

## NERC to coordinate Y2K drills

by Don Nord

Together with utilities across the United States and Canada, Western will participate April 9 in a year 2000 drill coordinated by the North American Electric Reliability Council. NERC has lead responsibility for ensuring Y2K readiness of the electric power industry.

The upcoming drill is intended to exercise contingency plans that have been developed by each utility, including Western, as well as those of NERC's reliability regions. Western operates in two of NERC's 10 regions: the Mid-Continent Area Power Pool and the Western Systems Coordinating Council. The drill will confirm the soundness of contingency plans or identify weaknesses needing correction.

### Participation enhances reliability

"We hope participating in this drill will prove we can continue safe and reliable operation of our portion of the bulk interconnected power system, despite losing portions of our communication systems," said **Earl Cass**, Power Systems Dispatch assistant director, who serves as UGP's Y2K



drill coordinator in Watertown.

In Western's regions, design teams are developing drill scenarios that address key risks. Scenarios are specific to local control areas—the dispatch centers in charge of balancing

load and generation for a given region. However, all scenarios include simulated loss of primary telephone and data communications, requiring the use of alternative communication methods, which will demonstrate our ability to maintain electrical grid stability and integrity using backup communication methods. One backup method under consideration is satellite phone systems.

In addition to local control area scenarios, WSCC and MAPP will conduct communication drills between control areas. Also, NERC is coordinating the drill of continentwide communication through backup channels among security coordinators. A second, more in-depth, continentwide drill is scheduled for Sept. 8-9, 1999.

**(Note: Nord is Western's Y2K coordinator.)**

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— **Earl Cass**

## Drill coordinators have big job

Western's regions are leading drill preparation efforts, working with the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, MAPP, WSCC and other utilities within control areas.

Western's drill coordinators are:

- **Earl Cass**, UGP
- **Bob Evans**, DSW
- **Jasen Strutt**, SN

### ■ **Chuck Weaver**, RM

Western's **Mark Fidrych**, RM security coordinator, also serves as WSCC drill coordinator.

