CapX2020

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Helicopter involved in construction work along I-94 between Monticello and St. Cloud
Implosive connectors also will be used to join transmission wire

Minneapolis – August 15, 2011 – The CapX2020 utilities will begin using a helicopter for work on the Monticello-St. Cloud 345 kilovolt (kV) transmission line project on Tuesday, August 16.

A helicopter will be flying in close proximity to the new transmission line structures along Interstate 94 between Monticello and St. Cloud. It will assist in the stringing of transmission conductor (wire) from structure to structure as well as for installing supporting hardware. Most transmission line work will be performed without touching the ground.

Implosive connectors will also be used in the power line construction to splice transmission conductor joints. The split second detonation creates a flash and a loud boom near the top of the transmission structure. Implosive connectors produce a smoother, stronger and more electrically efficient connection. The connectors also can significantly reduce construction time, resulting in fewer environmental impacts and lower project costs.

The helicopter and implosive connector work is expected to last through October.

Motorists are reminded to keep their eyes on the road. Don't stop. Don't gawk. Drive safely.

About the Monticello-St. Cloud project
The Monticello-St. Cloud project is a double circuit capable 345 kV transmission line between the new Quarry Substation west of St. Cloud and the existing Monticello Substation. Single pole steel structures were predominantly used to reduce land impacts and are spaced about five per mile. The 28-mile line is expected to be in service by late 2011.

About CapX2020

CapX2020 is a joint initiative of 11 investor-owned, cooperative and municipal utilities in Minnesota and the surrounding region to upgrade and expand the electric transmission grid to ensure continued reliable and affordable service. The CapX2020 Group 1 projects include three 345 kV transmission lines and a 230 kV line. It is the largest development of new transmission in the upper Midwest in 30 years. The projects are projected to cost nearly $2 billion and cover a distance of more than 700 miles. The new infrastructure will provide a foundation for the region's projected electricity growth as well as connect into renewable energy sources in southern and western Minnesota and the Dakotas.