



OREGON TRAIL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Corporate Headquarters: 4005 23rd Street · PO Box 226 · Baker City, Oregon 97814
Phone (541) 523-3616 · Fax (541) 524-2865 · www.otec.coop

August 1, 2022

Re: OTEC Reminds Member-Owners to Prepare in Event of Public Safety Power Shutoff

Dear City Of Cove,

With hot weather across eastern Oregon in this wildfire season, Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative remains proactive in our efforts to mitigate the ever-changing risk associated with wildfires to keep the communities we serve, our members, and our employees safe.

We continue to do our due diligence as your member-owned cooperative and want to inform you that one or more of your active OTEC meters has been identified as being in a high-risk fire area in our service territory. In the interest of public safety, we may one day have to initiate a preemptive outage at that location called a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS). A PSPS is a proactive measure that shuts down power to specific lines that could be affected by extreme weather.

Across the west, some utilities have implemented these shutoffs as a proactive measure to ensure the safety of nearby communities and preventing the electrical system from being the source of a wildfire ignition during extreme weather events. In 2021, the Oregon State Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 762 – the State’s comprehensive approach to wildfire mitigation. As a part of that legislation, utilities across Oregon are required to submit wildfire mitigation plans to Oregon’s Public Utility Commission (PUC). OTEC’s plan is available on our website along with more information related to our PSPS plans and procedures. You may have received a letter from the Oregon Department of Forestry regarding SB 762 that may have stated your property was in a high-fire risk area. We want to let you know that our letter has no correlation with the State’s letter and that we are writing this to you as an independent, not-for-profit cooperative looking out for the safety our members.

OTEC would only initiate a PSPS as a last resort safety measure under certain extreme weathers conditions in conjunction with highly volatile, dry conditions on the ground.

If there is a potential for a PSPS, OTEC will attempt to contact you via automated phone calls, text, and email. Other forms of notification could include press releases to local media, social media and OTEC’s website. OTEC will attempt to notify affected members again before shutting off power and throughout the event until power is restored. However, situations may prevent OTEC from providing notice as the actual onset of extreme weather conditions and other circumstances beyond OTEC’s control may disrupt coordination, impacting notification and restoration efforts. A number of variables are used to predict how long a PSPS would last, based on real-time factors. The shutoff would continue until the risk has passed, after which line inspection and power restoration will occur.

Proudly serving Baker, Grant, Harney and Union counties

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OTEC receives its power from Bonneville Power Administration, which may de-energize transmission lines with its own PSPS policy. If BPA initiates its own PSPS, it would be outside of OTEC's control, but we would still work to notify affected members.

We encourage everyone to continue making fire prevention a priority, 85% of wildfires in the United States are human caused. Please work to stay informed on rules and local regulations. Let us continue to work together to protect our homes, communities, and natural resources by preparing now.

Here's how OTEC Members-Owners can prepare:

- Update your contact information including cell phone and email with OTEC by calling 541-523-3616 or through your online account. **OTEC also highly recommends you sign up to "Opt In" to our text messaging service to receive information and updates. You can do that by texting "START" to 352667, via your online account or by calling your local OTEC office.**
- Have a personal safety plan in place for every member of your household, including a plan for your pets and/or livestock.
- Sign up for your county's emergency notification system. You can find that by calling your county or you can find a list of OTEC-served counties at otec.coop/safety-first.
- Plan for any medical needs like medications that need to be refrigerated or devices that require power, such as oxygen tanks. You can also contact OTEC to sign up for the Med-Alert Program to receive outage notifications and information.
- Create or restock your emergency supply kit, including food, water, flashlights, a radio, fresh batteries, first aid supplies, and cash. As mentioned before, this applies to you and to your pets.
- Identify backup charging methods for phones and medical equipment.
- Know how to open your garage door manually.
- Ensure any backup generators are ready to operate safely.
- Identify the unique needs of your family and loved ones in the area for your emergency plan.
- Designate an emergency meeting location.

Please visit otec.coop/safety for more information and tips for wildfire preparedness and PPS and please feel free to call our offices at 541-523-3616 with questions or email communications@otec.coop.

Sincerely,

Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative