

CONNECT



JULY 2026

WHAT IS FIRE-SAFE MODE?

Every summer, hot temperatures and dry conditions increase the risk of wildfires. To help reduce that risk, Pend Oreille PUD uses special settings called Fire-Safe Mode and Elevated Fire-Safe Mode.

First, here's the most important thing to know:

Pend Oreille PUD does not proactively shut off power because of wildfire danger.

Unlike some neighboring utilities, we do not turn off the lights on purpose when fire danger increases. Our goal is to keep power on.

So what do these modes actually do?

Think about the circuit breaker in your house. If it trips, you probably wouldn't keep flipping it back on over and over without first figuring out what caused the problem.

Fire-Safe Mode works the same way.

Normally, if a tree branch hits a power line or another problem causes a brief outage, the PUD's electric system automatically tries to turn the power back on. During wildfire season, those extra attempts could create sparks.

In Fire-Safe Mode, the system is more cautious. Instead of repeatedly trying to restore power, it waits for crews to make sure everything is safe before electricity is restored. That can mean more outages and longer outages, but it also helps reduce the chance of starting a wildfire.

During periods of extreme fire danger, the PUD may use Elevated Fire-Safe Mode. This is the most cautious setting we use. The system becomes even more sensitive, and line crews must inspect power lines inch-by-inch for any fire danger before power is restored.

Again, Elevated Fire-Safe Mode is not a Public Safety Power Shutoff. Any outage that happens during Fire-Safe Mode or Elevated Fire Safe Mode is just a normal outage caused by things like weather, equipment problems, or trees hitting power lines, not because the PUD has shut power off.

We are not turning off power ahead of time. We are simply being extra careful about how we restore power after an outage occurs.

These additional precautions help protect homes, forests, and communities while keeping the lights on!

LOVE THE RIVER? JOIN US FOR THE 2026 AQUATIC WORKSHOP



Help protect the Pend Oreille River and surrounding waterways by joining your PUD and other local and regional experts for a free day of presentations on aquatic plants, invasive species, shoreline health, and more.

Friday, July 10: 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Camas Center, Usk

The workshop is free and open to the public. In-person registration is now open by visiting the Pend Oreille County website and Zoom participants may register through July 9.

Your Photo Could Be in the 2027 PUD Calendar!



Got a great shot of Pend Oreille County? We're looking for photos that showcase the beauty of our region, landscapes, wildlife, water, and outdoor life for the 2027 PUD calendar.

Selected images may be featured in the printed calendar, on our website, or on social media.

Send submissions to: communications@popud.org

Deadline: August 31
Please ensure the photo is high-resolution & include your name and where the photo was taken.

CONNECT



Employee Spotlight: Meet the Community Network System Technicians

While Pend Oreille PUD is best known for delivering reliable electricity, the utility also operates a growing fiber network that helps connect thousands of homes and businesses throughout the county. This month, we're spotlighting Community Network System (CNS) Technicians Brad Scott and Riley Bauer, the crew responsible for building, maintaining, and repairing the network that keeps many locals connected to work, family, and the outside world.

For Brad and Riley, no two days are the same. Their work can range from responding to customer outages and repairing damaged fiber lines to installing new services, pulling fiber, checking radio repeaters, and splicing cables. In fact, the PUD's network stretches from downtown Spokane all the way to

the Canadian border, providing an essential service to communities where reliable internet and cellular coverage can be limited.

"Our day can change in a heartbeat," Brad says. "We start by taking care of outages and then move into planned work, but weather and other unforeseen circumstances can quickly change the schedule."

Beyond helping customers stream movies or browse the internet, the fiber system plays a critical role in supporting remote workers, local businesses, and emergency communications. It also serves as the backbone for the PUD's electric system, allowing operators to remotely control equipment and quickly respond to outages and other events, especially during wildfire season.

For both technicians, helping customers is one of the most rewarding parts of the job.

"Customer appreciation is probably the thing I enjoy the most," Brad says. "It's nice to have customers show gratitude for the work you are doing."

Riley says restoring service to customers in isolated parts of the county can be especially meaningful. In some areas with little or no cell coverage, a fiber connection is the only way families can stay in touch.

"Some people rely heavily on their fiber connection because it's their only means of communication," he says. "Being able to restore that connection for them is rewarding."

Brad joined the PUD nearly three years ago, attracted by the opportunity to learn

something new and take on a different challenge. Riley came to the telecommunications department after starting at the PUD as a meter reader and learned the ropes through on-the-job training.

When they're off the clock, both enjoy making the most of the outdoors. Brad spends his free time hunting, camping, and being with family, while Riley and his wife stay busy with their baby daughter, enjoying boating, camping, hunting, dirt bikes, and snowmobiles.

Thanks to Brad and Riley's work behind the scenes, thousands of customers across Pend Oreille County can stay connected, whether that's for work, school, emergency communications, or simply keeping in touch with loved ones.

CONNECT WITH US!

Main Line: 509-447-3137
North County: 509-446-3137
South County: 509-242-3137
TDD: 800-833-6388
24-Hour Automated Phone Line: 844-971-1058



Commissioners:
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Dave Rick: drick@popud.org 509.671.7952
Troy Moody: tmoody@popud.org 509.991.1327
Website: www.popud.org

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

Tue, July 7 - Newport
Tue, July 21 - Newport

Thur, July 2 -
PUD Offices Closed
Happy Independence
Day!



Riley



Brad