



Legislation Text

File #: 18-2108, Version: 1

**AGENDA REPORT
REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

DATE: 9/19/2018

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Department of Water and Power

SUBJECT:

City Council consideration of Resolution No. 2018-099 determining that there is no significant risk of the Department of Water and Power's electric lines or equipment causing a catastrophic wildfire.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council adopt Resolution No. 2018-099 determining pursuant to Public Utilities Code Section 8387(b) that there is no significant risk of the Department of Water and Power's overhead electric lines and equipment causing a catastrophic wildfire.

ANALYSIS:

In 2012, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) adopted three interim fire maps that designated areas of the state where stricter inspection and vegetation clearance requirements would apply to overhead utility poles and equipment. These interim maps were primarily based on generalized wildfire threat, rather than the risk of electric line-ignited fires. However, the CPUC acknowledged the need for a better map and, in the same 2012 Decision, the CPUC directed parties to develop a more precise statewide fire map that identified areas of the state at an elevated risk for electric line-ignited wildfires.

In 2016, Senator Hill introduced Senate Bill (SB) 1028 (stats. 2016) with the goal of encouraging electric utilities to adopt a performance-based plan for mitigating the risk of wildfires from electric lines and equipment. SB 1028 is separated into two basic parts: (1) a mandate for all investor owned utilities (IOUs) to develop wildfire mitigation plans, with a specified review process by the CPUC; and (2) a more limited process for publicly owned utilities (POUs), that requires the POU to identify wildfire mitigation measures if the POU governing board makes certain findings regarding fire threat risk.

SB 1028 set up a two-step process for POUs. A POU only has an obligation to identify wildfire mitigation measures if its governing board first determines its overhead electric lines and equipment

pose a significant risk of causing a catastrophic wildfire.

To make the initial determination, the POU's governing board must assess whether "any portion" of the "geographical area where the utility's overhead electric lines and equipment are located" has a "significant risk of catastrophic wildfire" resulting from the POU's electrical lines and equipment. The POU governing board must base this determination on "historical fire data and local conditions," and must consult with local fire departments and other entities with responsibilities for control of wildfires within the relevant area. SB 1028 does not reference a POU's service territory, but instead directs the assessment to be performed in the geographic area where the POU's electric lines and equipment are located.

In 2018, the CPUC completed the development of the statewide Fire Threat Map that designates areas of the state at an elevated risk of electric line-ignited wildfires. This updated map incorporated historical fire data, fire-behavior modeling, assessments of fuel, weather modeling, and host of other factors. The map development and approval process involved detailed review by the relevant utility staff and local fire officials, a peer review process, and ultimate approval by a team of technical experts led by CAL FIRE. The CPUC's Fire Threat Map includes three Tiers/Levels of fire threat risk. Tier 1 consists of areas that have the lowest hazards and risks (however, Tier 1 is not specifically called out within the CPUC Statewide Fire Threat Map which is included as an attachment to this report). Tier 2 consists of areas on the CPUC Fire Threat Map where there is an elevated risk for destructive utility-associated wildfires. Finally, Tier 3 consists of areas on the CPUC Fire-Threat Map where there is an extreme risk for destructive utility-associated wildfires.

SB 1028 was enacted prior to the adoption of the CPUC's Fire Threat Map and does not reference the Tiers. However, staff believes that the Fire Threat Map is the best source of data for determinizing whether there is significant risk of wildfire resulting from electrical lines or equipment. The Fire Threat Map incorporates historical fire data and received extensive input from electric utility staff and fire officials.

It is important to note that the only overhead electrical lines and equipment owned by DWP are located within the fence line of DWP's Wastewater Treatment Plant #2 at 652 Harrison Street. Accordingly, staff has reviewed the CPUC's Fire Threat Map, historical fire data, and local conditions relevant to this set of overhead electrical lines and equipment. To this end, we have also consulted with the City Fire Department, which is the only entity responsible for the control of wildfires in that area. Based on this review and assessment, staff has concluded that 0 percent of DWP's overhead electrical lines and equipment are located in an area designated as either elevated risk or extreme risk areas for wildfire (reference attachment: City of Corona DWP Owned Overhead Electrical Lines and Equipment Locations to Fire Shape Maps).

Therefore, staff has concluded that the geographical area in which DWP's overhead electric lines and equipment are located does not have a significant risk of a catastrophic wildfire resulting from these overhead electrical lines and equipment. If the City Council agrees with this determination and adopts the attached resolution, the DWP will have no obligation under SB 1028 to develop additional wildfire mitigation measures.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Not applicable.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

Not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

No environmental review is required because the proposed action is not a project governed by the California Environmental Quality Act.

PREPARED BY: CURTIS SHOWALTER, ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER IV

REVIEWED BY: TOM MOODY, GENERAL MANAGER

REVIEWED BY: KERRY D. EDEN, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER/ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIRECTOR

REVIEWED BY: MICHELE NISSEN, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

SUBMITTED BY: DARRELL TALBERT, CITY MANAGER

Attachments:

-Resolution No. 2018-099

-City of Corona DWP Owned Overhead Electrical Lines and Equipment Locations to Fire Shape Maps

Footnotes:

¹ CPUC Decision Number - D.12-01-032 available at:

http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/WORD_PDF/FINAL_DECISION/157605.PDF

² CPUC Decision Number - D.12-01-032 at 146-147 available at:

http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/PublishedDocs/WORD_PDF/FINAL_DECISION/157605.PDF

³ See Senate Floor Analysis, SB 1028, Aug. 23, 2016, *available at*:

http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160SB1028#.

⁴ Cal. Pub. Util. Code § 8387(b).

⁵ PG&E Advice Letter 5211-E/3172-E, "Joint Filing – Adoption of Final California Public Utilities Commission Fire-Threat Map," Jan. 5, 2018, *available at*

https://www.pge.com/tariffs/assets/pdf/adviceletter/ELEC_5211-E.pdf; SED Disposition Letter Approving Advice Letter 5211-E/3172-E, January 19, 2018, *available at* https://www.pge.com/tariffs/assets/pdf/adviceletter/ELEC_5211-E.pdf.