



City Council Agenda Item

City Council Meeting Date: December 17, 2019

TO: Jim Throop, City Manager

FROM: Tikan Singh P.E., Electric Utility Manager
t_singh@ci.lompoc.ca.us

SUBJECT: Adoption of Resolution No: 6292(19) Adopting the City of Lompoc Wildfire Mitigation Plan

Recommendation:

Staff recommends the City Council adopt Resolution 6292(19) adopting the first annual City of Lompoc Wildfire Mitigation Plan (attached).

Background:

Given recent, catastrophic wildfires in California, the state passed Senate Bill (SB) 901, amending California Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 8387. The law requires utilities to prepare wildfire mitigation measures if the utility's overhead electrical lines and equipment are located in an area that has a significant risk of wildfire resulting from those electrical lines and equipment. The law requires the wildfire mitigation measures to incorporate specified information and procedures as stated in SB 901.

Discussion:

On September 21, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 901. A section of the bill, amending PUC Section 8387(b), directed California's electric utilities to develop wildfire mitigation plans related to power lines and equipment in areas of increased risk for utility-associated wildfires. Public electric utilities such as Lompoc Electric must annually prepare a wildfire mitigation plan; receive an independent review to assess compliance and ensure it complies with all applicable rules, regulations, and standards; and present it to their governing body at a noticed public meeting for comment.

On January 19, 2018, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) adopted a statewide CPUC Fire-Threat Map to identify areas where there is an increased risk for utility-associated wildfires. The CPUC State Fire-Threat Map assigns Tier levels to all

areas of California based on their risk of wildfires creating High Fire Threat Districts (HFTD). The Tier levels are as follows:

- Tier 1: Moderate Risk – any area not designated Tier 2 or 3.
- Tier 2: Elevated risk – A greater likelihood of utility-associated wildfire that would impact people/property; and where enhanced utility regulations could be expected to reduce utility-fire risk.
- Tier 3: Extreme risk – The highest likelihood of utility-associated wildfire that would impact people/property; and where the most restrictive utility regulations could be necessary to reduce utility-fire risk.

Lompoc Electric has identified that less than (2%) of its utility's infrastructure is located in and adjacent to the CPUC designated Tier 2 HFTD¹. The area is considered an "Elevated" level of risk for wildfire threat. No service area is located in a Tier 3 area of "Extreme" level of risk. Lompoc Electric has determined that the level of risk for starting wildfires from its overhead lines and equipment is limited.

Despite the lower risk, Lompoc Electric will take additional appropriate actions to help the City prevent and respond to the increasing risk of wildfires from its electric utility infrastructure. For wildfire prevention and response, Lompoc Electric is subordinate to the Fire Department. Lompoc Electric's wildfire mitigation efforts will operate in coordination with the Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan previously submitted by the Fire Department.

To comply with SB 901 and to meet the requirements outlined in PUC Section 8387(b)(2), Lompoc Electric developed a Wildfire Mitigation Plan (Plan) which considers all of the following:

- Objectives of the Plan;
- Roles and responsibilities for carrying out the Plan;
- Identification of key wildfire risks and risk drivers;
- Description of wildfire prevention, mitigation, and response strategies and programs;
- Community outreach and education;
- Restoration of service following a wildfire;
- Metrics for evaluating the performance of the Plan and identifying areas for improvement; and
- Review of the Plan by an Independent Evaluator.

PUC Section 8387(c) requires that a qualified independent evaluator review and assess the comprehensiveness of the Plan. Upon City Council approval of the Plan, staff will contract an independent evaluator to review the Plan and issue a report. The evaluator's report will be submitted to the City Council at a subsequent meeting.

¹ See Maps 1, 2 and 3 of the Wildfire Mitigation Plan attached hereto as Exhibit A to Resolution No. 6292(19) for more information about the areas of the City that comprise the 2%.

Fiscal Impact:

To be in compliance with PUC section 8387, there are three separate costs that are incurred in the development and implementation of the Plan: 1) Materials cost (less than \$50,000), 2) Labor cost, and 3) Plan evaluator fees (cost to be determined). Materials cost, labor cost, and plan evaluator fees are budgeted in the Electric fund. There is no expected impact to the General Fund.

Conclusion:

Distribution system protection for both public and asset safety has been paramount. Lompoc Electric has been successful in preventing wildfires from its infrastructure and has not had a wildfire start from its electrical lines or equipment. The implementation of the wildfire mitigation plan will help Lompoc Electric continue its successful practice of preventing wildfires from its electrical lines and equipment.

Respectfully submitted,

Tikan Singh P.E., Electric Utility Manager

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY MANAGER:

Brad Wilkie, Utility Director

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL:

Jim Throop, City Manager

Attachment: Resolution No. 6292(19)