

Get ready for wildfire season ... and blackouts

The state is warning residents to prepare for possible brownouts during times when Oregon is most at risk for wildfires.

Electric utilities across Oregon have filed Wildfire Mitigation Plans with the Oregon Public Utility Commission during the past year. The plans are redesigned to prevent and lessen wildfire conflagrations.

Senate Bill 762, which was passed during the 2021 legislative session, required the utilities to develop plans showing how they'd meet service needs during major wildfires.

Plans must identify areas at high-risk for wildfires within the utility's service territory and actions to minimize the risks, as well as protocols for

implementing public safety power shutoffs.

"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.

Public safety power shutoffs, or PSPS, are considered a measure of last resort as a way to prevent energized electrical lines from contributing to fast-moving wildfires. This week's high temperatures highlight the need to be prepared, Tawney said.

"No utility utilizes a PSPS lightly," she said. "But their implementation plans are designed to help keep Oregonians informed and safe in extreme fire weather."

HOW TO GET READY

- Sign up for Clatsop Alerts and outage information from Pacific Power.
- Develop an emergency plan and make sure everyone in your household knows what to do.
- Create a fuel-free defensible space around your home that can reduce fire danger.
- Be two weeks ready. Gather food, medical supplies, batteries, pet supplies, and other things needed by family members during an outage or evacuation.
- Check on elderly neighbors or individuals with special needs who might need additional assistance.
- Consider a backup generator and keep cell phones fully charged.



Seaside Fire & Rescue

Two homes in the 900 block of Fourth Avenue were destroyed.

Fire destroys Seaside homes

Two homes were destroyed and a third damaged Monday during an early morning fire in a Seaside neighborhood.

The fire's cause hadn't been determined Wednesday.

The call came in at 4:19 a.m. that a home at 961 Fourth Ave. was ablaze, according to Seaside Fire & Rescue. Soon, a neighboring house at 951 Fourth caught fire.

There were at least five propane explosions, which damaged a home across the street

at 960 Fourth Ave.

Highway 101 was closed and traffic detoured. A man and a woman were arrested on outstanding warrants by Seaside Police while firefighters worked to gain control of the blaze. It was not disclosed whether they were connected with the fire.

Other fire agencies assisting Seaside were Gearhart, Cannon Beach, Hamlet, Warrenton, Astoria, and Lewis & Clark.

Hammond: Group forms to raise town's awareness

Continued from Page 1

"I have a uniquely positioned view of Hammond," he said. "On a daily basis, at street level, I interact with the community of Hammond. I feel that this perspective has value and should be heard. I also get to interact daily with my fellow Hammond residents. Their thoughts and opinions also should be heard."

Allen Berry, a Hammond resident who ran for Tom Dyer's Warrenton City Commission seat in 2020, said the poor quality of Hammond's streets are a testament to how little effort city leaders pay to Hammond.

"For example, they came out and patched the road, but they didn't fix it," Berry said. "They always do Warrenton, but they never fix Hammond."

Hammond can be a vital part of the city without losing its identity, he said.

"We should be a more recognizable part of Warren-

ton," Berry said. "We are together anyway, ... but they're acting more like we're the ugly stepchild of Warrenton."

Commissioner Rick Newton thinks the new group is a great idea and has been assisting in the organization process.

"I just want to gather ideas about what can be done for Hammond, what business could do, and gather ideas for Spruce Up Warrenton," Newton said. "I personally cannot decide what people need without having input from them and we have not gotten a lot from them."

Newton hopes to come away from the meeting with a list of prioritized projects Hammond residents want, whether that's trimming the flowering cherry trees on Pacific Drive or building a bus stop for children in the mobile home area near Fort Stevens.

He invited the VFW Fort



Fadden



Berry



Newton

Stevens Post 10580 to an organizational meeting set for Friday to talk about their plans for Hammond's old town hall.

Residents may want to volunteer for Spruce Up Warrenton or form their own group, he said.

"It doesn't matter, just bring ideas," Newton said. "They don't even have to be good ideas (because) sometimes part of a bad idea is really good."

What does Fadden hope evolves from Friday's meeting?

"Awareness. We have a voice. VFW partnership. Solidarity. Community pride. Negotiate," Fadden said. "Let's make some noise."

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