



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Severe Storms Cause Damage to East River Transmission System

Severe storms on Friday, July 1 in eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota have caused significant damage to the electric transmission system, leaving many without power within East River Electric Power Cooperative's service territory.

"Our transmission system is very reliable; however, a storm of this magnitude can cause problems of this nature," said Larry DeKramer, East River Transmission, Substation and Dispatch Manager.

A line of thunderstorms from Colman, S.D., to northeast of Marshall, Minn. left nearly 100 utility poles down.

Power is expected to be restored to the city of Colman, as well as areas near Egan and Ward by tonight; however, in the hardest hit areas in western Minnesota, it could be several days.

Reported wind speeds up to 80 mph in the Lake Benton, Minn. area moved an East River Electric communications building approximately 30 feet.

"We are currently assessing the damage throughout the affected service territory, both on the ground and by plane," DeKramer said. "Our personnel are committed to making sure power is restored as quickly and safely as possible."

East River Electric Power Cooperative, based in Madison, S.D., is a wholesale electric power supply cooperative serving 24 rural electric cooperatives and one municipally-owned electric system, which in turn serve more than 92,000 homes and businesses and over 250,000 consumers.

Our 41,000 square mile service area covers the rural areas of 41 counties in eastern South Dakota and nine counties in western Minnesota.

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