

# TODAY

A NEWSLETTER OF



## MRES members recognized for reliability, safety

Six members and one associate of Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) earned the American Public Power Association's (APPA) Reliable Public Power Provider (RP<sub>3</sub>) designation.

In total, 270 of the more than 2,000 public power utilities nationwide hold the RP<sub>3</sub> designation, which lasts for three years and recognizes utilities that demonstrate proficiency in four key disciplines: reliability, safety, workforce development and system improvement.

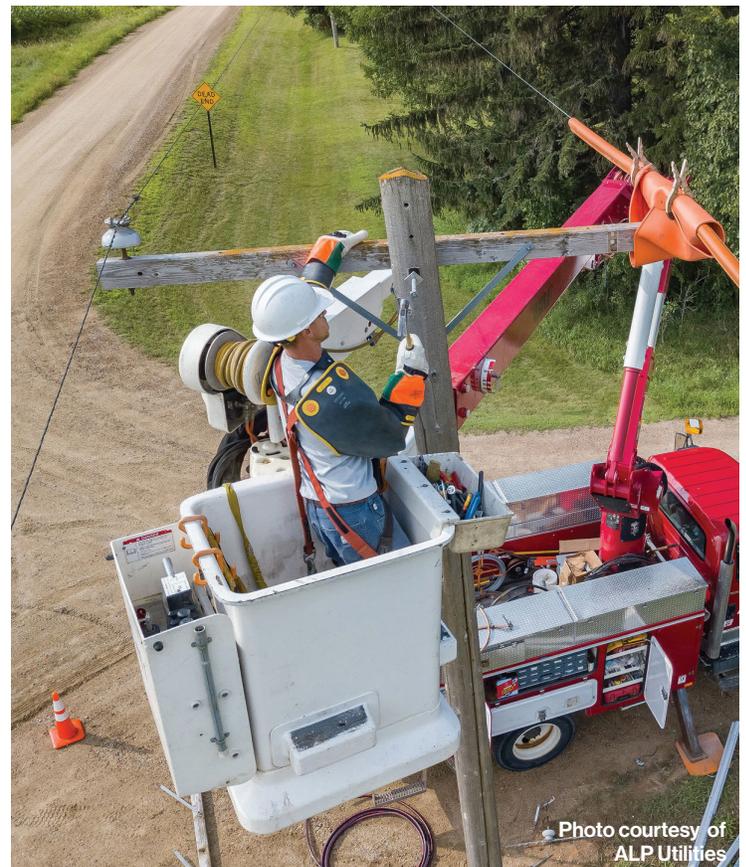
The MRES members and associate holding the prestigious RP<sub>3</sub> designation are all located in Minnesota:

- ALP Utilities in Alexandria (received designation in 2020)
- Detroit Lakes Public Utilities (2020)
- Hutchinson Utilities Commission (2020)
- Marshall Municipal Utilities (2020)
- Moorhead Public Service (2019)
- Willmar Municipal Utilities (2020)
- Blue Earth Light and Water (Associate, 2019)

In addition, two MRES members are among the 129 utilities to earn APPA's Safety Award of Excellence. These safety awards are based on the number of work-related reportable injuries or illnesses and the number of worker-hours during the year, as defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. MRES members that earned these awards are Rock Rapids (Iowa) Municipal Utilities and Worthington (Minnesota) Public Utilities. Nearly 330 utilities submitted entries to be considered for the annual safety awards.

APPA also announced that 14 MRES members and two associates have earned national recognition for achieving exceptional electric reliability in 2020.

Electric reliability is measured using four different metrics, and APPA helps member municipal utilities track power outage and restoration data through its subscription-based eReliability Tracker service. The data is then compared to



national statistics tracked by the U.S. Energy Information Administration for all types of electric utilities.

Certificates of Excellence in Reliability were awarded to the following MRES members and associates that outperformed the electric industry national average for reliability:

- Atlantic Municipal Utilities – Atlantic, Iowa
- ALP Utilities – Alexandria, Minnesota
- \*City of Barnesville – Barnesville, Minnesota



## MRES members recognized for reliability, safety *(continued)*

- Detroit Lakes Public Utilities – Detroit Lakes, Minnesota
- \*Jackson Municipal Utilities – Jackson, Minnesota
- City of Litchfield (Associate) – Litchfield, Minnesota
- \*Luverne Municipal Utilities – Luverne, Minnesota
- Marshall Municipal Utilities – Marshall, Minnesota
- Melrose Public Utilities – Melrose, Minnesota
- Moorhead Public Service – Moorhead, Minnesota
- \*Olivia Public Utilities (Associate) – Olivia, Minnesota
- Pierre Municipal Utilities – Pierre, South Dakota
- Sauk Centre Public Utilities Commission – Sauk Centre, Minnesota
- Wadena Utilities Department – Wadena, Minnesota

- Watertown Municipal Utilities – Watertown, South Dakota
- Worthington Public Utilities – Worthington, Minnesota

*\*MRES provides distribution maintenance services, which includes system maintenance and outage response, to these members and associates.*

“This recognition demonstrates public power’s exceptional reliability,” said MRES President and CEO Tom Heller. “It is a testament to the hard work of lineworkers and utility staff in each of these communities to ensure that the lights stay on for all of their customers. Reliable electric service is a top priority for MRES and every member.”

## BES elementary school program wraps up another successful year

In an ongoing effort to provide interactive, real-world education to students and their families, MRES once again offered its Bright Energy Solutions Power Team<sup>SM</sup> School Program to members and their communities during the 2020-2021 school year. Now in its eighth year, the program is an opportunity for fifth graders in MRES member communities to learn about a number of electricity-related topics, including safety, power supply, renewable energy and careers in the utility field.

Despite the uncertainty surrounding this past school year, 19 member communities participated in the program. In total, the program engaged 1,703 teachers, students and families, teaching them about electricity and the value of having a local municipal utility.

In July, MRES staff will email a reminder to each of its members encouraging them to sign up for the program during the 2021-2022 school year. As an incentive, Missouri River splits the cost of the program with members, and the resulting cost to members is a little over \$20 per student.

For more information, contact Member Services Representative Jody Peck at 605-338-4042 or [jody.peck@mrenergy.com](mailto:jody.peck@mrenergy.com).



## Electric vehicle toolkit available for members

As part of its commitment to a cleaner energy future, MRES has an electric vehicle (EV) toolkit available for members to assist with planning, marketing and hosting successful ride-and-drive events.

The toolkit was developed by MRES staff as a start-to-finish guide for planning ride-and-drive events, which provide an opportunity for people in member communities to learn more about EVs and also test drive various EV models. The toolkit includes everything from planning and promotion – complete with marketing templates for radio ads, newspaper ads, bill stuffers and more – to event execution and follow-up. It also provides a comprehensive checklist and event timeline that members can follow every step of the way.



In addition to the toolkit, MRES recently replaced one of its fleet vehicles with a 2020 Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV (plug-in hybrid electric vehicle) that will primarily be used when visiting member communities and also to help facilitate ride-and-drive events.

For more information or to download the 40-page EV toolkit as an interactive PDF, go online to the members section of [brightenergysolutions.com](http://brightenergysolutions.com). For more information on ride-and-drive events or EVs in general, please contact your Bright Energy Solutions field representative.



## Ernst tours Red Rock during '99 County Tour' across Iowa



Iowa U.S. Sen. Joni Ernst (left) visited the Red Rock Hydroelectric Project near Pella on April 6 as part of her annual "99 County Tour" across Iowa. Ernst is a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. She was given the tour by Director of Generation Resources Brent Moeller (right), Senior Vice President of Power Supply & Operations Ray Wahle (center), and Exira Plant Manager Ed Jackson (back left).

## Local leaders advocate for public power during virtual legislative rally

MRES and its members were well represented during APPA's 2021 Virtual Legislative Rally on March 1-2. The rally is an annual event APPA hosts to provide resources and connections that help public power communities make their collective voices heard in Washington, D.C. It also offers the opportunity for public power officials to meet with their respective state's congressional delegations and hear from experts on important issues impacting public power that are likely to be considered in upcoming legislation and by the new administration.

All meetings were held virtually with MRES members from each state participating along with MRES staff and our federal lobbyist, Marty Kanner, president of Kanner & Associates. The primary topics discussed during meetings with members of Congress included regulatory certainty needed on carbon emissions, infrastructure initiatives and municipal tax issues. Additionally, Missouri River's position paper on the importance of protecting the federal power program and information on the Gregory County Pumped Storage Project were sent to congressional offices. More information on all five of these topics can be found in the members-only section of [mrenergy.com](http://mrenergy.com).

## MRES board approves substation project in Worthington, Minnesota

In March the MRES board approved a plan to work with Minnesota-based Great River Energy (GRE) on a new substation to help serve current load needs and potential customer-load expansion in and around the member community of Worthington.

Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency, financing agent for MRES, will own the facility, while GRE will serve as the project contractor. The substation will be called the Lorain Substation, and when finished it will interconnect with a GRE-owned 69-kilovolt transmission line that already runs to an existing Worthington Public Utilities substation.

Missouri River was involved in the planning study for the substation and offered assistance as the project went through the Midcontinent Independent System Operator's (MISO) expedited review process. Now that the project has been approved by both MISO and the MRES board, construction on Lorain Substation will begin in May and is expected to be complete by the end of 2022.

## CapX2020 utilities announce new name – Grid North Partners

Following the development and construction of more than 800 miles of new high-voltage transmission infrastructure in the Upper Midwest, the 10 CapX2020 utilities have renamed their organization Grid North Partners.

MRES has been a member of this collaborative organization since it was formed in 2004.



The last project in the CapX2020 portfolio was energized in 2017.

The new name reflects the partners' strategy to identify collaborative solutions to meet the region's evolving energy needs, including the addition of thousands of megawatts of new renewable resources, the retirement of large coal plants, and progress toward carbon-reduction goals at the state and federal level set by both policymakers and utilities.

Grid North Partners will be active in 2021, holding a symposium, working with MISO to identify regional transmission expansion needed to integrate the changing generation fleet, and continuing to educate policymakers and other stakeholders on the purpose and need for transmission.

Grid North Partners also announced the launch of a new website, [gridnorthpartners.com](http://gridnorthpartners.com).



P.O. Box 88920  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57109-8920  
Phone: 605-338-4042 | Fax: 605-978-9360

© 2021, Missouri River Energy Services. All rights reserved.  
No portion of this publication may be copied or duplicated in any format  
without the expressed permission of MRES.

## Register today for Missouri River's 56th Annual Meeting

# YOU'RE INVITED!

The MRES® 56th Annual Meeting will be held via webinar on May 5, from 1–4:30 p.m.

Join your peers and learn more about the complex issues and challenges facing your municipal utility and MRES.

## REGISTER TODAY!

Register online at [www.mrenergy.com](http://www.mrenergy.com) under the "EVENTS" tab, or call Lisa Korthals at the MRES office, 800-678-4042.



## DETAILS

### *State of Public Power*

Joy Ditto  
APPA President & CEO

### *Federal Legislative Update*

Marty Kanner  
President, Kanner & Associates

### *Cybersecurity*

Gen. Wesley Clark  
Retired, U.S. Army

### *Year in Review*

### *Polar Vortex Emergency Event*

Ray Wahle  
Senior VP, Power Supply & Operations

### *MRES CEO Report*

Tom Heller  
MRES President & CEO

### *Annual Business Meeting*

Vernell Roberts, MRES Board Chair  
Scott Hain, WMMPA President

### *2021 Award Presentations*

