

A major winter storm sweeps through Minnesota and Wisconsin, but very few people had power outages.

That might be the result of Xcel Energy's efforts to keep tree branches away from electric lines. Brian Elwood, a spokesman for Xcel, says many outages during snowstorms happen when tree limbs loaded with wet snow drop onto power lines. For that reason, Xcel has worked to cut away branches that have grown close to the wires. Elwood also believes a lack of wind during the storm prevented lines from being blown down.