

Storm leaves thousands

house, hugged an NSP Abbotsford lineman and gave him a big kiss," he said.

"Another crew was cheered by residents when power was restored. One crew member from Wisconsin Public Service Corp. would yell, 'Power to the people!' each time he switched power back on; the customers loved it," Englund said. □

— By Vicki Stavig and
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Theisen: Thanks to all of you

"Name a problem — we had it," said Ed Theisen, NSP Wisconsin company president. "When I think back on the recent storm that hit western Wisconsin I'm reminded of many stories of how NSP employees worked beyond normal limits to restore service to thousands of customers. We had never faced a challenge like the one which confronted us July 15. The storm put transmission lines, substations, feeders and distribution lines over a wide area out of service.

"Line crews, tree trimmers, dispatchers, people who answered phones and others worked from sunrise to sunset for a full week," Theisen said. "The verdict on how well we do our jobs comes from our customers, and on this occasion one lineman who worked on a backyard distribution line after that storm knew he was being closely scrutinized by people anxious to have power again.

"The results? Our customers were overwhelmingly supportive and cooperative," he said. "In many cases they cheered and applauded our linemen when power was restored. I believe those smiles and 'thumbs up' signs were more than just thanks for turning the lights on. Our customers were showing they recognize, and are thankful for, the dedication to service shown by all our employees.

"Perhaps those feelings were summed up in an anonymous greeting card left at the Eau Claire general office after power was restored. On the inside it read, 'NSP — you light up my life!'

"My thanks to all of you for a job well done," Theisen said. □

McCarthy: I am proud of you

"Time and time again NSP employees demonstrate their excellence, dedication and loyalty to customer service," said Don McCarthy, Minnesota company president and chairman of the board.

"These admirable qualities are especially visible during major outages, such as the ones caused by the July 15 storm. Employees worked as a team, doing whatever had to be done to handle the situation," he said. "In many cases that meant working around the clock with little or no

rest, often traveling to other locations to lend a hand.

"My sincere thanks to all of you and to your families, who through their understanding and cooperation helped get the job done. The industry and our customers consider NSP a top-notch utility — you are the reason for that," McCarthy said.

"I am proud of you." □