



3724 West Avera Drive
PO Box 88920
Sioux Falls, SD 57109-8920
Telephone: 605.338.4042
Fax: 605.978.9360
www.mrenergy.com

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 16, 2021

Southwest Power Pool Calls Emergency Alert Level 3

Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) was notified that the Southwest Power Pool (SPP) declared an Energy Emergency Alert (EEA) Level 3 starting this morning at 6:15 a.m. The emergency alert means that electric generation in the region is not sufficient to meet the extreme and widespread demand for electricity. SPP began temporarily shutting down power, otherwise known as rolling blackouts, which will reduce demand on the system. MRES had hoped to provide advance notice to its members but SPP was unable to notify us in time.

The shortage of electricity was caused by record low temperatures throughout the country, including those regions typically not impacted by winter weather. SPP has called for the curtailment of 3,000 megawatts (MW) of electricity throughout the region, of which 2,700 MW is load interruptions to utilities in the SPP footprint.

SPP is a Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) that oversees the bulk electric grid and wholesale power market on behalf of a diverse group of utilities and transmission companies in 17 states. Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) and MRES are both transmission owners in SPP and both serve the power supply needs of MRES members. MRES members located in the SPP footprint may be affected by this event.

Upon instructions by the Reliability Coordinator of SPP, WAPA began to curtail power to substations within the MRES membership, causing power outages in those communities. MRES was notified at about 10:50 a.m. that WAPA is in the process of restoring curtailed load. MRES has no control over, and does not make any decisions regarding when and if these rolling blackouts are required.

All MRES-operated generation resources have been operating to the fullest extent during this extreme weather event and are performing well. Those include Laramie River Station in Wheatland, Wyoming, the Exira Station near Atlantic, Iowa, and the Watertown Power Plant in Watertown, South Dakota. Many MRES members with local generating units in their communities are also running those units to support power supply in the region.

SPP remains in an Emergency Alert Level 3 because they are still operating below required minimum reserves. Therefore, MRES asks that its member municipal utilities do whatever they can to reduce power usage in their communities, such as requesting that customers voluntarily reduce electric usage by delaying running the dishwasher and clothes washer, turning down the heat, and shutting off lights.

When necessary, the call for rolling blackouts is made by the SPP operator and reliability coordinators. While we all hope this is never needed, the temporary outages help protect the grid from longer, more sustained outages. MRES will continue to provide updates on our website at www.mrenergy.com/news as they are available.

MRES is a joint-action agency made up of 61 member municipalities in the states of Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. MRES provides its members with wholesale electricity along with a host of energy-related services.

#####

For more information, contact Member Services and Communications Director Joni Livingston at Missouri River Energy Services, phone: 605-261-3637 or email: joni.livingston@mrenergy.com.