

LIGHT READING

Essential information for this wildfire season

What you need to know!

In recent years, the hot and dry summer months have increasingly presented challenges in our area. Since 2024, Washington state has designated May as Wildfire Awareness Month. This initiative serves as a fantastic opportunity to discuss and learn about safety measures that everyone can adopt during this critical time.

Utilities throughout the region are actively implementing preventative measures to tackle these threats through comprehensive wildfire mitigation plans. Inland Power is committed to diligently monitoring our service territory, especially in areas identified as having a moderate to high risk for wildfires and enhance public safety. When necessary, we will transition our system settings in these regions to non-reclose or “fire safety mode” within our system.

What is fire safety mode?

Fire safety mode offers an alternative operational strategy for our electrical distribution system, emphasizing system security and public safety over standard operations.

Under typical conditions, when an external object, such as a tree branch, contacts our power lines, our devices detect the short circuit. They briefly interrupt power and

then attempt to restore it automatically. If the obstruction is cleared, power is quickly reestablished, leading to only a minor service interruption or a brief blink.

In fire safety mode, however, this automatic restoration feature is disabled (non-reclose) in areas identified as having a higher wildfire risk. As a result, service disruptions that would normally be momentary will be extended, requiring a crew to manually inspect the situation and restore power.

Fire safety mode is slated to begin around June 1, 2026; however, this date is subject to change based on weather conditions. Once activated, fire safety mode typically stays in effect for the duration of the dry season and will only be deactivated when burn bans are lifted and cooler temperatures return.

Has Inland Power implemented any initiatives to enhance its resilience?

Inland Power is collaborating with EnXchange to create a specialized weather-alerting dashboard that integrates directly with our lines and infrastructure. This technology will enable real-time data usage for fire-safety modes, reducing outages and improving safety. Additionally, weather cameras will be installed to enhance visibility of wind, temperature, and precipitation, facilitating

quicker and more informed decision-making.

Our engineering and operations teams are improving system sectionalization by adding reclosers and equipment that divide circuits into smaller sections. This isolates outages to limited areas, minimizing service disruptions – like when a tree falls, only the affected line segment loses power.

Additionally, after improving primary distribution lines, we are now focusing on inspecting secondary lines serving individual homes. This includes maintaining equipment and removing debris to ensure safety and reliability, further enhancing the overall reliability of the system.

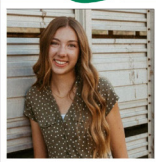
What can I do?

We have provided useful information on the back page of this Light Reading issue to help you create defensible space around your property. If there's a tree on your property that is dead, dying, or uprooted and presents a risk of falling into overhead power lines, please contact our office to schedule an assessment with one of our vegetation management specialists. They will evaluate the tree and coordinate its removal if needed. For more information, please visit our Wildfire Safety page at inlandpower.com.

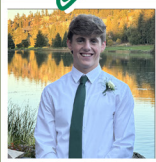
Congratulations!



Dennis Mackleit
Spokane Falls Community College



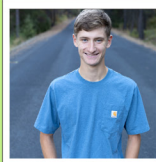
Keira Maloney
St. John-Edicott High School



Landen Mathews
Boise State University



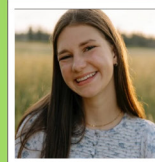
MarcheLe McNeilly
University of Idaho



Breden Gough
Wilbur-Creston High School



Addison Jay
Mt. Spokane High School



Sally Peterson
Ferris High School



Isabelle Sosa
Davenport High School



Keira Trent
Central Valley High School



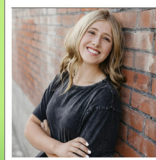
Terrence Yu
UCLA



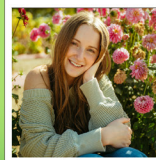
Josie Wynecoop
Davenport High School



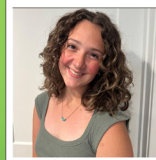
Clair Moehrle
University of Idaho



Samantha Pierce
Clemson University



Samiah Smoger
Wilbur-Creston High School



Joslyn Spencer
Azusa Pacific University

BEST WISHES TO ALL OUR SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS THIS FALL!



2026 ANNUAL MEETING

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Congratulations to our newly re-elected Inland Power Board Members

Randy Suess and Brian Slaybaugh!

District 5
Randy Suess

Cheney, WA
IPL Member since 1976



District 7
Brian Slaybaugh

Pomeroy, WA
IPL Member since 1985



Cliff Foster



Jason Pope

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to Cliff Foster and Jason Pope for their participation as candidates in the election process. Your time and dedication are truly valued, and we wish you both the very best!

Thank you for making our Annual Meeting and Board Election a success!

We had a fantastic turnout at the 2026 Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 28! A huge thank you to our valued IPL members who joined us and participated in the 2026 Board Elections. A special shoutout to our guest speaker, Adam Ratliff, the Armchair Engineer (check out his website at armchairengineer.com), as well as the amazing Northern Quest staff and our own Inland Power team for their incredible efforts before, during, and after the event! 🍷

Advocating for reliable and affordable power!

IPL leaders head to Olympia

The 2026 Washington State Legislature adjourned in March after a 60-day session driven by fiscal pressure, tax debates, and climate goals. In this second year of the 2025–27 biennium, lawmakers focused on budget adjustments and unresolved policy issues. The session was a sprint, dominated by one key issue.

Lawmakers approved a 9.9% income tax on households earning over \$1 million, starting in 2028. Supporters say it addresses Washington's regressive tax system and funds family tax credits, early learning, and business tax relief. Despite opposition and legal concerns, the measure passed after a historic 24.5-hour debate and was signed by Governor Bob Ferguson.

Our Inland Power delegation took part in a series of crucial face-to-face meetings aimed at advocating for the interests of our membership and all regional utilities. During these discussions with lawmakers, we focused on addressing the ongoing threat to affordable energy, which poses significant challenges to our community. We also emphasized the continuing need for grid infrastructure hardening and enhancement, which are essential steps in ensuring the reliability and sustainability of our energy systems for the future. These efforts highlight our commitment to both protecting our members' interests and supporting the broader regional energy framework.

Additionally, wildfire mitigation was also addressed in our meeting discussion, as our state continues to be significantly affected by persistent dry climate conditions throughout the summer months. These conditions increase the risk of wildfires, making it crucial for us to implement effective strategies to protect our communities and natural resources.

ENERGY SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- **Energy policy** remained a key theme, tied to budget and cost of living issues. The Legislature kept Washington's Climate Commitment Act framework, the cap and invest system for reducing greenhouse

gas emissions. Despite calls for major changes, the session focused on minor adjustments, oversight, and prep for upcoming rulemaking on allowance budgets and market linkage with California and Québec.

- **Energy affordability** was also a key topic in budget talks. Lawmakers focused on protecting ratepayers and providing assistance due to utility cost pressures from carbon compliance and fuel prices. Meanwhile, the capital budget continued funding for grid modernization, clean energy and electrification projects, all supporting the state's decarbonization goals.



From left to right: **Chris Davis, IPL Board Member - District 3, Jeff Holy, WA State Senator, and Kristina Bahr, IPL Board Member - District 4.**

The 2026 session highlighted a Legislature ready to propose new taxes without addressing the state's fiscal imbalance, relying on accounting maneuvers and short-term fixes, leaving structural sustainability questions unanswered.

Energy policy debates followed a similar pattern. The state reaffirmed its climate framework but stopped short of confronting growing concerns about whether future energy supply will keep pace with electrification, reliability needs and economic growth. Rather than moving decisively toward fiscal discipline or energy certainty, the session postponed hard tradeoffs, setting the stage for more difficult decisions in the next biennium. 🌱

Key Washington State Bills



Energy Bills Enacted

SSB 6355

Establishes a Washington Electric Transmission Authority governed by a ten-member board to support statewide transmission expansion and upgrades, including tribal clean energy participation.

HB 2575

Streamlines and reduces energy and utility reporting requirements while preserving consumer protections and encouraging reinvestment of savings into low-income assistance.

ESSB 6246

Revises treatment of emissions-intensive, trade-exposed facilities under the CCA by removing prior plan requirements and simplifying reporting obligations.

SSB 5982

Includes qualifying public port districts under CETA when they generate and sell electricity.

HB 2296

Allows regulated utilities to invest in energy efficiency programs for rental housing and earn a return on cost-effective investments.

E3SHB 1960

Updates renewable energy tax incentives, creates new exemptions beginning in 2028, and establishes community and tribal investment programs.

2ESHB 1210

Expands clean energy-related property tax exemptions in targeted urban areas while tying eligibility to prevailing wage and workforce standards.

HB 2367

Subjects the TransAlta Centralia coal plant to the CCA; the bill took effect immediately upon signing.

2SHB 2215

Lowers emissions compliance thresholds for certain fuel suppliers and tightens reporting requirements.

Environment, Utilities, and General Government

HB 2426

Allows greater flexibility in permit appeals by authorizing alternative hearing structures when unanimously agreed upon.

E2SHB 2418

Streamlines residential permit review timelines across jurisdictions and clarifies responsibilities of special purpose districts.

E2SHB 1903

Creates a voluntary, statewide low-income energy assistance program administered by the Department of Commerce beginning July 1, 2026.

ESSB 5925

Expands the Attorney General's civil investigative authority in noncriminal matters involving constitutional, civil rights, and labor laws.

HB 2334

Standardizes rounding rules for in-person cash transactions.

HB 1302

Allows municipal utilities to waive connection charges for qualifying industrial symbiosis projects.

Safeguarding your home

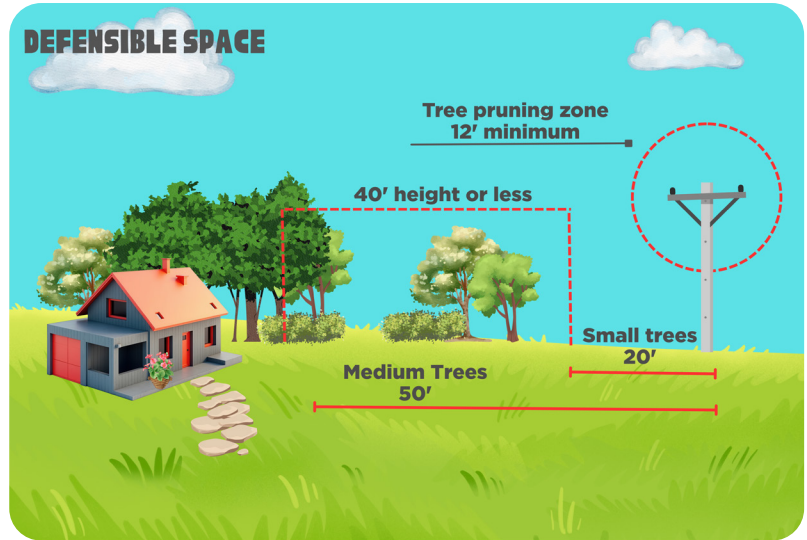
Take measures to create defensible space around your home.

These straightforward and manageable tasks can be accomplished over the weekend to improve your home's safety against embers and radiant heat.

Steps to create a defensible space:

- Clear roofs and gutters of leaves, debris, and pine needles.
- Install 1/8 inch metal mesh screening to minimize embers that could enter through vents in the eaves.
- Repair or replace any damaged or loose window screens and broken windows.
- Use wire mesh to screen or box-in areas beneath patios and decks, preventing the accumulation of debris and combustible materials.
- Relocate flammable materials away from wall exteriors, including mulch, flammable plants, leaves, needles, firewood piles, and any highly combustible items.
- Remove any items stored beneath decks or porches.

This information is provided by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). To learn more about potential assistance to create defensible space around your home through the NFPA Firewise USA® community, please visit inlandpower.com/wildfire-safety.



The idea of the home ignition zone (HIZ) is categorized into three distinct zones and based on research of how homes ignite.

IMMEDIATE ZONE: 0 TO 5 FEET

The area surrounding the home, particularly the zone extending 0 to 5 feet from the furthest attached exterior point, is designated as a non-combustible zone. Research shows that this region is crucial to address quickly, as it is particularly vulnerable to embers.

INTERMEDIATE ZONE: 5 TO 30 FEET

Establish a defensible space ranging from 5 to 30 feet from the furthest exterior point of your home. Consider employing strategic landscaping techniques to create breaks that can significantly impact and diminish fire behavior.

EXTENDED ZONE: 30 TO 100 FEET, OUT TO 200 FEET

Aim for a distance between 30 to 100 feet, with the possibility of extending up to 200 feet. The goal is not to eliminate the fire entirely but to hinder its progression, ensuring that the flames remain smaller and contained to the ground.



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