



For Release: July 26, 2016

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NEWS

Minnesota Power crews closing in on remaining storm-related outages

Duluth, Minnesota—The number of customers left without power from last week's powerful storms is shrinking almost by the hour as Minnesota Power works its way through the hardest-hit neighborhoods of Duluth.

By Tuesday morning, an estimated 1,600 customers remained without power from the storm that packed wind gusts of up to 100 mph, toppling trees into power lines and power poles. At least 250 power poles were damaged and require replacement. Minnesota Power said power has been restored to Island Lake, most of Pike Lake, Meadowlands, Floodwood, a portion of the French River area, and Duluth's East Hillside and Central Hillside and Duluth Heights.

In addition to Minnesota Power crews, reinforcements from Ameren, Interen, MP Technologies, M.J. Electric and Xcel are focusing resources to restore power in the French River area, Duluth neighborhoods Morley Heights, Woodland, Hunters Park, Lakeside, Lester Park, Congdon and Hidden Valley. Many streets, including Kenilworth and Leicester in Morley Heights, Waverly and Hardy in Hunters Park and Wabasha and Anoka in Woodland, have extensive tree damage, making access to lines and poles more complicated, and challenging. Restoration in these areas is steady but slow-going. All 260 lineworkers and tree crews are out; 16 crews alone are working in Woodland today.

As of 3pm, the company expects Caribou and Pike lakes to be restored by 6pm tonight, the north side of Morley Heights including Everett, Livingstone and Morningside streets is also expected to be restored tonight.

While the company expects the majority of remaining customers to have power restored earlier, some may not have service until Thursday. About 46,000 customers were without power at the peak of the storm, the worst to affect the company's electrical system since an April 2001 ice storm.

Some customers who have damage to their electric service meter and mast will need to contact an electrical contractor for repairs before Minnesota Power can restore power to the residence.

Minnesota Power cautions everyone to stay clear of any downed power lines, poles and wires as they could still be energized. Energized lines pose an extreme hazard. Keep pets and children away from those areas. Do not attempt to remove trees on public property or roadways as many trees are entangled with downed power lines.

Minnesota Power also reminds customers to make sure appliances and other electrical items that were on when the power went out are turned off to avoid possible damage when power is restored. Portable generators should be connected to appliances and not to home electric services to avoid potential injury to lineworkers, homeowners or the public.

For more outage updates and information go to the Outage Center at <http://www.mnpower.com/> or follow Minnesota Power on Twitter and Facebook. Customers who have questions about their mast or other outage-related questions can call Minnesota Power at 1-800-228-4966.

Minnesota Power appreciates the understanding and patience of customers as restoration efforts continue, as well as the many “thank yous” and compliments for our hard-working crews.

PHOTO CAPTIONS:

Minnesota Power lineworkers work in Duluth’s Lakeside neighborhood on Monday.

Restoring a line in Hunters Park on Monday.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 144,000 customers, 16 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at www.mnpower.com.

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