

MOTION

In January 2021, a young woman and her father tragically lost their lives from electrocution caused by downed Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) wires. These live electrical wires were downed due to the failure of a power pole crossarm which had been inspected by DWP and had passed that safety inspection. Litigation resulted from the deaths and the emotional distress suffered by the surviving family members resulting in a \$38 million settlement recently approved by the DWP Board of Commissioners.

This tragedy led to an uncovering of a faulty inspection process which incorrectly categorized thousands of power poles as passing safety inspections when in fact those power poles were in violation of such safety standards. The revamped inspection process using outside contract services identified 1,884 poles in the top tier safety threat requiring repair within 24 hours ("priority one poles"). DWP is currently in the process of repairing those poles and has begun notifying adjacent residents and businesses via door hangers. The location of these poles has not been shared with the City Council or the public.

Additionally, this inspection process has identified an additional estimated 80,000 power poles that are also in need of less immediate repair, but that if left unaddressed would within twelve months once again result in poles creating an imminent danger ("priority level two poles", as defined by General Order No. 95 and other regulations from the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)). DWP has not disclosed the location of these poles either.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Council INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power to REPORT to the Council as soon as the possible on the following:

1. The status of "priority one" pole repairs, including how many were classified as priority one at the highest point of the backlog, the number of poles still requiring urgent repairs, the average time to repair new priority poles, and the plan and timeline for completing these urgent repairs;
2. The steps the department has taken to address inspections and ensure that (i) the data collected by internal crews and contractors are reconciled accurately and publicly reported where legally permissible, and (ii) that work is dispatched in a timely manner and properly prioritized;
3. The status and location of "priority two", or less urgent, pole repairs, and how the Council and residents can be assured that the department is prioritizing potential hazards within that universe of power poles;
4. A detailed explanation of how a backlog of priority repairs was allowed to develop and the changes to LADWP policies and processes to ensure that no threat to public health or safety goes unaddressed;

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5. What investments the department has made in improving the power distribution infrastructure over the past 10 years and how these critical pole repairs were not made in the context of Power System Reliability Program and other initiatives to improve reliability and resiliency;
6. What resources will be necessary to ensure the timely completion of the pole repair program;
7. Specific recommendations to ensure that the now deficient inspection repair program is meeting the safety needs of the public;
8. Planned ongoing investments to improve reliability and resiliency of the power system.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Council INSTRUCT (i) the Department of Water and Power to PROVIDE quarterly written reports to Council on the implementation of its Power System Reliability Programs, including the pole inspection program, status of pole repairs, a map with the location of the top priority and secondary priority poles, and compliance with state regulations, and (ii) the DWP continue to do so until all of the currently identified second tier priority repairs are fully completed.

Presented by 
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