

# Utility Preparedness for Wildfires

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# Utility Wildfire Risk and Recommendation

- As the frequency, intensity and duration of wildfires has increased in the west, electrical companies need to take measures to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires during extreme weather conditions, recognizing the importance of a statewide approach; a collaborative stakeholder process is necessary to reduce the overall risk.
- The recommendation is for a statutory policy statement to:
  - Establish standards and procedures associated with the operation of electrical infrastructure, including risk-based assessments to identify fire high consequence areas, situational awareness, operational improvements, vegetation management and proactive de-energization (including public outreach).
  - Provide for regulatory oversight by requiring that wildfire mitigation and recovery plans be approved by the Public Utility Commission of Oregon in consultation with relevant local and state agencies.
  - Provide a mechanism for the recovery of prudent costs.

# Key Objectives of A Utility Wildfire Mitigation Plan

**GOAL:** Develop and deploy an integrated and multifaceted wildfire preparedness strategy to protect customers and communities from increased wildfire risk.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- Resilient systems with lower likelihood of fault events, including fire threat mapping, system hardening, inspection/correction and vegetation management.
- Response when faults occur, including equipment and personnel plans to minimize scope and duration of the fault event.
- Situational awareness and operational readiness designed to mitigate impacts to the system, including improved weather monitoring, agency coordination, local emergency management partnerships and Public Safety Power Shutoff, among other things.
- Maintenance of the plan, assessment of its effectiveness and review of impacts on stakeholders.

# Mission Return on Investment

- The benefit is minimizing the chance that electrical infrastructure may be origin of or contributor to catastrophic wildfire ignition.
  - Invaluable relative to costs of fires, as evidenced in California.
- Implementation will require a balance of mitigation costs versus wildfire risk.
  - Oversight through OPUC, which will address unique circumstances and evolve over time.
- Legislation and regulatory review should be timely completed and supported by a broad coalition.

Thank You!