THE WIRE

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IMPA
Indiana Municipal Power Agency

IMPA Focuses on Cybersecurity

As the world becomes increasingly reliant on electronics and digital connections, cyberattacks continue to increase in sophistication and frequency. Corporations and agencies across the globe have reported a remarkable spike in the amount of cyberattacks since 2019, and electric utilities have been no exception. As an essential service provider, the Indiana Municipal Power Agency (IMPA) joins hundreds of other public power providers in fully realizing the importance of protecting the United States electric grid and preventing cyberthreats from becoming a widescale reality.

According to the American Public Power Association, the electric industry is the only critical infrastructure sector besides nuclear power with a federal

- continued on page 3

Inside

IMPA Adds More Solar Parks

In just the last few months, IMPA has brought 33 megawatts (MW) of solar capacity online. The recent additions to the company's power supply portfolio include the Columbia City Solar Park, the Peru 2 Solar Park, the Richmond 5 Solar Park, the Anderson 4 Solar Park, and the Anderson 5 Solar Park. With these newest solar sites now operational, IMPA has over 140 MW of solar capacity in its power supply portfolio overall.

"This is an exciting time for solar energy in Indiana," said Raj Rao, President and CEO of IMPA. "We are proud to be one of the utilities leading the way for solar development throughout the Midwest."

- continued on page 4

Agency Pursues Battery Storage Pilot Program

IMPA regularly takes the initiative to investigate new technologies so that the Agency can provide members with honest feedback about these technologies before taking the financial risk of investing in extensive projects. One of the most recent experiments of this kind is IMPA's battery storage pilot program. Battery storage technology has the possibility to reduce the problem of renewables only supplying power intermittently. While prices on battery technology have fallen recently, it is still expensive. However, IMPA's investment in this technology could prepare the Agency and the Board of Commissioners with information about batteries as prices continue to fall in the future.

IMPA's dedication to researching new technologies helps the Agency and its member communities stay on the cutting edge of advancements in the energy sector. Throughout the entirety of this project, IMPA leaders will report to the Board of Commissioners regarding the technology's costs, installation, operation, and more. While the Agency's battery storage pilot program is only in the development stages, the information to come from the project will benefit all members through education and reliable data from a trusted source.

IMPA 2021 Workshops

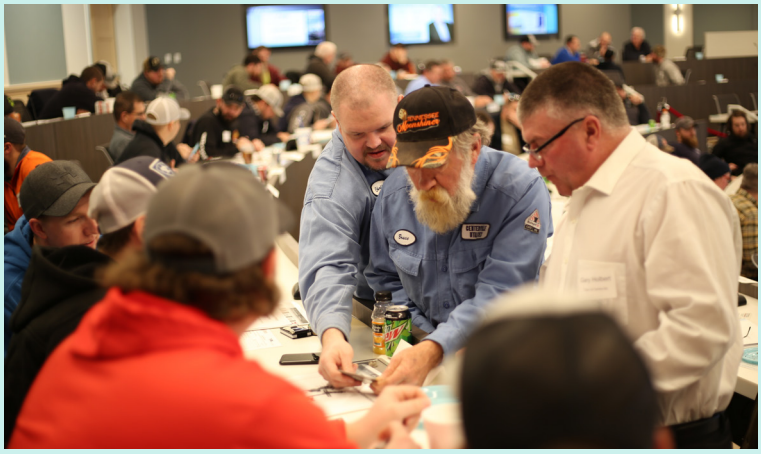
This July, IMPA brought back its series of monthly, in-person training programs geared toward municipal utilities for the first time since the pandemic. Covering a variety of topics, these sessions are meant to meet the needs of utility personnel, including lineworkers, engineers, customer service specialists, and more. The series kicked off with workshops regarding substation maintenance and cybersecurity, and several more are planned through the rest of the year.

The workshops are free to all IMPA members and member employees, and include all course materials, a certificate of completion, and a complimentary lunch. IMPA staff is thrilled to bring back these in-person events to provide training resources to attendees. For details about upcoming workshops and registration, visit IMPA's website at www.impa.com/impaworkshops.

September 8
Vegetation Management

October 6
Asset Mapping & GIS Best Practices

November 10
Accident Investigation & Developing a Safety Culture



Cybersecurity

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authority—the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC)—mandating utilities to have standards in place for cybersecurity. Since NERC set forth cybersecurity guidelines in 2016, IMPA has thoroughly met and exceeded expectations to protect the Agency's power assets. In the last five years, IMPA staff members have completed quarterly security training sessions and have undergone simulated phishing attempts on a regular basis to better recognize cyber threats. While staff training is a large component of protecting any utility from malicious threats, it is only one piece of the risk reduction measures that all public power communities should consider.

In a recent cybersecurity workshop held at IMPA's conference center, cybersecurity expert Steven Dyer gave his opinion on the two most critical risk reduction methods he recommends to all utilities: multi-factor authentication and intrusion detection software. Multi-factor authentication is an electronic security enhancement that requires any utility employee to provide two or more pieces of authentication before being granted access to workplace devices, networks, and applications. Intrusion detection systems monitor workplace networks for malicious activity and report suspicious activity to a designated administrator.

"In addition to multi-factor authentication and intrusion detection, staff training is imperative," said Dyer. "Employees are by far the biggest threat to utilities if they're not trained, which is why utilities have to understand the importance of training staff members and holding them accountable."

Even with all the appropriate precautions in place, the question for utilities across the country has changed from if a cyberattack will happen to when. Utilities and municipalities are encouraged to develop response plans for when both cyber and physical threats arise so that incidents are handled as competently as possible. IMPA consistently works to keep its environment, both in the physical and digital world, as safe as possible, and development of safety guidelines and responses is constantly underway. With hundreds of thousands of customers depending on IMPA's smooth operation, the Agency takes severe measures against any and all potential threats.

"Access to power is a crucial need for communities and individuals in the modern world, which is why we take so much pride in providing our electric services to IMPA's 61 members," said Raj Rao, President and CEO of IMPA. "We continue to adapt to the ever-changing digital world and meet our concerns about cybercrime with action to ensure that our services never halt."

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IMPA Solar Parks

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IMPA's solar program continues to gain momentum with one solar park still planned for completion by the end of the year, and nine more expected to begin operation in 2022. Counting IMPA's online solar parks, solar sites under construction, and plans for future construction, IMPA has secured 185 MW in its power supply portfolio. The Agency aims to surpass 200 MW of solar capacity by 2023. To learn more about IMPA's solar program, visit www.impa.com/solar.