

# VISUALIZING RELIABILITY HIGHLIGHTS BEST SOLUTIONS FOR FUTURE INVESTMENTS

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## ✘ A CASE STUDY:

How Heartland REMC Uses Their Data to Tell the Whole Story



*Source: Heartland REMC Website Gallery*

## BACKGROUND



- 9 counties
- 17,360 members
- 2,291.7 miles of line
- 6.65 members per mile of line
- 58 employees



**MIKE KELSEY**

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**Heartland REMC**  
*Operations Supervisor*

## BEFORE PWRMETRIX

Before Heartland REMC, a 17,400-member cooperative in Markle, Indiana became a PwrMetric customer in 2014, Mike Kelsey, operations supervisor, had a different view of the task of calculating reliability. The reports coming out of the co-op's outage management system were "a bunch of numbers that were boring to look at, especially if you tried to show them to senior management or the Board," he observes.

***"And if you are not looking at them everyday, they were rather intimidating."***



## WITH PWRMETRIX



With PwrMetric, "the software puts those numbers into graphs that are much more visually appealing. Our CEO shows them to our Board and they clearly tell a story.

***I can compare our reliability to other co-ops, to investor-owned utilities, here in the Midwest or in other regions. That really drove home the value,"***

- Kelsey



## COMPARISON MAKES THE DATA MORE RELEVANT

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Heartland REMC is using PwrMetrix to find problem areas within its utility system, pinpoint the causes of outages, and undertake a preventative maintenance program. “We discovered that the top cause of issues on our worst-performing feeders was animal-caused outages, usually from squirrels,” he says. In 2019, Heartland REMC crews “blanketed those feeders with animal mitigation” says Kelsey. That included placing black wrap on poles to prevent claws from gaining grip, squirrel guards on bushings and coated jumpers on pole top devices.

“By this summer we’ll be able to evaluate the impact of our measures – has the dynamic shifted? Have we reduced animal outages?” He says that the co-op will continue to track its reliability reports to identify issues and plan for future changes.

# INTEGRATION MADE EASIER TO UNLOCK THE DATA

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In January, the process of migrating data from the outage management system to PwrMetrix was made much easier with the establishment of a MultiSpeak integration of Milsoft's OMS and PwrMetrix.

Kelsey says that it is easy to summarize his satisfaction as a PwrMetrix customer.

1

The reports are so easy to run, and they put the information you need at your fingertips.

2

The support we receive throughout the whole PwrMetrix team is exceptional. You never feel you are a burden to them. I know when we started using PwrMetrix, I was on the phone quite a bit with Marlon [Umali] and others. I never felt that my questions were a burden – quite the opposite. They always took the time to work with me. And Marlon is very good at following up. He'll always circle back after they work on some improvements for us to see if I have other questions."





## MORE WAYS TO SHARE DATA

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Inspired by their success with PwrMetrix, Heartland and several other Indiana electric cooperatives launched a reliability benchmark group in 2019 to share experiences and discuss ways to expand the use of operational data. The group has now had three “roundtable” meetings with 12 co-ops participating in each call. “We talk about how we used the software to pinpoint issues, how we focused our dollars on solutions. We have more co-ops interested in joining in us in future meetings,” says Kelsey.