

ACONA Meeting Notes

March 26, 2019

After introductions the following topics were covered.

Tree Trimming in Altadena by SCE to Prevent Wildfires

Presenters: David Guzman, Manager of Vegetation Management, SCE; David Ford, Government Relations Manager, SCE

Ten of the most challenging wildfires since 2015. Edison does overhead inspections with an eye to mitigating wildfires. Over a third of Edison's area (35%) is in a high risk wildfire category.

What Edison is doing:

- Hardening infrastructure.
- Installing monitoring cameras.
- Public power safety shutoff program.
- Vegetation mitigation programs.

Vegetation management:

(See agenda slides for statistics on the team and the work done.) Remove 39,000 dead/dying/diseased trees annually. Also remove trees that present a risk to SCE facilities and public safety (e.g., fast-growing trees close to power lines, trees that can't be pruned in accordance with tree pruning standards).

Tree Trimming from an Arborist's Perspective

Presenter: Rebecca Latta, Certified Tree Risk Assessor

Fire threat map: www.cpuc.ca.gov/FireThreatMaps

Edison has a wildfire plan on their website.

More trees have been shifted into high fire categories.

Municipal utilities are hardening their equipment, but not following the 12' clearance guideline.

New guidelines may allow utilities to take trees within 200' (per the new law) that are not dead, dying or diseased.

Extra clearance doesn't always improve outcomes for wind-driven fires.

New rules may be in conflict with CEQA as well as other statutes.

Clean Power Alliance (CPA)

Presenter: Christian Cruz, Community Outreach Manager

A new public agency for energy. Provides renewable energy. Have 1 million accounts. Just rolled out to 29 more agencies in unincorporated LA County for residential customers.

Expanding to non-residential customers in May. Altadena's default selection is 50% from Clean Power, a rate that results in no cost increase over SCE rates. Will reach the state's 2030 renewable energy goals this year. Customer Service Center: 888-585-3788. Can call to opt down (less from Clean Power, with a slight reduction in cost — called "Lean Power") or up (100% from Clean Power with a 7-8% increase in cost — called "Green Power"). Website: cleanpoweralliance.org

Q&A

Q: Where are the high risk fire areas for us? A: Calfire's website has maps.

A: Cause of the Thomas Fire: Caused by two power lines that slapped together during high winds. All of the big fires have been caused by equipment failure. Why aren't we investing more in equipment instead of trimming/removing trees? A: Edison has enhanced inspections to look at all equipment. But what Edison is doing on the tree side seems to be working.

Q: What kinds of upgrades are being made? A: In 2017 Edison did an 8-circuit cutover in Altadena, about \$40 million. [See ACONA November 27, 2018 meeting notes and slides.]

Q: La Canada has new insulated wire installed. What are the numbers for Altadena? A: Don't know the actual numbers; will research and return answer to ACONA.

Comment: Edison is not responsive. La Canada crews seem to do a better job than the Altadena crews.

Q: My wrought iron fence was ripped down for Edison to get into my back yard. There were new power lines when I got home. It wasn't an emergency. A: Looks like it was on the line construction side. We will look into it.

Q: In Altadena we didn't receive notification of any tier of threat. Residents don't have an opportunity to self-mitigate. Need to add that option. Has Edison considered a collaborative plan? What is the protocol for removing/mitigating? Why not remove/replace? A: It's not a new Edison practice to leave notifications. That's supposed to initiate the collaborative process. In imminent threat situations, there is no time to collaborate. If follow up work is required, they will work with the client. Note that trimming trees around power lines is governed by certain requirements and restricted by law. Not every tree trimmer is qualified to do that work.

Q: Where is Clean Power Alliance getting power from? How are you financed? A: Buying on the open market. Finance comes from customers. There was a \$10 million seed funding from the county which will be paid back.

Q: Are we being punished for holding SCE responsible for wildfires? A: Our intent is provide safe, reliable electricity to all customers.

Q: What's the difference between SCE power and CPA power? A: The opt-in is state law. If you're at 50% you're not paying anything different, but your energy is 50% renewable.

Q: Edison might pass on costs for projects already in the works to CPA. Also heard there are change fees if I want to switch. A: PCIA exit fee is assessed of everyone. CPA's fees are based on a percentage of SCE's fees.

Q: I have trouble understanding what the levels of risk are for the Edison lines. High power versus lower power. Maybe need more information on where the risks are: transformer vs. something in your back yard. A: Power lines to your house have a lower risk standard (no abrasion, e.g.).

Q: I have my own solar system. Rates include compensation for energy futures. Will our costs go down once that's paid for? Is there any push to encourage self generation and storage? Reduced rates for electric cars? A: Will get the answer for the first question. There is a community advisory committee reviewing programs, including self generation.

Q: Those who have solar already, are you taking us into account as part of the 50% renewable energy? When does the true-up occur? Will there be an annual one for SCE and a monthly one for CPA? A: There is a true-up when you switch from SCE to CPA. CPA does this monthly thereafter.

Q: Edison itself offers clean energy options. Why aren't they marketed more heavily? A: Edison has to remain neutral in terms of third-party energy providers.

Q: New growth when trees are cut: Has there been any evaluation as to what impact that has? New growth from topping is more fragile. Topping triggers more growth than judicious pruning. A: We remove seasonal growth when we do our annual trimming. As we establish the new 12' guidelines, we will be doing more cutting, but thereafter will only trim back to the initial cut levels.

Q: What has changed with the addition of CPA? Has there actually been a reduction in the overall energy bill paid by the consumer? A: We are a public utility, so we are answerable to our customers and responsive to them. [Note: the 50% option results in virtually no cost difference from all-SCE (0-1%). Since CPA's rates are percentage-based on SCE's rates, if SCE's rates go down, so will CPA's.]