ALTALINK

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Customer Connection

In this issue

2013 Alberta flood

- Team efforts keep the lights on for Albertans during the flood

From our customers:

- Collaborative efforts yield positive results
- The nature of business – a customer testimonial

Our Customer Service programs

- Existing Connected Customer program
- M-Power Connect

AltaLink updates

- Southern Alberta
- Central Alberta

Contact Us

2013 Alberta flood

Team efforts keep the lights on for Albertans during the flood

The flood that devastated many communities in June will forever be etched in people's minds, not just because of the catastrophe, but the generosity of complete strangers. In true Alberta fashion, people pulled together to help their fellow neighbours in need.

During the flood, team-work helped to keep the lights on for Albertans. It started on Thursday, June 20 at 5:49 a.m., when FortisAlberta reported that one of AltaLink's structures that supports a line feeding Canmore was about to fall into Cougar Creek. At 6:02 a.m. the line was removed from service, shortly before it washed out. After a concerted effort that involved accessing a community that had many closed roads, high water levels, intermittent phone service and a lot of unknowns, the broken structure was removed and the line was returned to service at 6:02 p.m. Friday, June 21. Restoring this line was fundamental to providing Canmore with electricity supply throughout some tough conditions.

In Bragg Creek on Thursday, June 20 at 1:52 p.m. AltaLink assisted FortisAlberta in disconnecting a line that feeds the town. FortisAlberta noticed the line had fallen over and was either submerged in water or was dangerously close to that point. The outage affected 2,000 people but was restored just 41 minutes later at 3:06 p.m. after the line was made safe.

In Banff and Lake Louise, AltaLink, FortisAlberta, TransAlta and Canadian Pacific Rail (CP) worked together to restore power to Banff and Lake Louise after unprecedented water levels from Lake Minnewanka flooded AltaLink's nearby substation, resulting in a power outage.

"The first sign that something was wrong was when we were informed that TransAlta's Cascade hydro power plant and our substation near Banff were flooding," said Irv Paulson, System Operation Special Projects.

FortisAlberta dispatched a power lineman from the Canmore area to assess the situation at AltaLink's substation. The lineman reported to AltaLink's Control Centre (ACC) that the substation was under water and it was not safe to enter until the water receded.

The flood was a result of high water levels in the TransAlta dam in Lake Minnewanka. TransAlta uses the dam for its Cascade power plant but it became overloaded and had to be taken off-line, so they were forced to use the spillway for the first time in the dam's history. The spillway directs the water to the Bow River to decrease the water levels in the dam.

By early morning on Sunday, June 23, water levels had receded, allowing a worker to safely enter the substation and close the switch. At 2:47 a.m. power was restored to Banff and Lake Louise.

The water has now receded, but the memories are still fresh. During a time that was filled with uncertainty for so many Albertans, people pulled together, working tirelessly, helping us to keep the lights on.

For many AltaLink employees the team-work didn't stop at keeping the lights on for Albertans. They not only donated to the Red Cross, but were also out in Calgary, High River and Siksika Nation to hand out food, water, supplies and help with the clean-up efforts.

From our customers

Collaborative efforts yield positive results

Nova Chemicals planned outage

NOVA Chemicals is a leading producer of plastics and chemicals that make everyday life safer, healthier and easier. Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta they develop and manufacture materials for customers worldwide who produce consumer, industrial and packaging products. Collaboration is a key value for NOVA Chemicals. They are a responsive partner to customers, suppliers, employees and communities engaging and identifying new opportunities and solutions.

Manufacturing sites located throughout Canada and the United States are vital components of NOVA Chemicals' overall business. The Joffre petrochemical site located just east of Red Deer is one of the largest ethylene and polyethylene production complexes in the world. With about 800 employees, supported by 300-400 contractors, they produce more than $2 billion in products each year.

In September 2013, AltaLink scheduled an outage at Joffre 535s substation to facilitate project work related to the Red Deer Area Transmission Development Project. The project work was required in

order to ensure the reliability of the transmission system in the Red Deer area. In order to minimize outages to our customers, AltaLink also scheduled regular maintenance to the transmission system to coincide with the planned project related outage. Our outage scheduling practices include communications and coordination with customers that could be impacted. For this particular planned outage we needed to work closely with NOVA Chemicals.

The scheduled outage posed a unique situation for NOVA Chemicals' operations. The Joffre facility has a primary and secondary electrical feed that connects to their critical water pumping system, which supplies water to the entire facility. As a result of our outage request, NOVA Chemicals would have to rely on the secondary electrical feed as the only electricity source to the pumps. Loss of power to the critical water pump could have resulted in damaged equipment, production loss and an unscheduled plant shutdown.

When this risk was identified, NOVA Chemicals requested that we assess the viability of additional mitigations for the outage. We worked closely with them and FortisAlberta to create the following risk mitigation plan:

- An on-call power line technician was made available should one need to be called into action.
- A contingency switching plan was created, which would restore the critical water pumping system back to the primary electricity feed should a severe weather event be forecasted for the Joffre area.

With the contingency plan in place we were able to proceed with the planned outage. The outage went according to plan; the on-call technician and the contingency plan were not required to be put into action.

"Even though the risk to NOVA Chemicals' Joffre facility did not materialize, the collaborative efforts of the teams from NOVA Chemicals, FortisAlberta and AltaLink landed us in a win-win-win position," said Jim Rippon, AltaLink's Manager of Outage Scheduling. "We executed our project work as planned, we did not impact the NOVA Chemicals' facility and we strengthened our relationship with them. The learning about NOVA Chemicals' facility and their operations leaves us in a good position for future outage requests at this facility."

We would like to thank NOVA Chemicals and FortisAlberta for their active participation and collaboration in the creation of the contingency plan.

The nature of business – a customer testimonial

Since taking ownership of the Montana-Alberta Tie-Line (MATL) in October 2011, Enbridge has worked diligently to have the 345-kilometre, 300 megawatt transmission line completed. This line ties together some of the best wind energy resources from southern Alberta and northern Montana.

Who would have thought that a single pair of nesting birds would have the ability to delay the completion of a transmission line project – well, a pair of Ferruginous hawks did just that. Work on Enbridge's MATL project was temporarily delayed in June as a nesting pair chose the only tree within a kilometre of the line to lay their eggs. Recognizing that Ferruginous hawks are a protected species and understanding that business needs meant that construction had to somehow continue, the MATL team looked for ways to mitigate the length of the delay.

Working with environmental specialists from Enbridge, Stantec and a retired Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development biologist (who helped to develop the hawk recovery plan for Alberta), they were unable to find a way to continue work and understood that no construction or tower erection could take place within 1,000 metres of the nest. As a result of creative thinking, the

construction was realigned to work around the hawks' 1,000 metre radius, completing the balance of work outside that zone.

On July 16, 2013, the hawks and their young left the nest. MATL was energized on August 16, 2013 and on September 18, 2013, it completed its final test and commercial operations began.

"I want to thank each of you for the past year plus of the many conference calls and face-to-face meetings to get MATL into commercial operations," said Robert Stade, Enbridge project manager. "Each of you has had a part in helping MATL get to this day."

Our Customer Service programs

Existing Connected Customer program

In 2013, AltaLink initiated a new Existing Connected Customer program. The program consists of onsite meetings, a dedicated account representative and an annual survey of existing connected customers. We will be continuing to rollout into 2014.

If you would like to get in touch with your account representative or schedule a site visit, please contact Cayla Saby, Manager of Customer Relations at cayla.saby@altalink.ca.

M-Power Connect

In July 2013, we launched a new connection service called M-Power Connect. Since the launch, four new customer connecting projects have signed on using M-Power Connect. We have already received positive feedback about the new service – one veteran Alberta customer has stated "we are already seeing the benefit of the service after the second meeting."

M-Power Connect allows customers to be fully engaged throughout the entire project, providing robust collaboration and transparency – driving the bottom line result, an electric grid connection right when the customer needs it.

Please join us for a seminar about the M-Power Connect service in January 2014. More details will be available early in the new year. In the meantime, for more information about the M-Power Connect service, please contact our Customer Service department and we will be glad to assist you.

AltaLink updates

Southern Alberta

Foothills Area Transmission Development (FATD)

The Foothills Area Transmission Development (FATD) includes three projects in the Foothills and Calgary areas. The transmission system in these areas has not had a major development or upgrade since 1985, while the population in these communities has grown substantially. This project will help meet the growing demand for power in Calgary and the communities south of the city.

In October the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) approved these FATD projects for construction:

- Langdon to Janet Transmission Project
- Foothills 138 kV Project
- North Foothills Transmission Project

Construction preparation is underway, and the projects are expected to be complete between spring and fall 2015.

Southern Alberta Transmission Reinforcement (SATR)

The South Foothills Transmission Project and Windy Flats 138 KV Line Reconfiguration project were both approved by the AUC for construction in October (as part of the decision on the Foothills Area Transmission Development). These two projects will help bring clean, green wind power from southern Alberta to the homes, farms and business that need it. Construction preparation on these projects in underway, with construction expected to be complete by the summer of 2015.

Medicine Hat Transmission Project

The Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) approved the Medicine Hat 138 kV Transmission Project for construction on October 18, 2013. Construction for the project is scheduled to begin in late 2013/early 2014 and will take approximately 28 months to complete. This project will help meet the growing demand for power in the Medicine Hat area and will ensure Albertans have a reliable supply of electricity for years to come.

Central Alberta

Hanna Region Transmission Development

The Hanna Region Transmission Development involves building new substations and transmission lines and modifying existing facilities to reinforce the transmission system in central Alberta. In August, AltaLink energized two projects under the Hanna Region Transmission Development: Hansman Lake and Nilrem.

The Hansman Lake project is located in the Provost area and includes 21 kilometres of new 240 kV transmission line between AltaLink's existing Hansman Lake Substation and an existing ATCO Electric transmission line. It also includes modifications to the Hansman Lake Substation and an existing 240 kV transmission line located outside of the substation. Construction began in August 2011.

The Nilrem project is in the Hardisty area and includes a new substation (called Nilrem), 24 kilometres of new 240 kV transmission line connecting the Nilrem Substation to an existing line in the area, six kilometres of new 138 kV transmission line connecting AltaLink's existing Tucuman Substation to the

Nilrem Substation and modifications to the Tucuman Substation. Construction began in June 2011.

A third project under the development, Cassils to Ware Junction, is expected to be energized in November 2013. It is located in the Duchess and Brooks areas and includes 40 kilometres of new 240 kV transmission line between AltaLink's Cassils and Ware Junction Substations. Construction began in November 2012.

Red Deer Area Transmission Development
The Red Deer Area Transmission Development includes proposed transmission system upgrades between the Wetaskiwin and Didsbury areas. It will ensure Red Deer and the surrounding areas have a reliable supply of electricity for years to come.

Construction is currently underway on Stage 1 of the development that involves upgrades to six existing substation in the Red Deer area. Stage 1 is expected to be completely energized by the end of this year.

In July, AltaLink filed an application with the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) for stages 2 and 3 of the development. Stage 2 involves rebuilding existing 138 kV transmission lines in the Red Deer and Sylvan Lake areas. Stage 3 involves building new substations and 138 kV transmission lines near Ponoka, Innisfail and Didsbury and a new 138 kV transmission line east of Lacombe. If stages 2 and 3 are approved by the AUC, construction could begin June 2014 and would take approximately 14 months to complete.

Western Alberta Transmission Line (WATL)
Western Alberta Transmission Line construction continues. AltaLink expects the line will be in service in the spring of 2015. The 350-kilometre direct current transmission line will connect the Genesee and Langdon regions and will improve reliability, reduce wasted energy and ensure Albertans have access to the lowest-priced supply.

The high voltage direct current (HVDC) portion of the WATL project is progressing well, with detailed engineering in progress and hundreds of studies and design documents already completed.

For more information about the WATL project, visit our website.

Contact Us

Have a question, comment or a story idea for our newsletter? We'd love to hear from you!

Email: customerservice@altalink.ca