



Media Release

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Date: July 22, 2022

OREGON ELECTRIC UTILITIES FILED WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLANS WITH THE PUC Public encouraged to prepare for the possibility of Public Safety Power Shutoffs during fire weather events

SALEM, Ore. – Electric utilities across Oregon have filed Wildfire Mitigation Plans (WMPs) designed to prevent and mitigate wildfire risk with the Oregon Public Utility Commission (PUC). The WMPs are the first to be filed since Senate Bill 762 passed during the 2021 legislative session requiring plans for all electric utilities providing service in Oregon.

Senate Bill 762 established formal standards for electric utility wildfire mitigation plans, including the information utilities are required to include. Plans must identify areas at high-risk for wildfires within the utility’s service territory and actions to minimize those risks, as well as protocols for implementing public safety power shutoffs. Utilities also need to describe how they determined which risk reduction strategies to pursue. The bill required the three investor-owned utilities that are regulated by the PUC to submit their plans to the PUC by the end of 2021 and the PUC to approve them within 180 days after their submission. The remaining electric utilities throughout Oregon that are not regulated by the PUC, which includes cooperatives, People’s Utility Districts, and municipalities, submitted their plans for approval to their local utility governing body ahead of being filed with the PUC.

“The wildfire mitigation plans demonstrate a great deal of work to meet the needs of communities and keep pace with the changing wildfire risks,” said Letha Tawney, PUC Commissioner.

Included in the WMPs are the utilities’ plans to implement Public Safety Power Shutoffs. A PSPS is a measure of last resort to help keep people and communities in high fire-risk areas safe by proactively shutting off electricity during extreme and dangerous weather conditions when energized electrical lines could be damaged and ignite a fast-moving wildfire.

“As we anticipate higher than average temperatures in the next week, we appreciate that Oregon electric utilities have gone through the planning process to prepare for a possible PSPS,” added Commissioner Tawney. “No utility utilizes a PSPS lightly, but their implementation plans are designed to help keep Oregonians informed and safe in extreme fire weather.”

[View the 2022 Wildfire Mitigation Plans for all electric utilities in Oregon.](#)

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Be Ready for the 2022 Wildfire Season and Potential PSPS Events

- Register to receive alerts from official sources. Download the FEMA app and receive real-time alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide. Also, sign up for emergency notifications with your local city and/or county, as well as outage alerts from your electric utility service provider.
- Develop an emergency plan and make sure everyone in your household knows and understands what to do in the event of an evacuation.
- Create a circle of safety around your home, which is a fuel-free defensible space that can help reduce fire danger. Visit [Keep Oregon Green](#) for more information.

Prepare for a potential power outage/PSPS event:

- Be two weeks ready – Gather food, medical supplies, batteries, pet supplies, among other things, needed by family members during an outage or evacuation for up to two weeks. [Learn more about what supplies to consider.](#)
- For individuals with a medical condition that requires power, please contact your service provider in advance of an outage to register a Medical Certificate. This certification provides added benefits and helps the utility ensure they meet your needs in the event of an outage. Also, consider a backup generator or alternative location for power needs.
- Keep cell phones fully charged in anticipation of an outage. Consider a car-charger for cell phones and other electronic devices.
- Make sure your utility service provider has current contact information for notifications by updating your account online.

During a power outage:

- Contact your electric utility service provider to inform them of an outage. Avoid downed power lines at all costs.
- Stay clear of utility crews working to restore service in your community.
- Use flashlights or battery operated lanterns for emergency lighting. Do not use candles or other potential fire hazards.
- Turn off lights and unplug electric appliances except for the refrigerator and freezer to help avoid a surge to the system when service is restored. After turning off all the lights, turn one light on to know when power has been restored.
- Use generators safely – Do not run the generator inside the home or garage or anywhere near a window or vent, as these spaces can capture deadly levels of carbon monoxide. [Learn more about proper use of a generator](#) to avoid hazardous conditions.
- Check on elderly neighbors or individuals with special needs who might need additional assistance.
- Find creative ways to stay cool, including closing blinds and curtains, keeping the hottest rooms closed, stay hydrated, visit the local swimming pool, use a battery-powered fan, and avoid upstairs.

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The PUC regulates customer rates and services of the state's investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities, including PGE, Idaho Power, Pacific Power, Avista, Cascade Natural, and NW Natural. The PUC also regulates landline telephone providers and select water companies. The PUC's mission is to ensure Oregonians have access to safe, reliable, and fairly priced utility services that advance state policy and promote the public interest. We use an inclusive process to evaluate differing viewpoints and visions of the public interest and arrive at balanced, well-reasoned, independent decisions supported by fact and law. For more information about the PUC, visit oregon.gov/puc.