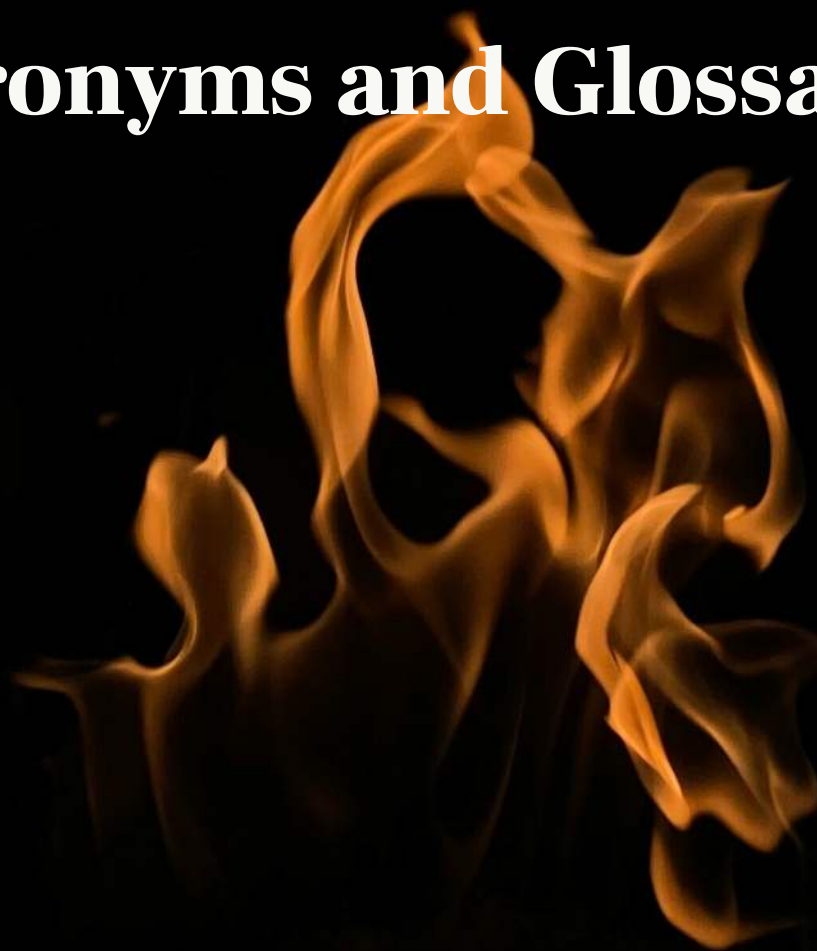




# **Wildfire Workbook**

## **Acronyms and Glossary**





# Comprehensive Glossary of Wildfire Mitigation and Utility Management Terms

This glossary provides terms and acronyms into a comprehensive reference for the Wildfire Workbook for utility wildfire mitigation and management.

## 1. Acronyms and Initialisms

The following table provides a quick-reference guide for the acronyms and initialisms used in utility regulation and wildfire management.

Acronym	Definition
<b>A&amp;G</b>	<b>Administrative and General:</b> A category of utility expenses that includes overhead costs like salaries, legal fees, and damages. 11
<b>ACSS</b>	<b>Aluminum Conductor Steel-Supported:</b> A type of high-capacity conductor with high tensile strength used in grid hardening efforts. 22
<b>APPA</b>	<b>American Public Power Association:</b> An industry organization that provides resources and encourages utilities to develop comprehensive communication and wildfire mitigation plans. 33
<b>ASL</b>	<b>American Sign Language:</b> A visual language used by the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, for which some utilities provide pre-recorded messages during PSPS events. 44
<b>BLM</b>	<b>Bureau of Land Management:</b> A federal agency that manages public lands and oversees vegetation management within utility rights-of-way on those lands. 55



Acronym	Definition
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<b>BPA</b>	<b>Bonneville Power Administration:</b> A federal power marketing administration in the Pacific Northwest that implements wildfire mitigation and emergency response strategies. <sup>66</sup>
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<b>CPUC</b>	<b>California Public Utilities Commission:</b> The regulatory agency in California that oversees utility wildfire mitigation, cost recovery, and public safety, including the implementation of PSPS. <sup>77</sup>
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<b>CRC</b>	<b>Community Resource Center:</b> A facility established by utilities during PSPS events to provide services like device charging, water, and information to affected communities. <sup>8888</sup>
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<b>CSO</b>	<b>Customer Strategy Officer:</b> A response team role responsible for advocating for customers during an emergency by providing updates and addressing outage concerns. <sup>99</sup>
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<b>DERs</b>	<b>Distributed Energy Resources:</b> Localized power generation and storage resources, such as microgrids and battery storage, that can enhance community resilience during outages. <sup>1010</sup>
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<b>DRC</b>	<b>Disaster Recovery Center:</b> A facility set up by state and federal agencies (like FEMA) after disasters to provide aid and recovery support to affected communities. <sup>1111</sup>
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<b>DSIC</b>	<b>Distribution System Improvement Charge:</b> A cost recovery mechanism used in states like Pennsylvania that allows utilities to recover costs for infrastructure upgrades through a quarterly surcharge. <sup>1212</sup>
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<b>EEI</b>	<b>Edison Electric Institute:</b> An association representing U.S. investor-owned electric companies that provides national guidelines on wildfire mitigation. <sup>1313</sup>
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<b>EFD</b>	<b>Early Fault Detection:</b> A technology that identifies potential electrical equipment issues, enabling repairs before failures occur and reducing ignition risk. <sup>1414</sup>
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Acronym	Definition
<b>EIMA</b>	<b>Energy Infrastructure Modernization Act:</b> Legislation in Illinois that established a rider for utilities to recover costs for smart grid and distribution upgrades. 1515
<b>EMAC</b>	<b>Educational Messages Advisory Committee:</b> A committee of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) that recommends clear, simple, and accurate messaging for emergency alerts. 1616
<b>EOC</b>	<b>Emergency Operations Center:</b> A centralized hub used by utilities for strategic oversight and coordination of resources, communications, and recovery efforts during emergencies like wildfires. 1717
<b>EPRI</b>	<b>Electric Power Research Institute:</b> A research organization that collaborates with utilities to test and validate new technologies, such as Ground Level Distribution Systems (GLDS). 1818
<b>EPSS</b>	<b>Enhanced Powerline Safety Settings:</b> Advanced safety settings that rapidly de-energize power lines during a fault to prevent ignitions. Also referred to as fast-trip settings. 1919
<b>ERP</b>	<b>Emergency Response Plan:</b> A plan mandated by regulators (e.g., under CPUC General Order 166) that outlines a utility's strategy for responding to emergencies and major outages. 2020
<b>ESCC</b>	<b>Electricity Subsector Coordinating Council:</b> A council that coordinates with the Department of Energy to manage communications and response during energy sector emergencies. 2121
<b>FEMA</b>	<b>Federal Emergency Management Agency:</b> A federal agency that provides disaster response support and oversees national alert systems like IPAWS. 2222
<b>FERC</b>	<b>Federal Energy Regulatory Commission:</b> The federal agency that regulates the interstate transmission of electricity and establishes national vegetation management standards. 23232323



Acronym	Definition
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<b>FLPMA</b>	<b>Federal Land Policy and Management Act:</b> A federal law that governs rights-of-way for utility infrastructure on public lands managed by agencies like the BLM. <sup>2424</sup>
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<b>FPI</b>	<b>Fire Potential Index:</b> A forecast that describes the potential for fires to ignite and spread, used by utilities to inform operational decisions like PSPS. <sup>25252525</sup>
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<b>GIS</b>	<b>Geographic Information Systems:</b> A technology used to create detailed digital maps that track the location and condition of utility assets like power lines and poles. <sup>2626</sup>
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<b>GLDS</b>	<b>Ground Level Distribution System:</b> An innovative approach where power lines are installed at or near ground level to reduce exposure to wind and falling trees, serving as a lower-cost alternative to undergrounding. <sup>27272727</sup>
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<b>GMP</b>	<b>Grid Modernization Plan:</b> An investment plan used in states like Massachusetts to recover costs for smart grid technologies and cybersecurity through a tracker mechanism. <sup>2828</sup>
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<b>GPR</b>	<b>Ground-Penetrating Radar:</b> A technology used to track and map underground utility infrastructure, such as cables and pipes. <sup>2929</sup>
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<b>GRC</b>	<b>General Rate Case:</b> A formal regulatory proceeding where a utility proposes adjustments to customer rates to cover its operating costs, capital investments, and a fair return. <sup>30303030</sup>
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<b>GRIP</b>	<b>Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnerships:</b> A Department of Energy program that provides federal funding to support utility projects like vegetation clearance and grid hardening. <sup>3131</sup>
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<b>GSRP</b>	<b>Grid Safety and Resiliency Program:</b> A Southern California Edison (SCE) program demonstrating the long-term value and effectiveness of covered conductors in wildfire mitigation. <sup>3232</sup>
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## Acronym Definition

<b>HAWC</b>	<b>Hazard Awareness and Warning Center:</b> A center used by utilities like PG&E to monitor wildfire risks and coordinate emergency response. 3333
<b>HFRA</b>	<b>High Fire Risk Area:</b> A utility-specific designation for areas with high wildfire risk, used for internal risk modeling and mitigation planning. This designation often builds upon and may be more expansive than the state's official HFTD map. 34343434
<b>HFTD</b>	<b>High Fire-Threat District:</b> An area officially designated by state agencies (e.g., in California) as having an elevated or extreme risk for utility-associated wildfires. 35353535
<b>ICS</b>	<b>Incident Command System:</b> A standardized management system used by utilities and emergency agencies for seamless coordination during incidents like wildfires. 36363636
<b>IPAWS</b>	<b>Integrated Public Alert and Warning System:</b> A national system developed by FEMA for disseminating emergency alerts, including Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs). 373737
<b>IPPs</b>	<b>Independent Power Producers:</b> Entities that operate power generation facilities and may own limited transmission lines; they can be held liable if their equipment contributes to a wildfire. 3838
<b>IPUC</b>	<b>Idaho Public Utilities Commission:</b> The regulatory body in Idaho that oversees utilities, including ordering the deferral of increased wildfire insurance costs. 3939
<b>IRP</b>	<b>Integrated Resource Plan:</b> A plan used by utilities in states like Georgia to recover costs for initiatives like renewable energy and grid upgrades through a rate rider. 4040
<b>ISA</b>	<b>International Society of Arboriculture:</b> An organization that provides credentials for professionals, such as Certified Arborists, involved in utility vegetation management. 4141

## Acronym Definition

<b>ISO</b>	<b>Independent System Operator:</b> An organization responsible for coordinating, controlling, and monitoring the operation of the electrical power system. 4242
<b>IVM</b>	<b>Integrated Vegetation Management:</b> A program that combines methods like selective herbicide application, mechanical trimming, and prescribed burns to control vegetation growth near power lines. 43434343
<b>LiDAR</b>	<b>Light Detection and Ranging:</b> A remote sensing technology that uses laser light to create high-resolution 3D maps, employed by utilities to assess vegetation encroachment near power lines. 44444444
<b>LNO</b>	<b>Liaison Officer:</b> An ICS role responsible for coordinating with representatives from government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private entities during an incident. 4545
<b>MNS</b>	<b>Mass Notification System:</b> A system that broadcasts messages to inform employees and the public of an emergency, sending real-time alerts and instructions. 4646
<b>MOU</b>	<b>Memorandum of Understanding:</b> A formal agreement between parties. A 2016 MOU between federal agencies and utilities facilitates cooperative vegetation management on federal lands. 4747
<b>NERC</b>	<b>North American Electric Reliability Corporation:</b> An international regulatory authority whose mission is to assure the effective and efficient reduction of risks to the reliability and security of the grid. 4848
<b>NEPA</b>	<b>National Environmental Policy Act:</b> A federal law that may require environmental analysis for certain vegetation removal projects on federal lands. 4949

## Acronym Definition

<b>NFPA</b>	<b>National Fire Protection Association:</b> An organization that establishes standards and codes for fire safety and emergency management, including for utility communications and operations. 5050
<b>NIMS</b>	<b>National Incident Management System:</b> A standardized approach to incident management developed by FEMA, utilized by local governments for coordinating emergency services. 5151
<b>O&amp;M</b>	<b>Operation and Maintenance:</b> A category of recurring utility expenses for day-to-day activities (operations) and work to preserve physical plant functionality (maintenance). 5252
<b>OIC</b>	<b>Officer-in-Charge:</b> A high-level management position, used by utilities like PG&E, with the authority to make decisions regarding Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS). 5353
<b>PBR</b>	<b>Performance-Based Regulation:</b> A regulatory framework that shifts focus from cost recovery to rewarding utilities for achieving specific outcomes, such as improved reliability or efficiency. 54545454
<b>PEDS</b>	<b>Protective Equipment and Device Settings:</b> A term used to describe operational measures like fast-trip settings that are integrated with vegetation management in high-risk areas. 5555
<b>PG&amp;E</b>	<b>Pacific Gas and Electric:</b> A major investor-owned utility in California that implements extensive wildfire mitigation strategies. 5656
<b>PIO</b>	<b>Public Information Officer:</b> An ICS role responsible for handling media inquiries and managing all strategic communications during an emergency. 57575757
<b>PML</b>	<b>Probable Maximum Loss:</b> A risk management metric estimating the maximum financial loss expected from a single catastrophic event, assuming safety measures function as intended. 58585858
<b>PPE</b>	<b>Personal Protective Equipment:</b> Safety equipment, such as arc flash or fire-resistant gear, required for utility crews working in hazardous conditions. 5959

## Acronym Definition

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**PSPS** **Public Safety Power Shutoff:** A proactive measure where utilities intentionally de-energize power lines during high-risk weather to prevent equipment from starting wildfires. 60606060

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**PUC** **Public Utility Commission:** A state regulatory agency responsible for overseeing rates and services of public utilities. 6161

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**RAMP** **Risk Assessment Mitigation Phase:** A phase in a California utility's General Rate Case application where it identifies and assesses significant risks to its system. 6262

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**REFCL** **Rapid Earth Fault Current Limiter:** A technology that senses when electrical equipment falls and acts to limit the current, preventing potential ignitions. 6363

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**RESA** **Renewable Energy Standard Adjustment:** A surcharge used by utilities in Colorado to recover costs for renewable energy projects. 6464

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**ROWS** **Rights-of-Way:** The legal right, established by grant from a property owner, for a utility to make use of the property for a specific purpose, such as installing and maintaining power lines. 65656565

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**RSE** **Risk Spend Efficiency:** A cost-effectiveness metric that measures the amount of wildfire risk reduction achieved per dollar spent on mitigation efforts. 66666666

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**SAIDI** **System Average Interruption Duration Index:** A reliability metric that measures the average outage duration for each customer served, calculated as the sum of all customer interruption durations divided by the total number of customers. 67676767

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**SAIFI** **System Average Interruption Frequency Index:** A reliability metric that measures the average number of interruptions that a customer experiences, calculated as the total number of customer interruptions divided by the total number of customers. 68686868

## Acronym Definition

<b>SBC</b>	<b>System Benefits Charge:</b> A surcharge on customer bills used in states like New York to fund energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other clean energy programs. <sup>6969</sup>
<b>SCADA</b>	<b>Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition:</b> A system for remote monitoring and control of industrial processes, used by utilities to manage grid operations. <sup>7070</sup>
<b>SCE</b>	<b>Southern California Edison:</b> A major investor-owned utility in Southern California that implements extensive wildfire mitigation strategies. <sup>7171</sup>
<b>SDG&amp;E</b>	<b>San Diego Gas &amp; Electric:</b> A major investor-owned utility in Southern California that implements extensive wildfire mitigation strategies. <sup>7272</sup>
<b>SIR</b>	<b>Self-Insured Retention:</b> An amount of loss, similar to a deductible, that a utility pays before its insurance coverage begins. <sup>7373</sup>
<b>SRP</b>	<b>Sensitive Relay Profile:</b> A term used by San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) since 2010 to describe sensitive settings for reclosers as part of its wildfire mitigation strategy. <sup>7474</sup>
<b>TCRF</b>	<b>Transmission Cost Recovery Factor:</b> A cost recovery mechanism used in Texas that allows utilities to recover costs for transmission infrastructure upgrades. <sup>7575</sup>
<b>TO</b>	<b>Transmission Owner:</b> An entity that owns and maintains the high-voltage transmission lines that make up the bulk of the electric grid. <sup>7676</sup>
<b>TRAQ</b>	<b>Tree Risk Assessment Qualification:</b> A credential from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) for professionals qualified to inspect and assess tree risk. <sup>7777</sup>
<b>USFS</b>	<b>U.S. Forest Service:</b> A federal agency responsible for managing national forests and grasslands, which coordinates with utilities on vegetation management. <sup>7878</sup>

## Acronym Definition

<b>USoA</b>	<b>Uniform System of Accounts:</b> A standardized framework prescribed by FERC for utilities to classify and report their financial costs. 79797979
<b>VRI</b>	<b>Vegetation Risk Index:</b> A metric used by utilities like SDG&E to assess ignition risk from vegetation near infrastructure and prioritize management efforts. 80808080
<b>WAPA</b>	<b>Western Area Power Administration:</b> A federal power marketing administration that uses technologies like LiDAR and drones to monitor rights-of-way and manage wildfire risk. 8181
<b>WASPC</b>	<b>Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs:</b> An organization that employs a multi-level system for wildfire alerts and warnings, similar to "Ready, Set, Go!". 8282
<b>WEA</b>	<b>Wireless Emergency Alerts:</b> A component of FEMA's IPAWS that sends geotargeted text messages to mobile devices without requiring users to opt-in. 83838383
<b>WECC</b>	<b>Western Electricity Coordinating Council:</b> A regional entity that promotes Bulk Electric System reliability in the Western Interconnection, which can provide technical support for evaluating multi-state utility wildfire mitigation efforts. 8484
<b>WFAS</b>	<b>Wildland Fire Assessment System:</b> A system that provides fire potential forecasts to help guide utility vegetation management decisions. 8585
<b>WMP</b>	<b>Wildfire Mitigation Plan:</b> A comprehensive plan submitted by utilities to regulators detailing strategies to prevent, combat, and respond to wildfires caused by their infrastructure. 86868686
<b>WUI</b>	<b>Wildland-Urban Interface:</b> The zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development, where communities are at greater risk from wildfire. 8787

## 2. Key Terminology and Concepts


This section defines key terms related to wildfire mitigation strategies, regulatory mechanisms, financial tools, and legal standards.


- **Advanced Conductors:** Specially engineered overhead power lines designed to minimize wildfire ignition risks and improve grid efficiency<sup>8888888888</sup>. This includes covered conductors and Aluminum Conductor Steel-Supported (ACSS) wire.
- **Advanced Sensors and Monitoring Systems:** Technology, including sensors, cameras, and weather stations, deployed by utilities to monitor grid health and environmental conditions in real time to enable proactive risk management and early fault detection.
- **Animal Guards:** Protective coverings or insulation installed on electrical equipment like transformers and poles to prevent animals from causing short circuits and sparking wildfires.
- **Captive Insurance:** An insurance company that is wholly owned and controlled by its insureds (the utility) to insure its own risks<sup>92</sup>. It is a form of self-insurance used to gain control over coverage and potentially reduce commercial insurance costs.
- **Community Resource Centers (CRCs):** Facilities established by utilities during Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events to provide essential services like device charging, Wi-Fi, water, and information to affected communities.
- **Cost Recovery:** The regulatory process through which a utility recovers its prudently incurred costs of providing service from its customers via approved rates.
- **Covered Conductors:** Overhead power lines coated with multiple layers of insulating material to prevent electrical faults, arcing, and sparks if the lines contact vegetation, animals, or debris. They are a cost-effective alternative to undergrounding for reducing ignition risk.

- **Defensible Space:** The area around a structure that has been cleared of flammable vegetation to slow or stop the spread of wildfire. Utilities encourage property owners to create it as part of community preparedness.
- **Deferral Accounts:** A regulatory accounting mechanism that allows a utility to track specific incurred costs (e.g., increased wildfire insurance premiums) that are expected to be approved for recovery in a future rate case.
- **Distributed Energy Resources (DERs):** Localized power systems, such as microgrids and battery storage, that can operate independently from the main electrical grid, enhancing community resilience during outages.
- **Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** A centralized command and control facility where a utility or government agency coordinates its strategic response to an emergency, managing resources, communications, and decision-making aligned with the Incident Command System (ICS).
- **Emergency Response Planning:** The process of creating and rehearsing plans for responding to wildfire incidents, including establishing protocols for internal coordination, resource deployment, and communication with external agencies.
- **Enhanced Powerline Safety Settings (EPSS):** Advanced protective settings on grid equipment, also called fast-trip settings, that cause a circuit to de-energize rapidly (often within one-tenth of a second) upon detecting a fault to prevent ignitions.
- **Fast-Trip Settings:** A rapid-action setting on a protective device like a recloser that interrupts a circuit almost instantly upon detecting a fault. This measure is used during high-risk conditions to prevent a sustained arc from igniting vegetation.
- **General Rate Case (GRC):** A formal regulatory proceeding where an electric utility proposes to set or adjust its customer rates by presenting its revenue requirement, including operating expenses and capital investments.


- **Grid Hardening:** The process of upgrading and strengthening electrical infrastructure to make it more resistant to wildfire and other environmental threats, including using fire-resistant poles, covered conductors, and undergrounding power lines.
- **Ground Level Distribution System (GLDS):** An innovative, hybrid method of installing power lines in a protective conduit at or near ground level as a lower-cost alternative to traditional undergrounding, eliminating exposure to wind and falling trees.
- **High Fire-Threat Districts (HFTD):** Geographic areas formally designated by a regulator (like the CPUC) as having an elevated or extreme risk of utility-associated wildfires, subject to stricter mitigation standards.
- **High Fire Risk Areas (HFRA):** A term used by utilities to designate areas for focused mitigation that may be broader than official HFTD maps, incorporating utility-specific risk factors like fire spread modeling and historical weather data.
- **Ignition Frequency:** A key performance metric that tracks the number of wildfires ignited by utility equipment over a specific period, often normalized by circuit miles for standardized comparison.
- **Incident Command System (ICS):** A standardized, on-scene management system used by utilities and emergency agencies to integrate facilities, equipment, personnel, and communications for effective incident management and seamless coordination with first responders.
- **Infrastructure Visibility and Health:** The practice of tracking the location and condition of utility assets (poles, transformers, power lines) using technologies like GIS and LiDAR to support proactive maintenance and data-driven risk assessment.

- **Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM):** A holistic approach to controlling vegetation near power lines that combines multiple techniques, including mechanical trimming, selective herbicide applications, and prescribed burns, to establish low-growing, fire-resistant plant communities.
- **Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS):** A national system managed by FEMA for disseminating emergency alerts to the public through multiple channels, including Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) and the Emergency Alert System.
- **Inverse Condemnation:** A legal doctrine where a property owner can sue a regulated utility to obtain compensation for property damage caused by public use, leading courts in some states to hold utilities under strict liability for wildfire damages.
- **Investment Plans:** Detailed proposals submitted by utilities to regulators outlining specific capital-intensive projects, such as grid modernization or wildfire mitigation upgrades, to justify cost recovery.
- **Ladder Fuels:** Vegetation, such as underbrush, that can carry a ground fire up into the tree canopy or onto electrical equipment, escalating it into a crown fire.
- **Microgrids:** Localized grids, a form of DERs, that can disconnect from the traditional grid and operate autonomously, providing continuous power to critical facilities or communities during outages like PSPS.
- **Mutual Insurance:** An insurance structure where the company is owned by its policyholders, often providing tailored, cost-effective coverage for industry-specific risks with profits returned to policyholders.

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- **Negligence (Simple, Gross, Per Se):** Legal standards used to determine liability:
    - **Simple Negligence:** Failure to exercise reasonable care to prevent harm.
    - **Gross Negligence:** A conscious and voluntary disregard of the need to use reasonable care, likely to cause foreseeable grave harm.
    - **Negligence Per Se:** Negligence established by violating a statute or regulation intended to protect the public (e.g., vegetation clearance standards).
  - **Performance-Based Regulation (PBR):** A regulatory framework that links a utility's financial earnings to its performance in achieving specific outcomes (e.g., reliability, safety, efficiency) through financial incentives or penalties.
  - **Pole Strengthening, Wrapping, and Replacement:** A grid hardening technique involving replacing traditional wooden utility poles with more resilient, fire-resistant materials (steel or composite) and wrapping pole bases to prevent ignition from ground fires.
  - **Probable Maximum Loss (PML):** A risk management metric that estimates the largest financial loss expected from a single catastrophic event, such as a wildfire, assuming protective systems function as intended.
  - **Proactive Vegetation Management:** A strategy involving the regular and systematic trimming, pruning, and removal of vegetation near power lines to prevent contact with energized conductors.
  - **Protective Equipment and Device Settings (PEDS):** A broad category of operational adjustments made to grid control equipment (reclosers, fuses) to minimize ignition risk during high-threat conditions, including implementing fast-trip settings and disabling automatic reclosing.

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- **Prudency Review:** A regulatory process where a public utility commission evaluates a utility's past expenditures to determine if they were reasonable and necessary, as only "prudently incurred" costs are typically recoverable from ratepayers.
  - **Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS):** A last-resort, proactive wildfire mitigation strategy where an electric utility temporarily de-energizes power lines in high-risk areas during extreme fire danger to prevent equipment from starting a fire.
  - **Public Information Officer (PIO):** A designated role in the ICS or EOC responsible for managing all communication with the public, media, and other stakeholders, ensuring information is accurate and timely.
  - **Ready, Set, Go! Program:** A standardized public education program providing a three-tiered framework for wildfire alerts and evacuation warnings: Ready (prepare), Set (be ready to evacuate), and Go (evacuate immediately).
  - **Reclosers:** Automatic switching devices on a power distribution system that interrupt power flow when a temporary fault is detected and then automatically attempt to restore power. For wildfire mitigation, the automatic reclosing function is often disabled during high-risk conditions.
  - **Reinsurance:** Insurance purchased by an insurance company from one or more other insurance companies to manage risk, allowing primary insurers to offer higher coverage limits for catastrophic risks like wildfire liability.
  - **Reverse 911:** An emergency notification system that enables authorities to send pre-recorded voice messages, texts, and emails to telephones in a specific geographic area for time-sensitive information like evacuation orders.

- **Riders and Trackers:** Ancillary cost recovery mechanisms that allow utilities to adjust rates to recover specific costs outside of a GRC. A rider is a surcharge for a specific program, while a tracker recovers actual, often volatile, costs like fuel or insurance.
- **Risk Spend Efficiency (RSE):** A cost-effectiveness metric that measures the amount of wildfire risk reduction achieved per dollar spent on mitigation efforts, calculated by dividing total risk reduction by total cost.
- **Securitization:** A financing mechanism used to recover large, extraordinary costs by issuing low-interest bonds repaid over time by a dedicated charge on customer bills, avoiding sharp rate increases.
- **Self-Insurance:** A risk management strategy where a utility sets aside its own funds (cash reserves or a captive insurance subsidiary) to cover potential losses instead of purchasing external insurance.
- **Shaded Fuel Breaks:** A vegetation management technique where trees and undergrowth are strategically thinned to reduce the density of flammable fuels, slowing wildfire spread and creating safer areas for firefighters.
- **Strict Liability:** A legal standard that holds a party responsible for damages caused by their actions or operations, regardless of fault or negligence.
- **System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI):** A reliability metric that measures the average total duration of service interruptions experienced by a customer over a defined period.
- **System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI):** A reliability metric that measures the average number of times a customer experiences a sustained service interruption over a defined period.
- **Uniform System of Accounts (USoA):** A standardized framework prescribed by FERC for utilities to classify and report their financial information and operating costs, ensuring consistency in regulatory accounting.

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- **Undergrounding Power Lines:** The practice of relocating overhead power lines and equipment below ground, the most effective but also the most expensive method for eliminating ignition risk from downed lines or vegetation contact.
  - **Vegetation Management:** A critical component of wildfire mitigation involving inspecting, trimming, and removing vegetation near power lines to maintain safe clearance and prevent contact that could cause faults or fires.
  - **Vegetation Risk Index (VRI):** A specialized metric used to assess the ignition risk posed by vegetation near utility infrastructure, helping utilities prioritize management efforts.
  - **Wildfire Fund:** A state-level fund (e.g., in California) established to help utilities cover liability costs from catastrophic wildfires, capitalized by contributions from shareholders and ratepayers to stabilize the financial health of utilities.
  - **Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP):** A comprehensive document that a utility submits to its regulator detailing its strategies, practices, and investments for preventing, combating, and responding to wildfires caused by its infrastructure.



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