

Commissioners approve EWEB's first wildfire mitigation plan, strengthening wildfire resiliency

Your elected Board of Commissioners approved EWEB's first Wildfire Mitigation Plan during their July 5 public meeting. The plan is designed to protect public safety, reduce risk to utility customers and promote electrical system resilience to wildfire damage.

Our new Wildfire Mitigation Plan not only meets the legislative requirements for Oregon electric utilities to develop risk-based wildfire mitigation plans, it adopts more rigorous standards and industry best practices.

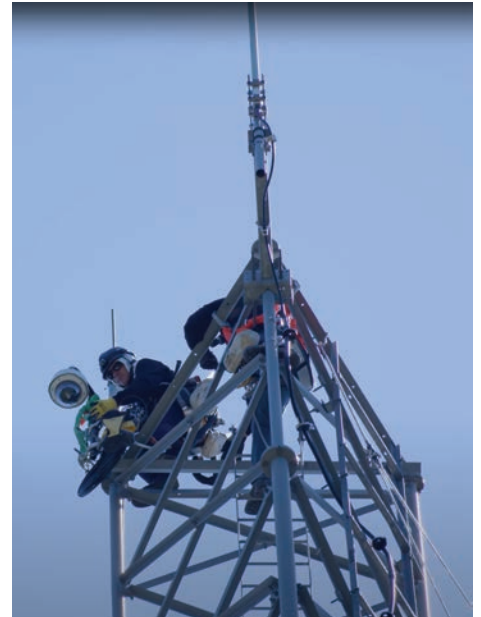
ACTION ON WILDFIRE RISK

In recent years the convergence of complex issues is making wildland fire activity more dangerous and destructive than in the past. These factors include increased vegetative fuel loads from decades of fire suppression activities, more development in the wildland/urban fringe and the rising frequency of erratic climate patterns such as drought, extreme heat, and severe storms. While most wildfires ignite from either a natural cause such as lightning strikes or human actions, we recognize utilities have a role to play in the mitigation of wildfire risks.

EWEB's 2022 budget allocates \$1 million towards a comprehensive approach to wildfire prevention and response that includes:

- Year-round system maintenance
- Vegetation management around electrical equipment and fire-fuel reduction projects within high-risk fire zones
- Targeted grid hardening investments that improve reliability and have wildfire mitigation co-benefits, such as use of fire-resistant equipment
- Operational practices, tools, and monitoring of weather conditions to inform field activities and utility response
- Real time changes to electric system operational settings during Red Flag Warnings to reduce the risk of ignition, up to and including de-energizing lines

Right: EWEB worked with the Oregon Hazards Lab at the University of Oregon to install a new ALERTWildfire camera atop an EWEB communications tower near our Carmen-Smith hydroelectric project.



WHAT IS A RED FLAG WARNING?

A Red Flag Warning is issued by the National Weather Service when warm temperatures, very low humidity, and strong winds are forecasted, raising the threat of wildfire.

To decrease the risk that EWEB powerlines become a potential ignition point, we change the protective settings on our equipment during a Red Flag Warning. These protective measures include modifying high-voltage electric switches and relays. Just like a circuit breaker in your home, the switch can sense when trouble occurs, such as a tree branch falling on the line, and instantaneously shuts off the power.

Turning up the sensitivity in protective settings mode to mitigate wildfire risk increases the likelihood of power outages. We encourage our customers to be ready year-round, have an emergency plan (and supplies) in place, and ensure preparedness for a prolonged power or water disruption – whether caused by snow, ice, wind, or wildfire.



EWEB begins 2023 budget and rate-setting process

The July public Board of Commissioners meeting kicked off a multi-month planning process that will culminate in December with adoption of a 2023 budget and rates for electric and water customers.

To meet the current and future needs of our community and ensure reliable service, some of the projects we are planning and budgeting for include:

- Building a second water treatment plant to improve the resiliency of our water supply
- Upgrading the Carmen-Smith Hydroelectric Project
- Implementing wildfire safety and prevention programs
- Upgrading and diversifying water storage tanks
- Rebuilding substations to increase capacity and improve reliability
- Investing in updated meter technology to reduce costs and improve service
- Addressing structural vulnerabilities of the Leaburg Canal

Your Board of Commissioners

Wards 4 & 5	John Brown (President)
Wards 6 & 7	Sonya Carlson (Vice President)
Wards 1 & 8	Matt McRae
Wards 2 & 3	John Barofsky
At-large	Mindy Schlossberg

The citizens of Eugene elect five commissioners to four-year terms. They dedicate their service to the utility as volunteers without pay. Commissioners hold regularly scheduled public meetings on the first Tuesday of each month, typically at 5:30 p.m. Our customer-owners are welcome and encouraged to participate. Meetings are streamed live and archived on eweb.org/board.

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