Basin Electric's Headquarters West (new building) took on a new look this summer. In late June, contractors started painting the outside of the building, giving it a white finish to match Headquarters East (the existing building). Painting will be done in August, depending on weather.

CONSTRUCTION ZONE

Contractors are busy working inside Headquarters West. The more visible projects, which give the interior a new look almost daily, include installing drywall, tile, and carpet throughout the building.

The Headquarters expansion project also includes the construction of an onsite warehouse/shop, which was completed last winter and came in $500,000 under budget. The shop's size and features enhance the safety for and productivity of the facilities division.

By Tammy Langerud

There's a saying that there are two seasons in the Midwest: winter and construction season. Basin Electric has three major construction projects underway that are an investment to the future of the cooperative, its employees, and its members.

Headquarters construction

In 2015, Basin Electric's board of directors approved an addition to the Headquarters building in Bismarck to support the future of the cooperative workforce.

Headquarters West (new building) will add 91,000 square feet to the existing Headquarters building. This will allow all Headquarters employees, who have been spread out across four locations due to limited office space, to work at one location.

Headquarters West, which will be four stories tall, will be completed in October. In November, approximately 175 employees will move in. A remodel of the existing building will be completed by early 2019.

Located near Tioga, ND, the Tande Substation is part of the Antelope Valley Station (AVS) to Neset transmission project. The complete AVS to Neset project is expected to be in service by Oct. 31.

Antelope Valley Station to Neset transmission project

Three elements remain in the Antelope Valley Station (AVS) to Neset transmission project. Crews are currently working on the Judson to Neset line, which will contain 60 miles of 345-kilovolt (kV) line supported by 375 poles. At of the end of July, 90 percent of the structures were complete and 70 percent of the conductor was strung.

The project also includes the installation of the new Tande Substation and modifications to the existing Neset Substation, both located near Tioga, ND. Both substation work efforts are in final construction phase, followed by commissioning efforts.

The complete AVS to Neset project, which was started in 2014 and includes a total of 200 miles of line, is expected to be in service by Oct. 31. The remaining efforts that will continue into 2018-2019 include completing reclamation and re-vegetation, and monitoring of those areas until achieving satisfactory results. In addition, Basin Electric will replace trees and shrubs that were removed for the project and monitor their survival rates.

Blaisdell to Plaza transmission

The Blaisdell to Plaza project consists of 30 miles of 115-kV line, running between Blaisdell and Plaza, ND. Construction crews started working on the foundations in early July, and started setting structures in early August. This project will be completed by the end of 2017.

Urea project

The urea construction project at the Great Plains Synfuels Plant is about 90 percent complete, with anticipated commercial operation beginning in January 2018. Located within the existing Synfuels Plant, it occupies more than 20 acres of the 640-acre plant site.

The project, which started in June 2014, includes construction of the production plant, storage facilities for granular urea, diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) and carbon dioxide, a rail spur, and rail and truck load-out facilities.

The completion of the project will add three new products made at the Synfuels Plant.

- Urea, a granular fertilizer that adds nitrogen into soil, will be the 11th product made at the Synfuels Plant. Urea production requires anhydrous ammonia and carbon dioxide, both of which are already produced at the Synfuels Plant.

- DEF will be the 12th product for the Synfuels Plant. DEF is a water solution of urea used to reduce NOx emissions in diesel engines, as mandated by the federal government on all new diesel engines.

- The urea facility will also produce a high-purity liquid carbon dioxide (CO_2). The CO_2 will be stored onsite for use in urea production in the event of an ammonia plant outage. Additionally, some liquid will be available for local markets.

The portal reclaimer will reclaim and transfer product from the urea storage building to the screening tower for final screening before being loaded on trucks to rail and delivered to customers. The 53,000-ton storage building, which was destroyed in a July 2016 storm, is now nearly complete with contractors installing wall and roof cladding, as well as the remaining structural steel on the outside of the building. On the inside, contractors continue work on the retaining walls, floor, and anchor rods for the portal reclaimer rail.