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Understanding Power Outages '101'

As Americans, we take for granted that electricity is a resource we can't live without — at least for very long periods. Furthermore, if we wanted to do without electricity, we'd camp out in one of the many primitive campgrounds located around the country, or become a hermit and do without electricity totally. For the most part, those free-spirited folks account for only a small portion of our population.

Consequently, in the real world, power outages do happen, but many are caused by a natural phenomenon and many are completely unpreventable. Several reasons can be acknowledged as the culprits — animals climbing poles, trees on lines, automobile accidents, lightning strikes, windstorms, overloaded

circuits and failures due to aging or deteriorating apparatuses.

Besides the issues noted here, several other conditions restrict our ability to restore service to our members. For instance, we live in a very mountainous area; access to many of our rights-of-way becomes overgrown with vegetation; our members place fencing around our poles; and trees just don't get trimmed due to a number of reasons, aesthetics or otherwise.

The devices we use to control power outages are designed to minimize the duration of a power outage. We utilize a combination of these devices. First, we employ a fusing mechanism that will take an area of members out of service when a fault occurs. It requires a lineman to replace the fuse, and the fuse is typically placed at or near the end of a segment of members. The cost of this device is relatively cheap when compared to other electrical devices.

Second, we utilize a combination of reclosing devices and sectionalizing devices. These apparatuses are able to sense faults without taking you completely out of service. They will operate quickly to give the line a chance to clear itself of the faulted condition. This event, commonly referred to as a blink, can be as high as four times before

Manager's Corner

By
Gary Jackson,
CEO/General
Manager



finally isolating the faulted area. Again, once this type of apparatus goes off line, a lineman is required to restore the service by resetting the mechanism. These devices are much more expensive. However, they serve us well in keeping our customers in power. The downside is that you see a large number of blinks prior to either going out of power or before the fault is isolated.

I'd like to relate another condition of power outages that some members find appalling, and we receive calls like this all of the time. The phone call goes something like this, "I just saw your crews out here, but they didn't stop or do anything to fix our power" or "I saw your crews at the end of the road working on the lines, but they left all of us still out of power."

Well, the answer to many of these questions is that our crews are attempting to put the main circuits back on line first. Without having the main feeders on, it does little good to fix the lines that are on the end of our system when the faulted condition is nowhere near your home. By doing it this way, we're able to

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October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

For more than 20 years, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month (NBCAM) has educated women about early breast cancer detection, diagnosis and treatment. NBCAM encourages all women to take charge of their own breast health by practicing regular self-breast exams and scheduling mammograms annually.

Each year more than 211,000 American women are diagnosed with breast cancer, as well as 1,700 men. More than 40,000 women will die from the disease this year. Although breast cancer is less common in blacks than in whites, when black women do develop the disease, they are more likely to die from it, especially if they are under 50.

Young black women with breast cancer are more prone than whites or older blacks to develop a type of tumor with genetic traits that make it especially deadly and hard to treat.

Cancer begins in cells, the building blocks that make up tissues, and tissues make up the organs of the body. Normal cells will grow and divide to form new cells as the body needs them. When cells grow old, they die, and new cells take their place. When this orderly process goes wrong, new cells form when the body doesn't need them, and old cells don't die when they should.

These extra cells form a mass of tissue called a tumor. Benign tumors are not cancer, malignant tumors are.

Cancer cells spread by breaking away from the original tumor and entering the bloodstream or lymphatic system. The cells invade other organs and form new tumors that damage these organs. Breast cancer can spread to almost any other part of the body. The most common are the bones, liver, lungs and brain. For example, if breast cancer spreads to the bones, the cancer cells in the bones actually are breast cancer cells and are treated as breast cancer, not bone cancer.

Common symptoms of breast cancer include a lump or thickening in or near the breast or in the underarm area. Nipple tenderness or discharge also are warning signs. Other symptoms are a change in the size or shape of the breast or a nipple turned inward toward the breast. The skin of the breast, areola or nipple may be scaly, red or swollen. It may have ridges or pitting so that it looks like the skin of an orange.

Risk factors include personal history of breast cancer (a woman who had breast cancer in one breast has an increased risk of getting cancer in the other breast); family history (risk for a woman is higher if her mother, sister or daughter had breast

cancer, and this risk is higher yet if the family member got breast cancer before age 40); having certain types of abnormal cells or gene changes; the older a woman is when she had her first child, the greater her chance of breast cancer; having first menstrual period before age 12 increases risk; going through menopause after age 55; women who never had children; women who take menopausal hormone therapy with estrogen plus progestin after menopause; white women are diagnosed with breast cancer more often than other races; older women with more dense breast tissue; overweight or obese women after menopause have higher risk; and

women who are physically inactive or drink excessively seem to have a higher risk factor.

It is important to keep in mind, however, that most women with known risk factors do not get breast cancer, and also, most women with breast cancer do not have a family history of the disease. Except for growing older, most women with breast cancer have no clear risk factors.

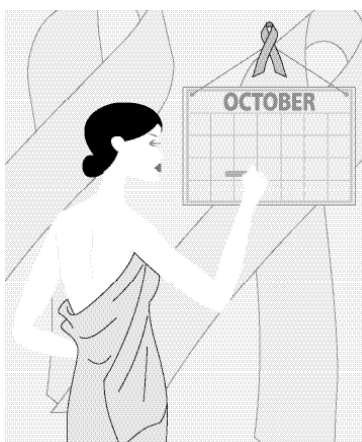
Common to all women are lifestyle decisions that may affect breast cancer risk. Eat a healthy diet by

decreasing your fat intake, especially saturated or hydrogenated fats. Eat leaner meats and limit red meat. Increase fiber in your diet by eating more whole grains, vegetables and fruits. Limit your alcohol consumption, don't smoke and stay active. A brisk 30-minute walk on most days will help maintain your recommended body weight. Lifestyle improvements are smart steps to take for a healthier life that not only can help decrease breast cancer risk factors, but also can help prevent heart disease, diabetes and many other life-threatening conditions.

The key to surviving breast cancer, however, still seems to be early detection. Practice regular self-exams, get a yearly mammogram if you are over 40 years old and watch for unusual changes in your breasts.

There aren't many of us who have not had some knowledge of breast cancer. Bookkeeper Debbie Yerkey lost her mother to breast cancer. Assistant Bookkeeper Nada McNemar's sister-in-law is a breast cancer survivor after undergoing a double mastectomy. Probably everyone knows someone diagnosed with this deadly disease.

Someday we hope to see a cure, but until that time, we have measures we can take to help ensure our health. We don't have to be helpless victims of breast cancer.



Set those clocks back!

Daylight Saving Time ends on Sunday, Oct. 29. Remember to set your clocks back one hour on Saturday night before you go to bed.

The main purpose of Daylight Saving Time was to make better use of daylight. The idea was first conceived by Benjamin Franklin while he was an American delegate in Paris in 1784. Franklin wrote an essay, *An Economical Project*, where he discussed the thrift of natural versus artificial lighting. Always a man well ahead of his time, Ben was correct. Daylight Saving Time does save energy.

Studies done by the U.S. Department of Transportation show that the country's electricity use declines by about 1 percent per day when Daylight Saving Time goes into effect. Less electricity is used for lighting and appliances in the evening when families are home. In addition, less electricity is used because most people plan outdoor activities during the longer days of spring and summer and don't spend as much time in the house. Although Daylight Saving Time saves energy for lighting in all seasons of the year, it saves the least during the darkest months of winter (November, December, January and February). Daylight Saving Time also decreases traffic accidents and fatalities by close to 1 percent. The increase in accidents in the dark morning is more than offset by the decrease in evening accidents.

Daylight Saving Time has been used in the United States since World War I. A law was enacted on March 19, 1918, that established both standard time zones and set summer Daylight Saving Time to begin on March 31. After the war ended, the law was so unpopular that it was repealed in 1919 with a Congressional override of President Wilson's veto, at which point Daylight Saving Time became a local option. During World War II, year-round Daylight Saving Time was instituted from February 1942 to September 1945. From 1945 to 1966, there was no federal law regarding Daylight Saving Time, so states were free to choose whether or not to use it and could choose when it began and ended. This caused quite a bit of confusion, especially in the transportation and broadcasting industry. For instance, passengers traveling a 35-mile stretch of highway between Moundsville, WV and Steubenville, OH had to endure seven time changes! The Uniform Time Act of 1966, signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson, mandated that Daylight Saving Time would begin on the last Sunday in April and end on the last Sunday in October. In 1986, the law was amended to begin Daylight Saving Time on

the first Sunday in April.

Daylight Saving Time has impacted a wide variety of areas. A man born just after 12 a.m. DST avoided the Vietnam War draft by arguing that births in his state were officially recorded using standard time which made him actually born on the previous day. Since that day had a much higher draft lottery number, it allowed him to avoid the draft.

In September 1999, the Palestinian West Bank was on DST while Israel had just switched back to standard time. West Bank Palestinians made time bombs and smuggled them to Arab Israelis who misunderstood the time on the bombs. The bombs exploded an hour early while being planted, killing three terrorists instead of the intended victims — two busloads of people.

Trains cannot leave a station before their scheduled time. When clocks fall back one hour in October, all Amtrak trains in the United States that are running on time stop at 2 a.m. and wait one hour before resuming their route. In the spring DST change, trains that are running on time immediately become an hour late at 2 a.m. and have to do their best to make up time.

Crime is consistently less during periods of Daylight Saving Time than during standard time. Data collected by the U.S. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration showed violent crime down 10 to 13 percent. More crimes occur after dusk than before dawn, so light in the evening decreases crimes such as muggings.

In 1986, when Daylight Saving Time moved from the last Sunday in April to the first Sunday, but no change was made to the date in October, about 300,000 barrels of oil were saved in the United States by adding the entire month of April.

So whether you agree with Daylight Saving Time or it wreaks havoc on your sleep pattern and generally just disrupts your life, it's something we have to deal with, because it doesn't look like it's going away anytime soon.

