

RE: powerlines underground

Good evening, I am Dan Axelrod, fulltime resident in this area for almost 18 years, physicist, and member of WATER. In view of the recent presentation to the City Council by Pacific Power's new PR rep Todd Andrus, I want to talk with you about dangers of the new above-ground power lines and tall towers that Pacific Power wants to extend from the Lassen substation up to the Crystal Geyser plant. These lines go right up through an area that the CPUC itself designates as an extreme fire hazard for fires started by power lines.

What I am asking is that you (a) take a stand in opposition to this danger, and (b) push for other governmental bodies relevant here: the board of supervisors, the CPUC, and the governor, to demand that Pacific Power underground those powerlines.

There is no question that above-ground power lines are far more susceptible to weather and wind damage and to starting fires than undergrounded lines. As you know, the Sierra foothill town of Paradise was destroyed two years ago by a PGE above-ground powerline failure, and they are now rebuilding the lines entirely underground because that is safer. Indeed, Pacific Power also knows the hazard, which is why they are now doing power shutoffs on hot windy days, done twice this year already in parts of this area, a strategy that has its own obvious inherent public safety risks.

As you may know, the Lassen substation project exists largely for the benefit of the Crystal Geyser plant, still not opened for some unannounced reason. The power requirements of Crystal Geyser clearly drive the Lassen expansion. This physics fact was stated explicitly by Andrew Barnsdale of the CPUC in a 2015 internal email, obtained through a Public Records request.

"The temporary transformer at the Mt. Shasta Substation will not provide enough power supply to provide for Crystal Geysers requirements that are driving the upgrades to the Lassen Substation."

So in evaluating how to do this upgrade, please keep in mind that the added danger is taken on primarily for the financial benefit of the Japanese multinational pharmaceutical company which owns Crystal Geyser, and also Berkshire Hathaway which owns Pacific Power, while placing in jeopardy the population and environment of this area. Since there appears to be an indefinite delay in the opening of CG plant, this is an excellent opportunity to be sure the power project is done right and most safely for the greater Mt. Shasta City area.