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For more information, contact:

Allan Urlis, director of communications

aurlis@iowarec.org

(o) 515-727-8945

(c) 515-720-2979

Safety should be top of mind in ice storm

- Iowans warned to stay away from downed power lines and instructed to report them immediately to their electricity provider -

DES MOINES, Iowa – Jan. 20, 2010 – Ice storms are likely to knock down more power lines than other severe weather events in the Midwest, which is why safety should be top of mind for all Iowans during this ice storm.

Anyone who sees a downed power line should assume it is energized, stay away from it and immediately call public safety officials or their electricity provider to report it.

“If someone is badly injured or killed from touching a fallen power line, family, friends and others who are impacted will wish the inconvenience of being without electricity was the worst of their concerns,” said Allan Urlis, director of communications for the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives. “It can’t be stressed often enough that if you see a downed line, assume it is an electric line, assume that it’s energized, report it and make sure any children in the area know they must stay away from it.”

Electric cooperative personnel are prepared to respond to any downed power line reports and ready to restore electricity as quickly and safely as possible when member-consumers lose electric service. The 43 electric cooperatives that provide electricity in each of Iowa 99 counties also are prepared to combine resources if necessary. Co-ops in areas not impacted by the storm will provide mutual assistance to other electric co-ops where power outages and damage have occurred.

Information about power outages impacting electric co-op member-consumers is available online at www.iowarec.org, which is the Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives Web site. Safety information also is posted on the Web site.

The Iowa Association of Electric Cooperatives, formed in 1942, represents the interests of and provides support to the electric cooperatives that provide power in each of Iowa’s 99 counties to approximately 650,000 people.

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