

Upgrade from 1A

With this model, relay systems are able to track if the power goes out and isolate the line. Customers will see a blink in the lights, but there should not be an outage.

This is partially why

CLPUD was able to restore power to nearly 4,000 customers relatively quickly during a storm on April 7.

Relays sense the current and voltage and send an alert to CLPUD operators.

"Those alerts go to the operators' cell phones so they can respond," Grove said. "We

have crews that come out of the Florence office. If it's a substation problem that our local servicemen can't handle, they come out of South Beach."

Shamus Gamache, CLPUD's electrical engineering supervisor, said, "We have better reliability because we

put in this new transmission system and also added capacity by finishing Kingwood and having it all connected."

CLPUD transferred Heceta Beach Substation's customer load to Kingwood once the substation was completed.

According to Chandler, Heceta Beach required upgrades to match the rest of the system's capacity. These included new breakers and feeds to the other two stations.

Heceta Beach's upgrades were especially important since the substation carries a third of the 11,000 customers in the Florence and Dunes City area. Once, in winter 2013, the station reached 99 percent capacity.

"We pride ourselves that people never lost service," Chandler said.

The third component of the \$6 million project was replacing 2.4 miles of transmission line on Highway 101 from north of Heceta Beach to 27th Street.

"On the transmission line from the highway, we collaborated and brought in crews from South Beach to fortify the Florence crew. We worked

together, probably more than we ever had, besides storms. And the Reedsport crew came up and took care of the customer work up here so we could free up the Florence crew to concentrate on this project," Grove said.

A flagging company from Coos Bay directed traffic.

Chandler noted that some of the older utility poles remain alongside CLPUD's new ones. These will be decommissioned after CLPUD's telecommunications partners switch their lines to the newer poles.

Throughout the project, CLPUD was able to use its own crews for most of the work.

Chandler said, "The nice thing about this is that it was company built and we didn't have to outsource service to anyone."

"There were a lot of linemen, journeyman craftsmen, wiremen, communications, shop, meter relay men and the engineers in house who designed everything and built the panels, tested all the relay and made sure everything works properly. All right here in our service territory,"

Gamache said. "It's been a great project and a pleasure to be part of. It's good to see that it's completed and I'll be able to close the SR work order number."

CLPUD projects that the Florence-area Electric System Upgrade will meet the growth and reliability of needs of customers for the next 20 years. This includes the trend for cannabis growers now that the product is legal.

"Marijuana farms can use a lot of our electricity load," Chandler said. "They are perfectly legal in Oregon, we just need to know. We ask that people tell their local electricity provider before they start plugging into the grid, or they could blow a transformer. That makes us very grumpy, and we would charge you for that."

Although CLPUD will now focus on other projects outside the Florence area, it has plans to remodel its Florence facility into a Southern Operations Facility soon.

Central Lincoln PUD can be reached in Florence at 966 Highway 101, by calling 541-997-3414 and by going to clpud.org.

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