

## **DWP/Neighborhood Council Meeting November 2, 2019 Highlights**

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The bulk of the meeting time was devoted to a presentation by Andrew Kendall, Senior Assistant General Manager of the Power System and subsequent discussion. A summary of his department's preliminary investigation of the recent Getty Fire was given. The LADWP statement is available at:

<https://ladwp.response.news/ladwp-statement-regarding-the-getty-fire-preliminary-investigation/>

Mr. Kendall reiterated that the utility does not have a policy of proactive shut-off of circuits during times of elevated wildfire weather conditions. Unlike the state's other large electric utilities, its service territory is compact (465 square miles) and mostly urbanized.

Undergrounding of circuits in lieu of overhead wires was discussed, with underground installations costing nearly 30 times that of overhead distribution circuits, 34,000 volts and lower. An alternate approach to reduce fire risk is to replace existing bare wires with insulated conductors (so-called Tree Wire). The cost study of such an undertaking is presently being carried out.

As part of California ordinance SB 901 enacted in 2018, the California Public Utilities Code (PUC) Section 8386 requires electric utilities to develop annual wildfire mitigation plans (WMPs) to prevent, combat, and respond to wildfires within their service territories. LADWP is in the final stages of creation of its plan and will be presented to its board at the December 10, 2019, meeting. As part of this plan, areas are designated as Tiers 1, 2 or 3 depending on their fire risk, with Tier 3 the highest. Most of the City is Tier 1 but with small expanses of Tier 2 (for example, Griffith Park), and a very small amount of Tier 3 in the Tujunga area. However, much of the City's western and northern borders are close by adjacent Tier 3 regions not within the City.

At the November 5, 2019 meeting of the DWP board, a report on the Saddleridge Fire will be given. This fire in the Sylmar area and north of the City's border, caused three transmission line to be taken out of service. Without the Haynes coastal plant online, system analysis shows that load could not be served and blackouts would have occurred. With the proposed retirement of the coastal plants, the system will need substantial reinforcement to increase transmission capacity from north to south. Besides the costs involved, linemen necessary to provide the requisite labor are in very short supply. Training times to qualify for lineman positions is in excess of three years and because the shortage is industry-wide, labor retention is a major problem.

There was also a brief discussion with Ratepayer Advocate Fred Pickel about recent significant jumps in utility bills. Pickel said he has asked DWP to be more proactive in explaining rates and that better messaging is required. He also said that he has repeated the need for regular rate review but with no substantive response.