

BPA crews team up for emergency repair after storm

By Teresa Waugh

Greg Olesen/Regional Operations and Maintenance Manager: When you see real estate changing hands like that, that's a pretty big event happening, that's a wind event.

A tsunami of sand blasted grit through the Tri Cities area Washington,

Oleson: It actually turned black here, dark.

Causing a critical outage about 40 miles northwest of Pasco.

Toby Cossairt/Pasco Lineman Foreman I: took out one of the structures behind us which caused a cascading effect and ended up taking down 34 poles in this stretch.

Another dozen poles went down in Moses Lake.

Reed Campbell/Tri-Cities District Manager: a lot of customers out of service, we had irrigation out of service,

This two-mile stretch the 16-mile, 115 kilovolt Hatton Tap line cut off electricity to Big Bend Electric Coop.

Campbell: So this was an emergency.

Greg Wilfong/Pasco Lineman Foreman III: Hattan doesn't have a back door feed, so they've been able to move their farm load around to other feeders, but Hatton sub is out of service until we get this put together. So a radial line, no loop no back door feeds, becomes a big deal.

Crisis response often involves completing tasks within 24 hours that might normally take several months.

Cossairt: The biggest challenge is usually getting everything to the site to start the repairs, getting the equipment there, getting the roads cleaned up, public safety, and then getting the new material to us while we can still keep working.

Another challenge is working around the facilities of other utilities.

Olesen: It has under build on it, their equipment.

For BPA transmission line crews, the response process is polished.

Campbell: This is where TLM for Bonneville and particularly for the guys that we've been working with here at Pasco and the Spokane crew and the Ellensburg crew and the Coulee crew have been working together on these different locations, really shine. They really shine when the emergency happens.

Whatever happens on the system, whatever district is operating, when things come apart Bonneville comes together to restore power quickly and as safely. ###

