

Crews' Courage Stamina and Skill Restore Service

When the winds begin to howl or freezing rain to fall, the power company line crews and the power dispatchers and service supervisors alert themselves for trouble calls.

Sometimes it's big trouble, for when it turns mean, the weather is a relentless foe of electric utility service facilities.

Like a military force, the maintenance and construction crews of Pacific Power & Light Company must be always ready for a sudden attack along the weather front. Every veteran



lineman of the company can tell tales of nights and days spent repairing transmission and distribution lines knocked out of service by sudden blows from a storm.

Ice is the worst foe. Wind is the next. Lightning and floods bring their share of troubles. Even a gentle rain breaking the long late summer coating of dust on insulators and making them conductors instead, can trigger short circuiting of lines and keep crews working all night.

Serious Storms Felt

At times during the 50-year history of Pacific Power & Light Company storm damage has been almost catastrophic, and the task of restoring electric service seemingly super-human. But out into the storms have gone the line crews, fighting not only the damage, but the continuing hazard of the storm.

Such a storm was the now historic "ice storm" of Oregon's mid-Willamette Valley in 1832. More than 100 miles of transmission line was knocked out of service. Ice built up on lines until they were three inches thick, were ripped from insulators and fell to the ground. The freezing held them to the surface, as the cold continued, and the lines couldn't be restrung.

Instead of a repair job it became a construction job. But what a job! Before the linemen could climb the poles they had to chip away the ice with hammers and axes. One crew worked 30 days straight, 10 hours a day.

Freak wind storms have caused damage that practically wiped out electric service over large areas. One in Walla Walla in the 1930's left several streets a tangle of toppled poles and wires.

Wires Sagged

In the early days, winds in the Yakima valley sometimes stretched the soft-drawn aluminum wire, used in early high-voltage transmission lines, until it sagged so low between the poles it almost touched the ground.

The gale-like blizzards that can sweep Wyoming and Montana are no joy to linemen in those states when wires are down.

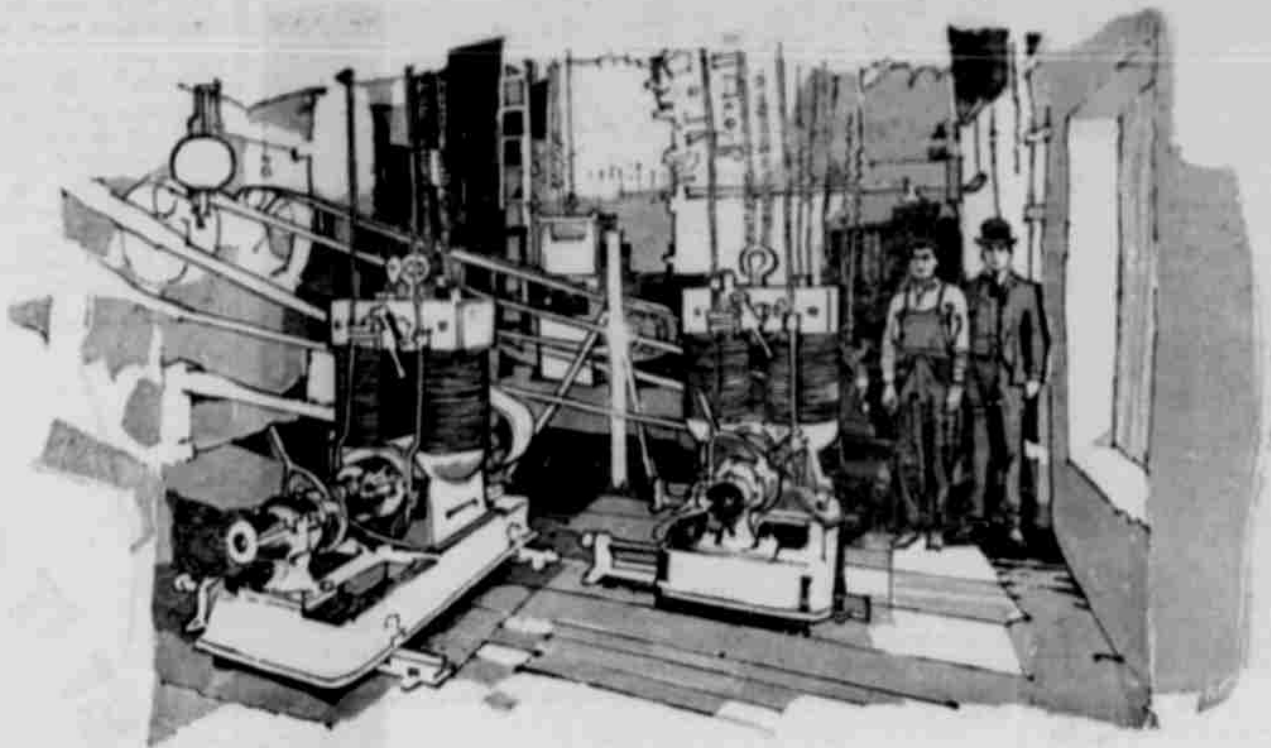
Improved construction and better materials have lessened possibilities of storm outages, but the line crews can never conclude that the battle with the weather is over. Their trucks, materials and varied specialized equipment are always geared for trouble at a moment's notice in order that Pacific Power's customers will be inconvenienced as little as possible.

Floods were a frequent problem in Oregon's Willamette Valley in the early years. Many a lineman was also a good oarsman. And mounting a pole from a boat, especially if the current were swift and the top of the pole swaying in an eight-foot circle, was a supreme test of a lineman's climbing skill.

Floods and ice also gave trouble in the early days to small hydroelectric generating plants. Sometimes there was not enough water left flowing in the winter to turn the turbines.

Pacific Power's battle with the weather to keep power flowing to its customers has often been at the point of high drama. At other times it has been for the line crews just steady, hard, exhausting toil. But the result has been a tradition for service despite obstacles that few companies can equate on any comparison.

Such was the credo of a young meterman, drafted during a storm emergency to track down started out in a truck, but the truck stalled in the snow. He hiked through drifts to a farmhouse and talked the farmer into letting him borrow a horse. The horse didn't like it, but the meterman forced him into drifts until he was tired of rebelling—then rode him bareback for miles up the line until he found the source of trouble.



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World's highest earth-fill dam is part of PP&L's newest and largest hydroelectric plant, the 268,000-kilowatt Swift Project on the Lewis River in southwestern Washington.

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During the past half-century, the electric switch has become the symbol of better living for thousands of customers served by Pacific Power & Light. Thanks to the efforts of hard-working "power pioneers," these 50 years have seen the light bulb of 1910 become today's all-electric home, with all it means to you in comfort and convenience.

Because of the big value and many benefits of electric service, use of dependable PP&L electricity has increased rapidly. In the past ten years alone, use of electricity in Pacific Powerland has more than doubled.

And today, just as throughout the past 50 years, PP&L continues to push ahead—developing new hydroelectric sites, exploring Northwest coal deposits as potential fuel for power, researching the possibilities for atomic power—to assure you plenty of dependable electricity for your better living in the years to come.



PACIFIC POWER & LIGHT

PP&L 50 YEARS