my line crew workers and the ladies in the office with phone calls. The line crew endures countless hours in the cold weather. With what they go through, I have to say I am very proud of the staff I have and to know what they do during these times when they are out restoring power."

Please keep in mind the next time we encounter a power outage the time and effort these workers give of themselves in order to restore power for everyone. Thank you NORA staff for a job well done!

The NORA Office will be closed Monday February 21st in observance of Presidents Day



Touchstone Energy

Our linemen are on call 24 hrs/day, 7 days a week. Please call 575-756-2181 to report power outages.



NORA's Executive Vice President & General Manager, Anthony Mercure, would like to recognize and thank to the following individuals & organizations that offered their invaluable assistance during the December outages:

- ◆ Michael Montano from Tristate and his crew members
- ◆ Steve Cummins from Los Alamos County and his crew
- ◆ Lucia Sanchez, Alfredo Montoya and Delilah Jaramillo with Rio Arriba County in assisting the community with oxygen, food, and heat
- ◆ American Red Cross for assisting with oxygen
- ◆ Village of Chama for assisting community members with oxygen
- ◆ Village of Chama Fire Department
- ◆ New Mexico State Police for performing welfare checks
- ◆ Community Members, NORA Board members and their spouses, and the spouses of NORA staff in providing NORA staff with food and drinks during these days of the outages
- ◆ Ranger 4H Club
- ◆ Felipe Atencio & family
- ◆ Jessica Cordova & family
- ◆ Brittany Clifton & family
- ◆ Steve & Mary Rendon
- ◆ Angelica Archuleta & family
- ◆ Vicente Mercure & family
- ◆ Marvin Mercure & family
- ◆ Mary Ann Salazar
- ◆ Angela Vigil & Carmen Gonzales
- ◆ Rio Chama Expreso
- ◆ Bonsall & Wendy Johnson
- ◆ Lucy & Dave Novak
- ◆ Meredith Ponds
- ◆ The Hudgin family
- ◆ NORA employees



Billing Schedule February 2022

Bill Due Date	24-Feb
Usage From	31-Dec
Usage To	31-Jan
SEDC Pickup @11:59pm	1-Feb
Bill Sent	1-Feb
Late Notice Sent	25-Feb
<i>Disconnects/Cut Off</i>	9-Mar
Contact/Follow Up	15-Mar

