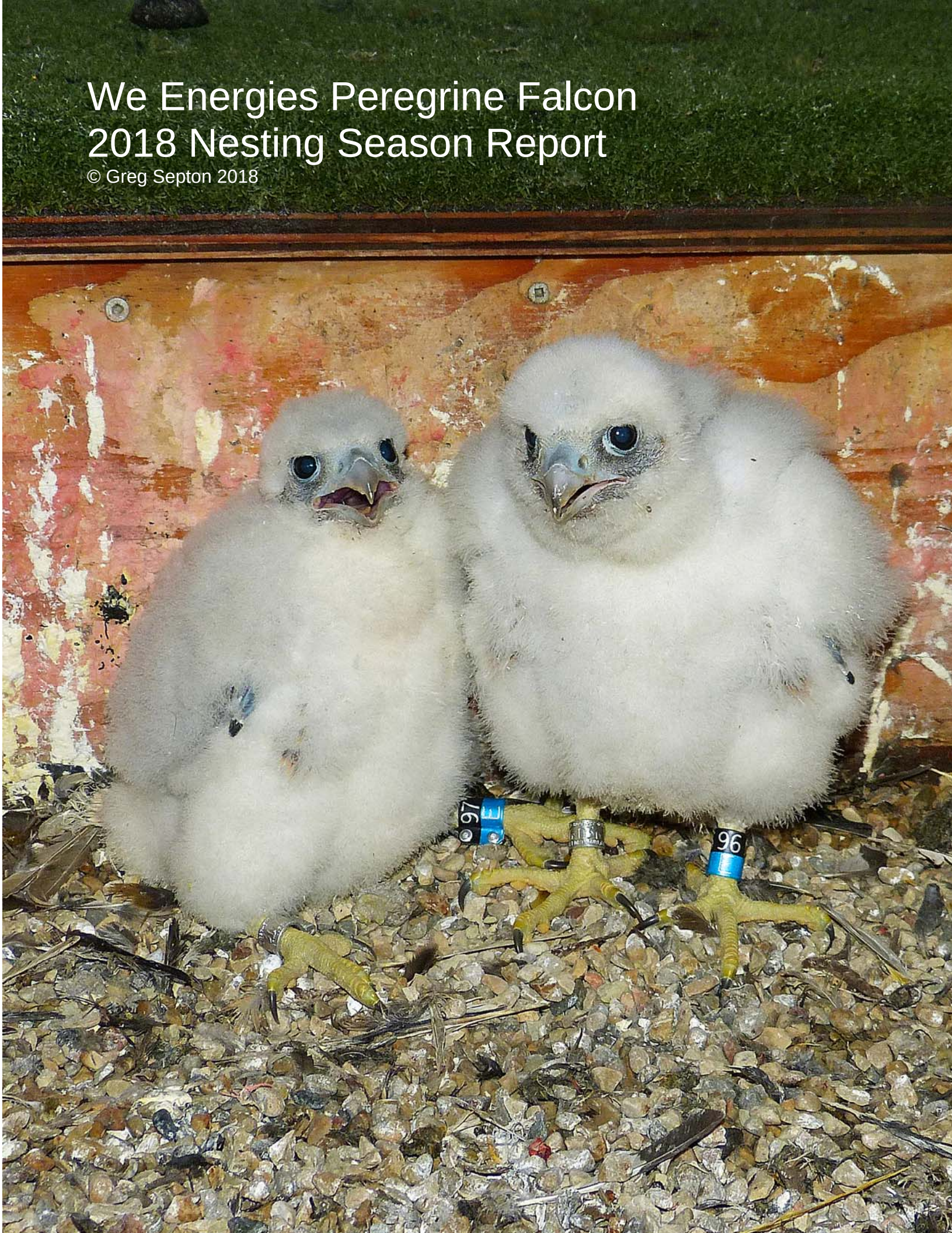
We Energies Peregrine Falcon 2018 Nesting Season Report



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Cover Image: *Gunner and Kluski – two male peregrines produced this year at Oak Creek Power Plant – back in their nest box shortly after banding.*

2018 nesting season overview

Seventeen young peregrines were produced at We Energies sites this year – 15 in Wisconsin and two in Michigan. The total number of peregrines produced at We Energies power plants in Wisconsin reached 251 this year. Adding another 22 peregrines produced at the Presque Isle Power Plant in Michigan brings the We Energies total to 273.

Since 1987, a known total of 1,671 peregrines have been produced in the wild in Wisconsin. Peregrines first began nesting at power plants in Wisconsin in 1992 and since then a total of 765 (46 percent) have been produced at these sites. During this same period, 273 peregrines were produced at We Energies power plants in Wisconsin, which represents 16 percent of the overall total, and 36 percent of all the peregrines produced at power plants in the state.

Between December 2017 and January 2018, We Energies IT Support Specialist Pete Dickinson and I installed new pan/tilt/zoom webcams at all five We Energies power plants hosting peregrine nest boxes. The amazing new webcams made reading bands and identifying adults this year a true pleasure. The new webcams also were connected to ExacqVision – a software program that identifies and records 30 days of activity. With this program, we can go back and look at any moment in time. If or when there is a problem, we can identify exactly what occurred. This has taken the guesswork out of trying to determine causes of losses and injuries. We also can review footage to identify visiting falcons and document when territorial battles occur. Plus, I now can reposition and monitor all the webcams live, side by side on one page, making it easy to keep an eye on activity at all the nest sites. Finally, all the We Energies peregrine nest site webcams are available as live streams to the general public on YouTube during the nesting season.

Once again, I began monitoring nest boxes via the webcams in late January and was able to identify all the banded adults at each site well before egg-laying began in mid-March. As eggs were being laid and incubation got underway, Senior Communications Specialist Cathy Schulze again reached out to the community and news media as she has each season and provided educational opportunities for schools within the We Energies service area. Her efforts working with schools and the media is to say the least, impressive and much appreciated.

As summer ended this year, I looked at something I hadn't really considered over the years – the decommissioning of a power plant and what it means for the peregrines that have called these sites home for many years. This year, the Pleasant Prairie Power Plant (PPPP) is being decommissioned, and the Presque Isle Power Plant (PIPP) will be following in its wake, beginning next year.

To maintain the critical number of urban peregrine nest sites, We Energies was been proactive and planned ahead by identifying other suitable, tall, human-built structures within relative proximity to both PPPP and PIPP – well before these sites are deconstructed. The plan was to get replacement nest boxes installed at nearby suitable sites in the hope that the falcons will find them, and in time, move in so there would be no net loss in the total number of nest sites.

In February, I visited four potential sites in Pleasant Prairie and determined that the Ardent Mills site (image below) – 2.65 miles north of PPPP – showed the greatest potential to serve as a replacement site.

Mike Grisar contacted Pat Hicks, manager at the Ardent Mills site, and we met with him in May to discuss the possibility of a nest box. Pat mentioned he'd seen peregrines on site in the past and that he was enthusiastic about the possibility of having peregrines nest at his plant. As a follow-up to our meeting, Pat attended the banding event the following week at PPPP.

Nest box plans and images were then sent to Pat, and a nest box was subsequently constructed and installed. We hope to have a webcam installed here as well to monitor the site and determine when the PPPP peregrines move in. I'll be closing off the old nest box at PPPP in late August to encourage the peregrines to move a bit north to what we all hope will become their new home.

The Ardent Mills site with its tall elevator and silos should be an attractive site for peregrines. With a new nest box in place, we'll know more come spring.

After we finished banding this year at PIPP, Plant Manager Frank Paris and I drove around Marquette, Michigan, and similarly identified a few potential replacement sites for a nest box after PIPP decommissioning. Although there are not many options for the Marquette area, we did locate one site that may have potential, and we are looking into that one.

I again thank everyone at We Energies who I've had the pleasure of working with over the past year. From plant engineers, technicians and managers at the power plants to IT, environmental and communications personnel, and corporate executives – there is commitment at all levels, so the peregrines should continue to do well.

Special thanks again to Mike Grisar whose steadfast friendship and support of peregrine recovery and management efforts on a corporate level makes everything run smoothly.

In closing, We Energies can be proud of its environmental commitment and the role it has played in returning the peregrine falcon to Wisconsin. The company clearly demonstrates what can be accomplished with long-term support and involvement, and serves as a model for what can be done when a decision is made to make a difference.

Looking forward to another productive nesting season next spring!

Greg Septon
Peregrine manager

Pleasant Prairie: We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant

Nesting details

Adult female: Unbanded

Adult male: PBR (b/r) 07/B, was produced in 2009 at Milwaukee's Miller Brewery nest site. This was PBR's seventh year at this site.

Eggs: 4 laid between March 22-29
Projected hatch dates: April 29-May 1
Eggs hatched: 4 between April 30-May 2
Banded: 2 females and 2 males on May 21
Site visits: Jan 29, May 21

Unbanded adult female with four young.

Note: This nest site has been successful for 22 consecutive years but is now being decommissioned. A new site – Ardent Mills – located 2.5 miles to the north will host a new nest box. Peregrines have been observed hunting at the Ardent Mills site and, in time, should relocate there.

This site has been active since 1997, producing a total of 65 young (2.95/year).

Four youngsters back home after banding.

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Lisa	Female	(b/blu) 53/W	1947-01178
CJ	Female	(b/blu) 54/W	1947-01179
Windsor	Male	(b/blu) 93/E	1156-03671
Rimfire	Male	(b/blu) 94/E	1156-03672

GPS: 42 degrees 32' 16 N, 87 degrees 54' 13 W

Oak Creek: We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant

Nesting details

Adult female: Eurus (b/blu) 48/M, produced in 2016 at the Georgia Pacific Mill nest site in Green Bay, Wisconsin. This was her first year at this site.

Adult male: Michael (b/r) P/58, produced in 2015 at the Racine County Courthouse nest site in Racine, Wisconsin, was back for his second year.

Eggs: 3 laid between March 25-30
Projected hatch dates: May 2-3
Eggs hatched: 2 between May 2-4
Banded: 2 males on May 22
Site visits: Feb. 27, May 22

This site has been active since 1998, producing a total of 60 young (2.86/year).

A relaxing June afternoon at the nest box for Eurus and her youngsters.

Banding day for Gunner and Kluski.

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Gunner	Male	(b/blu) 96/E	1156-03674
Kluski	Male	(b/blu) 97/E	1156-03675

GPS: 42 degrees 84’ 20 N, 87 degrees 82’ 83 W

Milwaukee: We Energies Valley Power Plant

Nesting details

Adult female: Unbanded

Adult male: Hercules (b/r) 60/R, produced in 2011 at the St. Joe's Hospital nest site in Milwaukee – back for his fifth year.

Eggs: 4 between March 22-31
Projected hatch fates: May 1-3
Eggs hatched: 4 between May 2-5
Site visit: May 24

This site has been active since 2002, producing a total of 38 young (2.23/yr.).

Unbanded adult female brooding her young.

The four young on banding day.

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Peaches	Female	(b/blu) 61/W	1947-01186
Shyrea	Female	(b/blu) 62/W	1947-01187
Chris	Male	(b/blu) 98/E	1156-03676
Marley	Male	(b/blu) 99/E	1156-03677

Note: 98/E was found dead Aug. 21, 2018 at 3600 S. Lake Dr., St. Francis, WI
GPS: 43 degrees 02' N, 87 degrees 57' 49 W

Port Washington: We Energies Port Washington Generating Station

Nesting details

Adult female: Brinn (b/r) 84/X, produced in 2012 at Gold Hoist cliff, Split Rock State Park, Lake, Co., Minnesota. This is her fifth year at this site.

Adult male: Beasley (b/r) P/07, produced in 2014 at We Energies Milwaukee County Power Plant in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. This was his second year at this site.

Eggs: 5 laid, March 21-31
Projected hatch dates: April 29-May 3
Eggs hatched: 5 between May 3-6
Banded: 2 females and 2 males on May 24
Site visit: May 24

This site has been active since 2000, producing a total of 63 young (3.32/year).

Breakfast.

The four young after banding.

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Lillie	Female	(b/blu) A/43	1947-01188
MacKena	Female	(b/blu) A/44	1947-01189
Larsen	Male	(b/blu) 00/R	1156-03680
Shea	Male	(b/blu) 01/R	1156-03679

GPS: 43 degrees 23’ 01 N, 87 degrees 52’ 13 W

We Energies Presque Isle Power Plant, Marquette, Michigan

Nesting details

Adult female: Unbanded

Adult male: Unbanded – likely the same male present since 2011.

Eggs: 4 laid between April 21-29
Projected hatch dates: May 29-31
Eggs hatched: 2 between May 29-30
Banded: 2 males on June 16
Site visits: Jan. 17, June 16

Above: The unbanded adult female.
Left: Her two sons back home shortly after they were banded .

Note: This nest site is scheduled to be decommissioned. A number of potential replacement sites for a nest box in Marquette are under consideration.

This site has been active since 2011, producing a total of 22 young (2.75/year).

Banding data

Name	Sex	Project band	USFWS band
Tim	Male	(b/blu) 46/S	1266-00199
Dan	Male	(b/blu) 47/S	1266-00200

GPS: 46 degrees 34’ 46 N, 087 degrees 23’ 43 W

We Energies-produced peregrine falcons nesting in 2018

Melvin (b/r) 80/P, produced in 2013 at the We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, paired with an unbanded adult female at the MG&E site in Madison, Wisconsin, producing four young. This was Melvin's fourth year at MG&E.

Beaster (b/g) 67/M, produced in 2005 at the We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, paired again with female **(b/g) R/13**, produced in 2007 at the Tower Building in South Bend, Indiana. The pair nested at the Racine County Courthouse site in Racine, Wisconsin, producing three young. This was Beaster's 11th year at this site.

Jeffery (b/blu) 52/E, a male produced in 2016 at the We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, displaced the resident male and took over the Market Tower nest site in Indianapolis, Indiana. He paired with the resident unbanded female and produced two young.

Seapro (b/g) R/97, a female produced in 2009 at the We Energies Port Washington Generating Station in Port Washington, Wisconsin, is believed to again have paired with **Frisco (b/g) K/13**, a male produced in 2006 at the Lock and Dam 1 site in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The pair nested at the UMN Mayo Building site, producing one young that died due to frounce.

Beasley (b/r) P/07, produced in 2014 at the Milwaukee County Power Plant, paired with **Brinn (b/r) 84/X,** produced in 2012 at Gold Hoist cliff, Split Rock State Park, Lake County, Minnesota. The pair nested at the We Energies Port Washington Generating Station, producing five young, one of which died in the nest. This was Beasley's second year at this site.

Mimi (b/r) D/54, produced in 2014 at the Milwaukee County Power Plant, paired with **Rupert (b/r) H/24**, produced in 2014 at the UW-Oshkosh nest site in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The pair nested at the UW-Green Bay Cofrin Library site in Green Bay, Wisconsin, producing three young. This was Mimi's third year at this site.

Suzuki (b/g) E/06, produced in 2006 at the We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, paired again with **Smokey (b/g) 82/A**, produced in 2003 at the Edgewater site in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. The pair nested again at the Valero Renewables site in Jefferson, Wisconsin. Five eggs were laid but none hatched. Suzuki has been present at this site for at least 10 years.

Squawker (b/g) 48/M, a male produced in 2003 at the We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, paired with an unbanded female. The pair nested at the Evanston Library site in Evanston, Illinois, where they produced four young. This was Squawker's 12th year at this site.

Shadow (b/r) C/96, produced in 2014 at the We Energies Pleasant Prairie Power Plant in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, was captured by hand to read her band at a nest site at Burns Harbor (Arcelor-Mittal Steel), Indiana. She may have unsuccessfully nested there during the previous year. She was paired with an unidentified male and raised three young.

Lightning (b/r) 84/R, produced in 2012 at the We Energies Oak Creek Power Plant in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, paired with an unbanded adult female producing three young. This was Lightning's fourth year at this site.

We Energies-produced peregrine falcons identified / dead / injured - 2018

Woomera (b/blu) 72/N, a female produced in 2016 at the Milwaukee County Power Plant in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, was found dead on April 22, 2018, along the sidewalk on the west side of Riverside Drive in Allouez, Wisconsin. This location is very near the Highway 172 bridge just up the Fox River from the Georgia Pacific Mill. Cause of death could be vehicle collision. Although it is not known if peregrines have attempted nesting under the Hwy 172 bridge, from their perspective it is an attractive site for nesting and/or hunting and would be worth watching.

Chris (b/blu) 98/E, a male produced in 2018 at the We Energies Valley Power Plant in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was found dead on Aug. 21, 2018, inside fencing at the FBI facility at 3600 S. Lake Dr., St. Francis, Wisconsin, (Milwaukee County). A necropsy is pending.

Peregrine production at We Energies nest sites - 1997-2018

Year	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Site																							
Pleasant Prairie Power Plant	2	3	2	3	4	1	4	2	5	5	2	4	1	4	4	3	4	4	2	1	2	4	66
Oak Creek Power Plant		4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	4	2	3	0	3	4	4	0	4	4	2	64
Port Washington Generating Stn.				3	3	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	3	4	2	4	4	2	4	2	3	5	64
Milwaukee Valley Power Plant						4	4	3	2	4	0	0	2	2	1	3	2	0	4	0	3	4	38
Neenah, Minergy									2														2
Presque Isle Power Plant, MI															2	2	4	3	3	3	3	2	22
Milwaukee County Power Plant																	3	3	3	4	4		17
Yearly and grand totals:	2	7	6	10	11	12	15	13	16	13	8	12	8	13	9	15	21	16	16	10	15	17	273

Wisconsin nest site types and production - 2018

Site type	N	%Total
Power plants	13	36%
Buildings	15	42%
Elevators/Silos	*3*	*8%*
Paper mills	*3*	*8%*
Banks	*1*	*3%*
Courthouses	*1*	*3%*
Breweries	*1*	*3%*
Universities	*3*	*8%*
Hospitals	*2*	*6%*
Office towers	*0*	*0%*
Sewage treatment	*1*	*3%*
Natural cliffs	6	17%
Bridges	1	3%
Ore docks	1	3%
Total nest sites	**36**	

Site type	Young	%Total
Power plants	45	41%
Buildings	42	38%
Elevators/Silos	*8*	*7%*
Paper mills	*9*	*8%*
Banks	*3*	*3%*
Courthouses	*3*	*3%*
Breweries	*1*	*1%*
Universities	*8*	*7%*
Hospitals	*6*	*5%*
Office towers	*0*	*0%*
Sewage treatment	*4*	*4%*
Natural cliffs	18	16%
Bridges	3	3%
Ore docks	3	3%
Total young	**111**	

Note: Numbers of young represent known production. Percentages are rounded.

Thanks to the following We Energies employees for their continued support and much appreciated help throughout the year:

Eric Adsen
Mark Chromy
Al Ciepluch
Peter Dickinson
Kevin Fletcher
Dan Gibbs
Doug Goebel
Charles Griffith
Mike Grisar
Dave Groshek
Doug Herzog
Brian Henschel
Terry Hoffman
Bill Holton
Steve Jagow
Amy Jahns
Gina Johnson
Andre Kaczmarek
Paul Kessler
Tim Kotras
Les Kowalski
Mike Kowalski
Christine Kowalski
Pete Kutzora
David Lee
Dawn Lemke
Steve Liegl
Marilyn Lovelace
Brian Manthey
Bob Matyas
Kris McKinney
Barry McNulty
Bob Meidl
Jerry Meissner
Tom Metcalfe
Guy Neu
Mike Nuss
Jenny Nygaard
Frank Paris
Jim Petersen
Bruce Ramme
Gary Reisenauer
Adam Remiker
Lisa Rivera
Peter Roy
Karen Ryan
Cathy Schulze
Jenny Short
Roland Simatic
Paul Spicer
Pat Stiff
Amanda Studinger
Liz Stueck-Mullane
Beth Straka
Bob Tutkowski
Claire Twohey
Raul Villareal
Bob Zahn
Matthew Zens

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