

# Wildfire Mitigation Plan



Due to the growing threat of catastrophic wildfires, NorthWestern Energy is exploring new ways to protect our customers and communities from wildfires.

Our 2024 Wildfire Mitigation Plan allows us to identify the risks of operating an electrical grid in wildfire-prone areas and implement strategies to reduce or manage these risks.

Our Wildfire Mitigation Plan represents our commitment to protecting our customers and the communities in Montana from this growing threat.

## What is NorthWestern Energy doing to prevent wildfires?



### Maintaining a resilient electrical grid –

Starting in 2010, NorthWestern Energy began a major investment to improve our distribution system so it would be reliable, able to grow, optimized, responsive to all customers, energy efficient, cost effective and state of the art. While these investments did not focus specifically on wildfire mitigation, effective management of our transmission and distribution assets provided a foundational core to reduce wildfire risk.



**Managing vegetation** – We have proactive efforts in place to mitigate trees or tree branches falling into power lines, to maintain healthy forests and to decrease fuel loading. This includes doing aerial and ground

assessment of our powerlines and removing any vegetation that is at high-risk of causing a wildfire.



**Situational awareness** – We have a Wildfire Operational department which focuses on monitoring weather forecasts and environmental conditions across our service territory. We're also implementing new field cameras that will allow us to monitor our system and detect wildfires as soon as they start.



**Operational practices** – New system technologies provide us with the ability to actively change how the electrical grid operates during high-risk conditions. We may also adjust work practices such as tool choice, vehicle access routes or the potential stoppage of proactive work.



**System preparedness** – We're increasing the scope and frequency of ground and aerial assessments of our electrical system so we can repair issues before they cause fires. We're also using a technology called Lidar to evaluate portions of the system and using a risk model to prioritize maintenance work.



**Communication and outreach** – Ensuring the safety of customers and the public is of utmost importance to NorthWestern. The strategy to achieve this includes informing the public on NorthWestern's efforts to mitigate wildfire risk, proactively communicating as conditions change, potentially causing interruption to electric service, and outreach after an event has occurred to keep the public apprised of the situation.



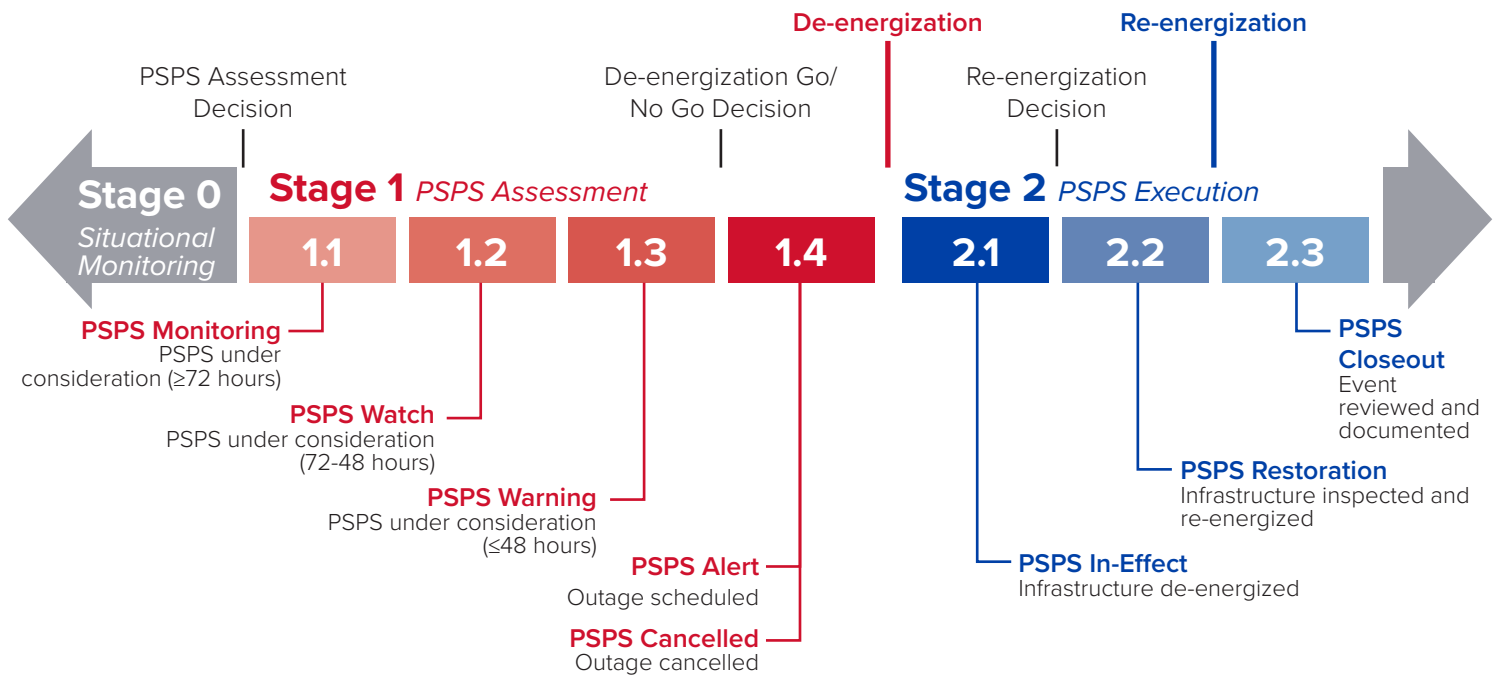
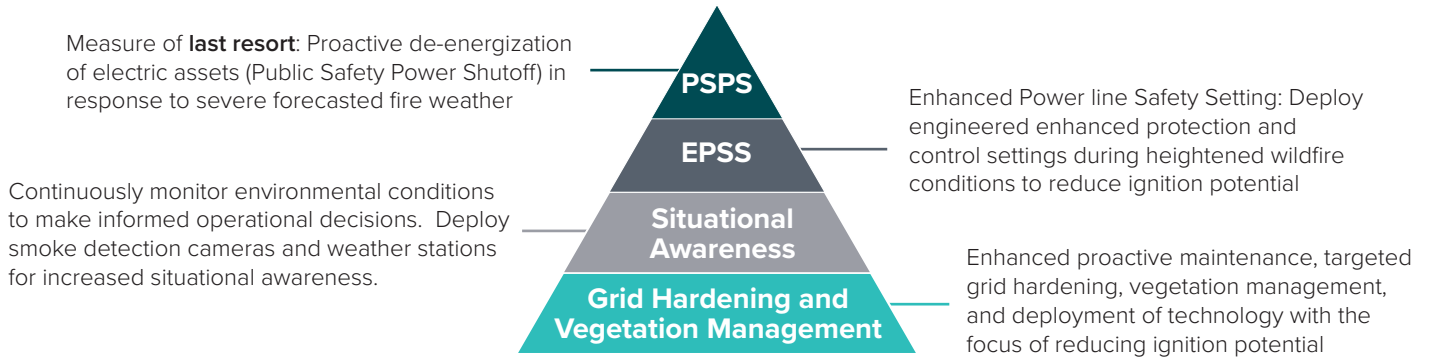
**Public Safety Power Shutoffs** – As a last resort, we will de-energize electrical infrastructure in specific areas, during periods of time where the risks of continuing to operate electrical infrastructure are unacceptably high. Known as Public Safety Power Shutoffs, or PSPS, this is an increasingly common method for energy companies to prevent wildfires.

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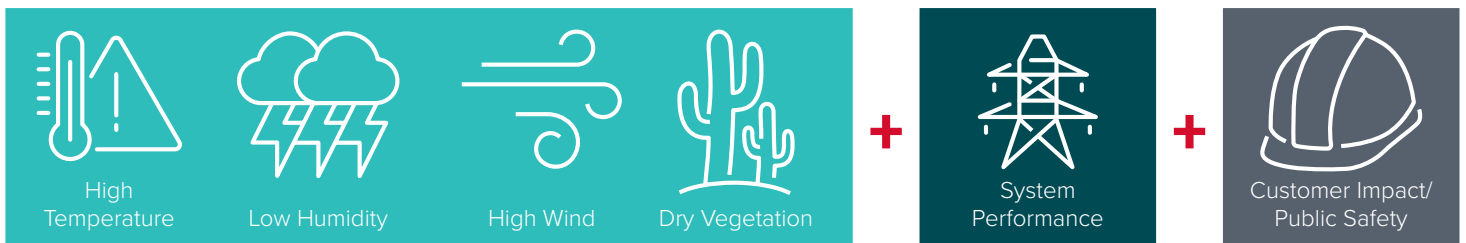
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## Public Safety Power Shutoffs

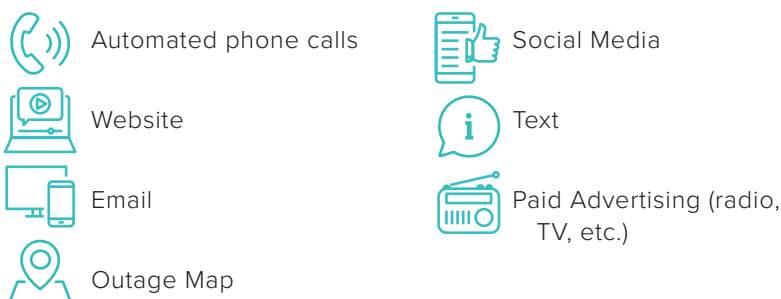
Our Public Safety Power Shutoff plan helps us prevent wildfires and keep our communities safe. If extreme weather conditions threaten our ability to safely operate the electrical grid, we will turn off power to help protect public safety.



### How does NorthWestern determine when it should implement a PSPS?



### How will customers be informed of a PSPS?



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