



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

16755 Finley Butte Road
P.O. Box 127
La Pine, OR 97739

www.midstateelectric.coop
info@midstateelectric.coop
541-536-2126 • 800-722-7219

Departments

Member Service Option 3
Engineering Option 4
Marketing Option 5
Operations Option 6

After-Hours Outage and Emergencies:
541-536-2165 or 800-752-5935

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Thursday
7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Closed Fridays and holidays

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

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Vice President

Dick Luebke, Sunriver

Secretary/Treasurer

Tanna King, Chemult

Daniel Jansen, Christmas Valley

Alan Parks, Fort Rock

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Ron Cass, La Pine

Garry Journey, Crescent

Gil Ernst, Gilchrist

Board meets the fourth Monday
of each month at the co-op office.

STAFF

General Manager

James "Jim" Anderson

Engineering Manager

Tom Weller

Operations Manager

Terry Dunn

CFO/Accounting Manager

Jami Steinhauer

Information Services Manager

J.D. Powers

HR and Communications Manager

Sina Streeter

Marketing Manager

Joe Hull

Attorney

Raymond Kindley

OR-23

Prepare for Wildfire Season

Wildfires are starting earlier, burning more intensely and scorching more land than ever before. What the U.S. Forest Service once characterized as a four-month-long fire season now stretches up to eight months a year.

As a result of our increased wildfire danger, the Oregon Legislature passed Senate Bill 762, which Gov. Kate Brown signed into law in 2021. The bill requires consumer-owned electric utilities to develop risk-based wildfire mitigation plans and submit them to the Oregon Public Utility Commission. MEC's 2022 wildfire mitigation plan was updated and submitted to OPUC by the June 30, 2022, deadline.

We aim to protect public safety and preserve the reliable delivery of electricity, with wildfire mitigation as a priority. MEC is committed to taking all practical actions available to prevent the devastation a wildfire could bring to the people and communities we serve.

This brings up the topic of Public Safety Power Shutoffs. PSPS is fairly new to the Pacific Northwest but has been used as a fire-mitigation tool in California for a few years. A PSPS preemptively deenergizes our power lines during high wind events combined with hot and dry weather. We incorporated a new PSPS policy into our wildfire mitigation plan.

When considering deenergization of our power lines, MEC will examine the impact on fire response, water supply, public safety and emergency communications. We consider external risks and potential consequences of deenergization, while striving to protect the communities and members we serve. Turning off power is a last-resort safety precaution.

On a case-by-case basis, MEC has historically considered deenergizing a portion of its system in response to a

known public safety issue. If we need to call a PSPS or respond to one from our power supplier, we will keep you informed.

MEC continues an aggressive vegetation management program. This includes tree trimming and brush clearing to reduce flammable material and mitigate fire risk around power lines. Central Oregon is particularly vulnerable to drought conditions, and wildfire safety is even more critical to our rural communities.

MEC invests in system hardening by building infrastructure that can withstand fire. We replace wood poles with alternative materials in fire hazard areas and strategically convert overhead lines to underground.

We all must prepare for emergency events and have a plan in case of an extended power outage. Below are some specific steps you can take:

- Update your contact information with Midstate Electric.
- Identify a backup charging method for devices that require power.
- Plan for the needs of pets or livestock.
- Build or restock your emergency kit with flashlights, fresh batteries, first-aid supplies, medications and cash.
- Designate an emergency meeting location.
- Know how to manually operate your garage door.
- Ensure backup generators are ready to operate safely.
- Identify the unique needs of your family and loved ones in the area for your emergency plan.

Please be safe and vigilant this summer. Together, we can reduce the impacts of this fire season and further protect our community.

Jim Anderson, CEO/General Manager