

# RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

## Board Memorandum

**BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES**

**DATE: JUNE 14, 2021**

**SUBJECT: RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES WILDFIRE MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ASSEMBLY BILL 1054 FOR SUBMITTAL TO THE WILDFIRE SAFETY ADVISORY BOARD BY JULY 1, 2021**

**ISSUE:**

Consider the Riverside Public Utilities Wildfire Mitigation Plan annual update, which must be submitted to the Wildfire Safety Advisory Board by July 1, 2021 pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 1054.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Board of Public Utilities approve a recommendation to the City Council to approve the 2021 RPU Wildfire Mitigation Plan annual updates.

**BACKGROUND:**

Riverside Public Utilities (RPU) Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) is designed to meet the standards set forth by Senate Bill (SB) SB 901, which was signed into law September 2018. SB 901 tasked all private and publicly owned utilities and corporations to construct, maintain, and operate its electrical system in a manner that will minimize the risk of wildfire. Additionally, SB 901 requires utilities to submit and update a wildfire mitigation plan annually.

On July 12, 2019, Assembly Bill (AB) No. 1054 was passed along with AB 111, which are meant to compliment past bills such as SB 901. AB 1054 does not add to the required content for a WMP but does add an additional process requirement that the WMP be submitted to the newly formed Wildfire Safety Advisory Board ("Wildfire Board") by July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

In accordance with SB 901 requirements, RPU prepared and presented the WMP to City Council, where it was adopted on December 17, 2019. Additionally, RPU complied with AB 1054 by submitting the WMP to the Wildfire Board on May 6, 2020. This annual update will be submitted to the Wildfire Board by July 1, 2021.

**DISCUSSION:**

RPU's Wildfire Mitigation Plan complies with the requirements of Public Utilities Code Section 8387. This Wildfire Mitigation Plan is designed to meet the standards set forth by California SB

901, which was signed into law in 2018 and tasked all private and publicly owned utilities and electrical corporations to construct, maintain, and operate their electrical systems in a manner that minimizes the risk of wildfire and to annually submit a wildfire mitigation plan. RPU also utilizes recommendations set forth by the California Municipal Utilities Association (CMUA). These recommendations provided a template for public utilities such as Riverside to follow to meet the requirements of the applicable law.

RPU continues to assess and analyze its wildfire mitigation risks. Historical power outage data is reviewed regularly, along with identifying the energy delivery system's top 10 at-risk circuits that traverse through the tier 1 and tier 2 high fire threat areas. Since the plan was adopted, there have been several grid management enhancements completed. Over the last year, Electric Operations has been updating older Substation Automation System to migrate to a new SEL-Real Time Automation Controller infrastructure. In addition, three new weather stations have been installed at Harvey Lynn, Springs, and RERC Substations. The data from these newly installed weather stations is used to provide real-time weather information to the system operators. Soon, we will be able to use data such as temperature, wind speed, and relative humidity to block circuit breakers from reclosing on various feeders at our substations (which is a key fire risk mitigation strategy).

In addition, cameras provide dispatcher with real-time video of the greater Riverside area, paying special attention to wildfire prone regions. Three cameras were installed at Box Springs Mountain Radio Site and City Hall for added visibility. Electric Operations also created a video network, so these video streams can be integrated with the Land-Mobile Radio dispatch consoles in the Grid Control Center located at the Utilities Operation Center. Also, due to recent increases of fires within the river bottom, continued collaboration and partnership with Riverside Fire Department takes place before, during, and after all wildfire events. This includes completing several river bottom inspections and extensive mitigation efforts in the area like clearing of overgrown vegetation near electric distribution facilities. As noted within the WMP, the Riverside Fire Department also concurs with the plan.

As part of mitigation efforts for their Wildfire Mitigation Plan, Southern California Edison implemented the Public Safety Power Shutoff program, or PSPS. Based upon several factors (like weather, wind speed, humidity, etc.), and pursuant to their PSPS plan, SCE will intentionally shut off power to their customers to minimize the risk of fire caused by their electrical facilities. RPU does not have, nor does it plan to develop, a PSPS program. The risk of wildfire in SCE's more than 50,000 square mile service territory is different than the risk of wildfire in the City of Riverside. Riverside's single connection to the grid at SCE's Vista Substation may be subject to PSPS events. If a PSPS event is implemented, Riverside will rely upon the 240 megawatts of internal generation to help serve customers. Also, once implemented, Riverside's second connection to the grid will further reduce the risk of impact from SCE's PSPS program.

RPU shall continue to maintain compliance with applicable laws by adhering to submission deadlines and providing updates to the Board of Public Utilities and Wildfire Board, and by keeping accurate records of performance metrics and data associated with the Wildfire Mitigation Plan.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

There is no fiscal impact for the review of the Riverside Public Utilities Wildfire Mitigation Plan update.

Prepared by: George R. Hanson, Utilities Assistant General Manager/Energy Delivery  
Approved by: Todd M. Corbin, Public Utilities General Manager  
Approved by: Al Zelinka, FAICP, City Manager  
Approved as to form: Kristi J. Smith, Interim City Attorney

Certifies availability  
of funds: Edward Enriquez, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer

Attachments:  
1. Wildfire Mitigation Plan  
2. Presentation