

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 5, 2026

NIPCO Restores Power Within One Hour Following Transmission Line Outage in Plymouth County

Le Mars, Iowa – Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO) experienced a transmission-level outage at 16:45 on May 4 after the NIPCO Control Center was immediately alerted to the event by NIPCO’s internal protection system of any outage on the L3 to Sioux City transmission line. This line includes several electric transmission substations that serve members of North West REC. In response, NIPCO’s electric system operated as designed, automatically opening the line.

Because May 4 was considered a “bluebird day” — meaning there were no known adverse weather or environmental conditions — NIPCO followed established safety protocols. When an outage cause cannot be immediately identified and there is potential that electric infrastructure may have come into contact with farm equipment or a vehicle, NIPCO protocol requires isolation and de-energization of the line until crews can safely inspect it. During a manual patrol, crews identified the cause of the outage as a static wire — the top wire that provides lightning protection and grounding — which had broken loose and made contact with the electric conductor below.

NIPCO, working closely with North West REC, was able to isolate the Merrill substation, and thanks to NIPCO’s looped transmission system, power was rerouted and restored to REC member-consumers within approximately one hour. NIPCO prioritizes public safety and system reliability and will continue to isolate and de-energize transmission infrastructure whenever necessary until outage causes can be safely identified and corrected.

About Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO)

Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative (NIPCO) is a generation and transmission electric cooperative supplying wholesale electric power to seven distribution cooperatives covering 6,500 square miles in western Iowa. These distribution cooperatives supply retail power to over 30,000 members/consumers. NIPCO serves these customers with over 900 miles of 69kV transmission line and 82 distribution substations. Incorporated in 1949 and headquartered in Le Mars, Iowa, NIPCO is a Touchstone Energy® electric cooperative and a member of Basin Electric Power Cooperative. Visit them at www.nipco.coop and find them on Facebook at Northwest Iowa Power Cooperative.

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