



March 8, 2021

RE: March 7, 2021 Emergency Planned Outage

It is with sincere gratitude that I extend my thanks to the residents of the New London area for your understanding and cooperation during yesterday's emergency planned outage that left you and your families without electric power for over nine hours.

When initially approached by First Energy about accommodating an outage, we rejected them, citing the inconveniences and ongoing low temperatures. It was only after a second review of the situation that it became clear a planned outage was our only viable option.

Yesterday's outage was necessary to correct a critical situation that could have led to a catastrophic outage — which could have resulted in a considerably lengthier outage. First Energy's only pole between their new 69kV transmission line and the beginning of Firelands' line needed to be replaced. This aged pole cracked two weeks ago when contractors were attempting to install new transmission lines on it. Everyone involved recognized that this pole, now in a weakened stage, could possibly break apart the next time it was subjected to strong winds. A delay in replacing it would have created added risks to the public and to our substation equipment, and no one was willing to take this elevated risk.

With the pain of yesterday's outage comes gains. Previously, transmission power to our New London substation was fed in only from the east on lines attached to very aged and deteriorated poles. As of today, the power is being fed from the west, on the newly rebuilt transmission lines. New switch banks were also installed yesterday, which will allow transmission power to be fed to the cooperative from either the east or west — adding a layer of insurance if there is a power-supply interruption from either direction of the transmission line.

Please accept my apologies and appreciation for your understanding with yesterday's emergency power outage. We understand that it lasted longer than projected and that many people made sacrifices in their schedules and comfort. For this, we sincerely say thank you.

Your management team and trustees at Firelands are committed to investing in and improving the reliability of your electric cooperative's distribution system in New London and our entire service area. Please call me if you ever have any concerns or questions about your cooperative.

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