

**Oregon Utility Safety Committee (OUSC)
Salem Meeting – September 18, 2009**

Minutes

Attendees

John Gander	BLEC	Rick Carter	OR-PUC
Chris Lassen	Charter Communications	John Ivey	OR-PUC
Greg Nervino	Consumers Power Inc.	JR Gonzalez	OR-PUC
Doug Caven	D2000 Safety	Steve Harkin	PacifiCorp
Kevin Barkdull	EWEB	Chris Myers	Pacific Power
Matt Halleman	EWEB	Gary M. Boswell	PGE
Mark Maguire	EWEB	Jeff Cox	PGE
Chuck Weseman	Hood River Elec.Coop	Larry Melzer	PGE
Lennie Ellis	IBEW	Herb Caballero	PGE
Ray Strath	IBEW	Diane Winchester	Qwest
Tracy Harness	NW Line NECA	Gordon Baldwin	SAIF
Ken Semore	NW Natural	Tony Schacher	Salem Electric
Sean Schafer	OR-DHS -Public Health	Michael Warren	Springfield Utility Bd
Peg Munsell	OR-OSHA		

Business Meeting

1. Introductions

2. Utility Accident Reports

- The OPUC reported on electric and natural gas reportable incidents from July 17, 2009 through September 17, 2009. OPUC reporting is required per OAR 860-24-0050.

Electric Accidents/Incidents

1. Electric Reportable Incidents: **Two**
2. Electric Non-Reportable Incidents: **One**

Gas Accidents/Incidents

1. Gas Reportable Incidents: **Three**
2. Gas Non-Reportable Incidents: **Nine**

For more information on these incidents click on "September 17, 2009," at <http://www.oregon.gov/PUC/safety/accrpts.shtml>

JR Gonzalez commented on the Electric Wind incident – the incident resulted when the utility was releasing excessive generation (above its contracted amount) over the line. The PUC is looking at discussions with independent wind generation and reviewing the entire renewable generation situation.

JR Gonzalez commented on the 7200 V contact emphasizing the importance of the public education programs that most utilities have regarding inadvertent contact.

Discussion around the theft related incident and the break in to an abandon facility. Theft statutes are on the increase and considerable increase on reports of incidents of this nature. The PUC is interested in hearing about these types of incidents even though the reporting of them is not required.

JR Gonzalez raised the PUC's concern with the large number of incidents this month and wonders if the operators are reporting "locate" related occurrences so that they can be evaluated. NW Natural representative stated that these are all "Low Pressure" locates that are performed by contract locators. NW Natural does track these incidents and evaluates. NW Natural will continue to report these.

Further discussion regarding locate related incidents with comments on the Springfield incident with a dig in of a 4" Gas Line. The locate was found to be 8 feet off and further investigation revealed that the locating company had old ineffective equipment that most likely contributed to this error.

The PUC encourages filing of the RAA Report and further that contracts with locators specify particular types of locating equipment that can be used.

1. Report on Eastern Oregon Utility Safety Committee Meeting

Rick Carter reported on the meeting with additional discussion regarding the little girl who had found a locate flag and had inserted it into a pad mount transformer making contact with the secondary side.

Minutes of the meeting were distributed.

2. Old Business

Training For Locators – JR Gonzalez stated that the OUNC board has met and are beginning to draft some language regarding locating training and possible certification. This program emphasis will be in the honor of an individual who lost their life as a result of locating errors.

Ground Laid Facilities – A particular Oregon utility has a high percentage of its new facilities installed upon the ground. The PUC has met with the operator and they have been warned on numerous occasions.

Emergency Communications – This was discussed at previous meetings and might be a good topic for a 2010 Meeting.

NW Natural – Additional discussion regarding an On-Line training program that NW Natural has created covering emergency response and public safety.

3. New Business

Pandemic Flu

Oregon Public Health – Dr. Schafer from the Oregon State Public Health Department presented material on the Pandemic (H1N1) Flu with a comparison to the Seasonal Flu. The presentation covered the similarities and differences between the two types of flu. A good discussion occurred with questions from those in attendance. As with the Seasonal Flu the emphasis for the H1N1 Flu is very similar.

- **Wash your hands**
- **Cover your cough**
- **Stay home when sick**
- **Get vaccinated**

Please contact Rick Carter if you need a copy of Dr. Schafer's presentation.

Qwest – Disaster Preparedness – Chris McCune from Qwest's Denver office called in on a conference call to present their Disaster Preparedness program as it relates to Pandemic Flu.

- Their plan is developed with a 40 to 45% absentee rate
- Plan was developed in 2005 and has been in place and tested since then.
- They have developed;
 - **H1N1 website**
 - **Hotline**
 - **Emailings**
 - **Command Center**
 - **FAQ's**

Questions followed;

- **Q-** Flu likely to hit in the fall, with a 40 to 45% absentee rate how would this affect storm recovery? **A** – If the situation is an emergency we will follow our plan bringing resources to bear from other locations
- **Q-** Does the plan take into consideration any different approach for effects of absenteeism in Load and Dispatch? **A** – Qwest employees can respond from home and with our Command Center we will have the ability to draw response from our 14 state service territory.
- **Q** – The public health system had anticipated waves of flu and this is not what happened, it has manifested itself much quicker and broader than anticipated how will you respond? **A** – We believe that our plan and the 14 state territories will give us the ability to respond to those situations.
- **Q** – Is Qwest stockpiling vaccination? **A** – At this time we are not anticipating stockpiling of vaccine. We are stockpiling hand washing supplies and respirators.

Oregon OSHA – has developed a website dealing with the use of the N95 respirators for flu. Any Non-compliance with respirator fit testing requirements and medical evaluation as it relates to the flu will be considered de minimis violations.

4. Utility Interaction and Coffee Break

5. Program: Safety In Motion – Bob Button

(Safety In Motion, Inc is a leader in preventing strains, sprains and body motion injuries. Since 1995 their mission has been to help people lead healthier lives.)

Bob presented an overview of the Safety In Motion program discussing primarily strains and sprains and how they have become such a large problem for us because we carry with us the baggage of all of our past physical experiences.

Currently SAIF statistics show that Sprains and Strains are the #1 source of claims. They currently calculate 15,000 plus claims per year at an average cost of \$6100.00 per claim.

Thanks to Bob Button and Safety In Motion for his presentation.

Chairman Ken Semore concluded the meeting at 12:00 pm.

The next OUSC meeting will be November 20th, 2009 in Salem.

Respectfully submitted by:
Steve Harkin, 2009 OUSC Secretary