

Umatilla Electric Co-op's Wellington and Energy Northwest's Long Receive NWPPA's 2022 Safety Heroism Award

(April 19) Last week, Umatilla Electric Cooperative Journeyman Lineman Chris Wellington and Energy Northwest Engineering Supervisor Dan Long each received the NWPPA Safety Heroism Award on April 14 at NWPPA's 2022 Engineering & Operations Conference in Spokane, Washington.

Wellington received the award for the life-saving actions he took July 14, 2021. He had been home sick and getting ready to turn in for the night when he heard a car accident that caused a power pole to be knocked down along with energized wires. He noticed smoke billowing from where the accident occurred and quickly jumped into his vehicle to check on the driver of the car that struck the pole. The car was engulfed in flames, but luckily the driver was able to escape. After Wellington made sure the person was okay, he raced to the substation to de-energize the line while notifying authorities and UEC line crews to respond. After verifying which circuit to switch out, he was able to de-energize the line and authorities were then able to attend to the individual who had struck the pole.

Long received the award for the life-saving actions he took Oct. 17, 2021. Long was headed to the coast to vacation with his family when he witnessed a car leaving the roadway and driving down a steep embankment, where it came to a rest in the river approximately 100-150 feet below. Long immediately stopped and got out of his car to help while his wife called 911 to report the incident. He was joined by other motorists shortly after. As they reached the bottom of the embankment, they could see that airbags had deployed and the car was submerged approximately to the windows. As Long and others got into the water to check on the driver, they noticed a woman attempting to get a baby and herself out of the rear window, which had been broken out. Long and another good Samaritan



(L-R) E&O Vice Chair Jeri Timm, E&O Second Vice Chair Rob Ferrera, UEC's Chris Wellington, and E&O Chair Paul Wienecke.



(L-R) E&O Vice Chair Jeri Timm, E&O Second Vice Chair Rob Ferrera, Energy Northwest's Dan Long, and E&O Chair Paul Wienecke.

assisted in getting the woman and baby out of the car and to the shore. Police and other first responders arrived at the scene and were able to take over.

The Safety Heroism Award recognizes an NWPPA member utility employee or team that displayed an act of unselfish and voluntary assistance in a situation where life, significant injury, or significant property loss would have been incurred were it not for the efforts of the individual or team. The NWPPA E&O Safety Subcommittee selects the winner of the annual Safety Heroism Award with concurrence from the NWPPA E&O Policy Committee.

About NWPPA: NWPPA is an international association representing and serving more than 150 customer-owned, locally controlled utilities in the Western U.S. and Canada. The Association also serves over 300 associate members across the U.S. and Canada who are allied with the electric utility industry. For more information, visit www.nwppa.org or follow @NWPPAssoc on our social channels.

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