



## **NEWS RELEASE**

Date: July 16, 2008 at 2:35pm  
Release Date: Immediately  
Contact: Cassandra Ulven, 503-441-9324 (pager)

### **(Firefighters Contend with Hazards While Fighting Brush Fire in West Linn)**

Around 9:41a.m. this morning, firefighters from Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue responded to reports of a down power line, explosion and brush fire above the West Linn Paper Company near Willamette Falls Drive. When crews arrived, they found a large patch of grass and brush burning near the base of a transformer. Because of steep terrain, water supply challenges, hot weather and power-line hazards, additional crews were brought to the scene, including firefighters from Clackamas County Fire District #1 and Lake Oswego Fire Department. *(More details about the specific cause of the down power line, as well as subsequent outages, are being released by Portland General Electric via FlashNews.)*

Fire commanders' first concerns were surrounding the fire and avoiding high-voltage power lines which were still energized. Firefighters were broken up into groups to fight the fire from each side, and spray down the perimeter of the area to keep the fire from spreading uphill. Without a fire hydrant near the scene, firefighters used water tenders to shuttle water and feed hose lines. West Linn Police officers shut down Willamette Falls Drive for nearly two hours to keep the lanes clear for water supply operations.

Since the fire spread mostly to terrain above a high cliff wall, it was initially difficult for fire commanders to determine whether the fire had spread to the base of the cliff. Boats from the Water Rescue Consortium were used to relay information, as well as restrict recreational boat traffic on the Willamette River due to concerns of the down power line that was still in the water. Thanks to the KOIN news helicopter, a fire commander was also able to view the fire from an aerial perspective. He was able to see other hazards such as power lines and relay the information to ground crews.

Nearly fifty firefighters and responders worked to extinguish the fire. A coating of fire resistant foam was also used to prevent any hot spots from flaring up. There were no injuries as a result of the fire and there were never any threatened structures. Fire Commanders worked closely with PGE and the West Linn Paper Company during the incident. The mills operations were significantly impacted due to power outages and it's estimated by mill operators that a day of production was compromised.

News Release from: PGE

PGE UPDATE ON WILLAMETTE FALLS/WEST LINN OUTAGE

Posted: July 16th, 2008 3:11 PM

PORTLAND, Or. - Around 9:30 a.m. a barge with a crane that was doing work on the Willamette River came into contact with a PGE power line. The line that came down is a 13 kV distribution line. Earlier reports indicated the line was a 56 kV transmission line, which is not the case.

Approximately 2,500 West Linn customers lost power for a short time. Power was restored to customers just before noon. PGE crews continue to work on the scene to repair the downed line.

PGE is working with local emergency responders to determine the exact cause of the fire at the scene. We expect to have that information in the next day or two.

The barge was operated by Wilsonville Concrete, which was contracted by PGE to clear debris from the river at the PGE Sullivan Plant on Willamette Falls.

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Elaina Medina  
Public Information Specialist  
Portland General Electric

503.464.8790 (office)  
503.251.4099 (after hours)  
[www.portlandgeneral.com](http://www.portlandgeneral.com)

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