2014 CARLTON AND 2015 OKANOGAN COMPLEX FIRES
NWPPA’s ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS CONFERENCE
APRIL 13 2016

WASHINGTON STATES LARGEST WILDFIRES
OKANOGAN COUNTY and PUD STATISTICS

THE LARGEST COUNTY IN THE STATE

COVERS 5,268 SQUARE MILES
BORDERS: CHELAN, DOUGLAS, FERRY, GRANT, LINCOLN, SKAGIT, WHATCOM COUNTIES AND THE CANADIAN BORDER.
POPULATION 41,290

OKANOGAN COUNTY PUD

96 EMPLOYEES
21,000 METERS
104 TRANSMISSION LINE MILES
1371 DISTRIBUTION LINE MILES (27,409 poles)
411 UNDERGROUND MILES
500 FIBER LINE MILES
CARLTON COMPLEX FIRE STATISTICS

- **STARTED**: JULY 14, 2014
- **STARTED AS 4 SEPARATE FIRES** (Lightning caused)
  - Stokes Fire
  - Gold Creek Fire
  - French Creek Fire
  - Cougar Flats Fire
- **ACREAGE**: 256,108 (400.2 square miles)
  - 80,564 acres FS
  - 70,215 acres WA STATE
  - 6,157 acres BLM
  - 99,082 acres PRIVATE LANDS
- **HOMES LOST**: 237 plus 55 cabins
  - 12 more homes damaged/destroyed in mudslides
- **POLES BURNED**: 1097
  - 584 DISTRIBUTION POLES REPLACED
  - 78 TRANSMISSION POLES REPLACED
- **DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM**
  - 341 MILES
  - 9 FEEDERS
- **TRANSMISSION LINES**
  - 3 TRANSMISSION LINES EFFECTED
- **FIBER**
  - 60 MILES OF FIBER AND WIRELESS INFRASTRUCTURE WERE LOST
OKANOGAN COMPLEX

• STARTED: AUGUST 15TH
• STARTED AS 6 SEPARATE FIRES
  – BLUE LAKE LIME BELT
  – BEAVER LAKE TWISP RIVER
  – NINE MILE TUNK CREEK
• ACREAGE – 353,310 (552 SQ. MILES)
  – Okanogan complex + North star + Tunk Block
• HOMES LOST – 123 plus 72 other buildings
• POLES BURNED - 1077
  588 DISTRIBUTION POLES REPLACED
  11 TRANSMISSION POLES REPLACED
• DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM
  – 289 MILES
  - 15 FEEDERS
  TRANSMISSION LINE EFFECTED - 1
  FIBER EFFECTED - 10 miles and 9 AP’s
The Okanogan Complex 1 yr. 1 month 1 day from the Carlton Complex. Both made big runs 1 yr. 1 month to the day CC - 123,000 OC - 105,000
PREPARE FOR FIRE SEASON

• ALL OPERATIONS AND ENGINEERING ARE FIRE SHELTER WILDLAND FIRE TRAINED (RT-130)
• MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS UP TO DATE.
• SHORT WORKS ROSTER FOR EQUIPMENT AND CONTRACTORS ARE UP DATED.
• TRANSMISSION POLES ARE TREATED WITH FIRE PROTECTION COATING.
• TRUCKS ARE PREPARED FOR FIRE FIGHTING AND SAVING POLES.
• BEGINNING OF EVERY YEAR MEET WITH DNR, FOREST SERVICE, EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, WEATHER SERVICE, EMS, AND LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS.
2016 Central Washington Large Fire Pre-Season Meeting

Announcement and Registration Information
May 26 • 0900-1600 • Okanogan County Fairgrounds
June 2 • 0900-1600 • Cle Elum • Putnam Event Center


You are invited to attend a 1 day workshop targeted for participants at the Local Duty Officer through Agency Administrator level including all partner fire agencies, and other stakeholders who may be at the table during an escalating large wildfire, including local government, county emergency management, law enforcement and infrastructure/utility providers.

The purpose of this meeting is to bring interagency partners together including Agency Administrators, Agency Representatives, and Fire Leadership to prepare for the 2016 Fire Season through sharing information and exercising skills in unified command, delegating authority, incident organization (complexes), and prioritization. Through training together partners will be better prepared to efficiently implement an appropriate response to wildfire incidents, as well as all-risk incidents.

The workshop will include speakers and exercises, with the following objectives:
• Build and improve interagency relationships at the Duty Officer through Agency Administrator levels.
• Improve the understanding of Unified Command, Jurisdiction, and roles and responsibilities of parties.
• Exercise the delegation of authority.
• Practice prioritizing resources and values at risk during high exposure/low resource scenario.
• Experience complexing multiple incidents and understand the process and impacts.
• Understand the latest changes in Washington Legislation and how that may impact managing wildfires.

Please register online no later than April 30, 2016
The event is free, and additional information is on the registration form.
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1SevNhpB6izvX2w2DaeTwiLsiGez1ZeMWdz2dsc03zDK8/viewform?c=06w=1&usp=mail_form_link
WHEN POSSIBLE AND NOT A SAFETY CONCERN GET OUT AHEAD OF THE FIRE AND PREPARE THE POLES AND GROUND AROUND THEM
CIRCUITS ARE PUT ON NON-RECLOSE AND SWITCHING IS DONE TO MINIMIZE THE EFFECTED METERS
LET THE FIRE BURN THROUGH AND COME IN BEHIND IT AND TRY AND SAVE AS MANY POLES AS POSSIBLE
CHALLENGES

CREW HOUSING
FOOD/MEALS
COMMUNICATIONS
GENERATORS
ACCESS
MATERIAL
PERSONNEL
CLEANUP
FLAGGING FOR CREWS
Evacuation - they have to go somewhere
FOOD
COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES
RADIO COMMUNICATION, PHONE SYSTEM, CELL PHONE AND FIBER SYSTEM ALL DOWN
COMMUNICATION PERSON
• RESPONSIBLE FOR:
  – ATTENDS MORNING UPDATE MEETING
  – EOC CONTACT
  – FIRE CAMP MEETINGS
  – IC CONTACT
  – LAW ENFORCEMENT
  – PUBLIC AND TOWN MEETINGS
  – MEDIA – TV, RADIO AND NEWSPAPER
  – PUD’S CONTACT
  – WORKS WITH THE SOCIAL MEDIA PERSON

SOCIAL MEDIA
• RESPONSIBLE FOR:
  – ATTENDS MORNING UPDATE MEETING
  – EOC MEETINGS
  – PUBLIC AND TOWN MEETINGS
  – WORKS WITH COMMUNICATION PERSON
  – UPDATES SOCIAL MEDIA

Okanogan PUD worker inspects pole as fire rages near Malott along Old Highway 97.
#Firestorm2014
CRISIS COMMUNICATION
TELL IT ALL, TELL THE TRUTH AND TELL IT FAST

PSA

OUTAGE MAP

Okanogan PUD
Public Service Announcement

August 20, 2015

Severe winds last night fanned flames and prompted the evacuation of the town of Twisp, Winthrop. Consequently, Riverside and portions of Omak. PUD crews are assessing the damage from last night’s activities and continue to focus on restoring electric and fiber services that have been affected by the aggressive fires that continue to threaten Okanogan County. The PUD has several areas currently without power and telecommunication service. The PUD anticipates that half of those customers will have electric service restored before 5:00 p.m. today.

Fires continue to threaten the Loop Loop Transmission line. The line is currently energized and serving the towns of Twisp and Winthrop. This line will continue to stay energized unless (1) the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests the line to be de-energized for firefighting safety, or (2) the fire burns the transmission line.

Weather predictions indicate high winds beginning this afternoon and continuing through this Friday. The PUD is encouraging customers to make preparations for the outages due to wind, downed lines and fire damage.

Please be aware of your situation, determine evacuation routes and check on neighbors who may not have received notification. For customers that have been affected by the fire or to report outages or downed lines, please call 509-422-1330.
GENERATORS

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL
GENERATORS WERE BEING HOOKED UP WITHOUT PUD INVOLVEMENT
SAFETY FOR THE PUBLIC AND LINECREWS WAS A CONCERN

GENERATOR INSTALLATIONS ON
OKANOGAN PUD ELECTRIC SYSTEM

1. HIRE A LICENSED AND BONDED ELECTRICIAN
   a. They can correctly install and connect your generator using proper wiring methods.
   b. They can help you redeploy vital appliances and ensure your generator can support.
   c. This will prevent unnecessary damage to your generator and appliances.

2. CONTACT THE PUD
   a. Public safety is paramount. Improperly installed generators can be hazardous and must be isolated.
   b. Customer safety is paramount. Eliminate potential liability and negligence due to an improperly installed generator.

3. RE-ENERGIZATION OF THE PUD’S DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM
   a. If there is not a visible open, the re-energization of the PUD’s distribution system will put your structure and generator at risk as well as our equipment.

Okanogan PUD
Public Service Announcement
August 24, 2015

Approximately 500 customers are without power. Mutual Aid crews will be arriving today and tomorrow to assist our crews. We estimate that power in Okanogan could be restored as early as the end of the week. Additionally, we estimate that it will take several weeks to fully restore service to the Turpin Mountain and Asotin Valley areas.

Although crews are working around the clock to restore power to affected areas, we will continue to respond to new customer service requests.

For those customers who are, or will be, running generators, please call the PUD at (509) 422-3310 to notify us. Safety is our first priority. Small generators can compromise the safety of our customers, utility crews, and emergency workers. All small generators should be installed by a licensed electrician. Proper generator installation procedures are available on our website at www.okanogandon.org.

There remains active fire along multiple sections of the power line corridor. The Loop Loop Transmission line continues to stay energized and will continue to stay energized unless (1) the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requests the line to be de-energized for firefighting safety, or (2) the fire burns the transmission line.

We are still experiencing an active fire situation. Please be aware of your situation, monitor evacuation levels, and check on neighbors who may not have received notification. For customers that have been affected by the fire or to report outages or downed lines, please call 509-422-3310.
Access
WE HAD TO BUILD ROADS
MATERIAL

MANUFACTURE DELIVERY

WAREHOUSE TO CREWS
CLEAN UP
FLAGGERS
FIRE EFFECTS ON POLES
THEY BURN
THEY BURN A LITTLE

THEY BURN A LOT
OR THEY COMPLETELY DISAPPEAR
UNDERGROUND IS THE ANSWER TO PROTECTING YOUR ELECTRICAL INFRASTRUCTURE?
UNDERGROUND BURNS TOO
RESTORATION/PRIORITY

1. TRANSMISSION
2. MAIN FEEDERS
3. WHAT WORK CAN GET THE MOST CUSTOMERS.
4. WHAT WORK CAN CONTRACTORS DO TO ALLOW US TO DO WHAT WE DO.
5. REPLACE OR REPAIR MAKE IT SAFE AND MOVE ON.
6. RIGHT OF WAY CLEARING/HAZARD TREES.
7. ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT.
ENGINEERING ASSESSMENT
SUMMARY

– WE ARE USING DUCTILE IRON OR STEEL POLES
  • WHERE ACCESS IS NOT AN ISSUE

– ADDITIONAL FIRE FIGHTING UNITS
  • ON THE AVERAGE DEPENDING ON POLE AND FRAMING EVERY 5 POLES SAVED IS ANOTHER UNIT.

– WORK SHIFTS – ALL PERSONNEL INCLUDING MUTUAL AID CREWS WORK THE SAME HOURS
  • CARLTON COMPLEX 5AM -11PM / OKANOGAN COMPLEX 6AM – 11PM

– MEALS – WE USED A CATERER FOR ALL MEALS
  • PROVIDE BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER ALL SHOW UP AT THE SAME PLACE SAME TIME

– LODGING
  • EARLY AS POSSIBLE RESERVE ROOMS FOR OUTSIDE CREWS

– COMMUNICATION
  • ONE CONTACT FOR EOC, FIRE CAMPS AND MEDIA
  • FACE BOOK AND TWITTER IS NEW
  • ONE PERSON OVER SEE THE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSA), SOCIAL MEDIA
  • DEVELOP A BACK UP PLAN FOR LOSS OF RADIO, CELL PHONE COMMUNICATIONS

– FEMA
  • CONTRACTS AND MUTUAL AID UP TO DATE BEFORE THE EVENT
  • BE PREPARED FOR THE WHAT IF - KNOW THE CAN AND CAN’T’S

– THE EFFECTS ON FAMILY
  • HAVE A PLAN OR AWAY A SPOUSE OR LOVED ONE CAN GET OR SEND INFORMATION
  • SOMEHOW INCLUDE THE FAMILY OF THE EMPLOYEE

– YOUR UTILITY
  • THE LINEMAN OR OPS PEOPLE ARE THE FOCUS BUT IT TAKES THE WHOLE ORGANIZATION TO MAKE IT WORK -THE SUPPORT TEAM IS CRITICAL TO THE SUCCESS!!!
THE BEST VIEW COMES AFTER THE HARDEST CLIMB

CARLTON COMPLEX

OKANOGAN COMPLEX
DEAR PUD,
OUR THANKS FOR EVERYTHING YOU ARE DOING (AND HAVE ALWAYS DONE ) SINCE THE FIRE. WE REALLY DON’T KNOW HOW YOU KEEP FUNCTIONING AROUND THE CLOCK. WE DID NOT LOSE POWER BUT MANY DID – WE HAVE IN THE PAST SO WE KNOW WHAT IS LIKE, MORE THAN ONCE WE’VE CALLED DURING A SNOW OR RAIN STORM- YOU’VE ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO GET US BACK IN POWER IN A DECENT TIME. YOU MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO READ BY LIGHT BULB AND NOT BY CANDLE, WATCH TV, OPERATE A MICROWAVE DO LAUNDRY IN A MACHINE INSTEAD OF A ROCK. WE MUST ADMIT THAT YOU ARE A GREAT GROUP OF PEOPLE! WE KNOW WE CAN COUNT ON YOU TO TAKE CARE OF US.
Okanogan PUD
Public Service Announcement

September 3, 2015

Okanogan PUD anticipates that power will be fully restored by the end of today to all retail customers who were affected by the Okanogan Complex Fires. Okanogan PUD line crews and support personnel, along with line crews from Douglas PUD and Pend Oreille PUD, have worked tirelessly to make sure power is restored as fast and as safely as possible. For those customers still experiencing a power outage as a result of the fires, please call the PUD at 509-422-3310.

The Okanogan PUD would like to thank everyone for their unwavering support of our crews and support staff through these devastating fires. We are proud to serve the citizens of Okanogan County.
QUESTIONS