



She couldn't stay and chat, though. She had to catch the last half of "Days of our Lives".

Not all customers reacted so positively. One man displayed his frustration by throwing the spoiled remains of his refrigerated goods into a garbage bag and depositing it on the floor of Eau Claire's general office. He didn't wait for a receipt.

Several other customers staged a demonstration outside the same office. Lynn Moline, NSP's coordinator of public information, tried to

console them to no avail. The Eau Claire TV station filmed the confrontation and broadcast a segment of it on the nightly news which spawned a rash of calls and letters from viewers who had little sympathy for the protestors. One customer, Todd Alan Hanson, wrote:

"I saw the few north side residents torment you and have also heard tales of the bizarre things angry citizens have done. I ask only that you do not lose faith in people. These cretins and perpetrators of such mindless acts have as their curse to live in their ignorance and suffer with their stupidity. Forget the actions and words of that mindless scum and hear the praises of those who commend your efforts!"

The efforts of NSP employees following the storm ranged from normal dedication to extraordinary devotion. Leo Eichenger, for example, who is still recovering from a heart attack he suffered not long ago, worked almost 100 hours that first week. Jim Willson saved the day when the emergency generator powering NSP's radio transmitter tower ran low on propane the night of the storm. He ran home and got

two propane tanks from his travel trailer.

And where would the crews have been without transportation? Vern Myren's vehicle maintenance people replaced five broken axles in five days. That's more than they normally go through in two years. To top it off, they replaced one axle while the truck was parked on a city street—and the bucket was being used by line crews at the same time!

War is hell, but is being without electricity worse? One caller, who identified himself as a Korean War veteran, claims it is.

Another caller claimed he was awakened at 3:30 a.m. by an NSP service truck driving past his house. He said he didn't mind being roused from a sound sleep but he wanted to know why the crew didn't stop and restore his service.

Still another caller pleaded, "I know I should have paid my bill sooner but please turn the power back on. I promise to come down and pay you as soon as I can."

And probably the briefest call was from a minister who identified himself then simply repeated, "God bless you. God bless you." ■



"Thanks NSP" T-shirts are available at Modern Screen Printing, 414 Water St., and the Shirt Junction, London Square Mall, both in Eau Claire.