

Peak Electric Group Urges Columbia County Homeowners to Get Backup Power Properly Installed Before Peak Wildfire Season

Utilities can call a Public Safety Power Shutoff with as little as an hour of final notice

SCAPPOOSE, OR, UNITED STATES, August 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Peak Electric Group](#) is urging homeowners across Columbia County and the greater Portland area to have backup power properly installed and inspected now, as the region moves into the most active stretch of wildfire season and the period when planned power shutoffs are most likely.

The Oregon Public Utility Commission approved utility wildfire mitigation plans for the 2026 season, each of which includes Public Safety Power Shutoff procedures. Portland General Electric states that it can call a shutoff anywhere in its service area if conditions make it unsafe to operate the grid, and that while it aims to give 24 to 48 hours of advance notice, a second notice may come only one to four hours before power is cut.

For rural properties, that window is short. Well pumps stop working within minutes of an outage, which means no water for drinking, washing, or sanitation. Septic pump chambers stop cycling. Anyone relying on powered medical equipment has a much more serious problem.

The dangerous shortcut

The company's larger concern is how homeowners bridge that gap. Peak Electric Group says the improvised approach, running a cord from a portable generator into a dryer outlet or wiring one directly into a panel without a transfer switch, is the most dangerous thing a homeowner can do with backup power.

An improperly connected generator can push electricity back out onto the utility line. That energizes conductors that line crews and neighbors have every reason to believe are dead. It is a known cause of serious injury and death among utility workers during outage restoration.

The company also notes the more common hazard: portable generators produce carbon monoxide and must never be run in a garage, a crawlspace, a shed, or near an open window or vent, even with the door open.

"People do not do this because they are careless. They do it because the power is out, it is 95

degrees, and they are trying to keep the freezer running. The problem is that the person most likely to get hurt is a lineman who has no way of knowing your generator is feeding his line. A transfer switch solves it. It is not an expensive part. It just has to be there."

Lead time is the real constraint

A code-compliant installation, whether that is a transfer switch and inlet for a portable unit or a permanently wired standby generator, involves a panel capacity assessment, a permit, the installation itself, and an inspection. That sequence does not compress well, and demand for it spikes immediately after the first shutoff or major outage of the season.

Many older homes in the area also need panel or service upgrade work before backup power can be added at all, which extends the timeline further.

"If your plan for this September is to figure it out when the notice comes, you do not have a plan".

Homeowners can also check whether their address sits in a higher-risk area using their utility's wildfire risk map, and should confirm their utility account contact details are current so shutoff notifications actually reach them.

Peak Electric Group is licensed in both Oregon and Washington and handles panel and service upgrades, whole home rewires, HVAC wiring, electrical troubleshooting, and generator installation, alongside commercial and industrial work. The company can be reached at 503-397-7818.

About Peak Electric Group

Peak Electric Group, LLC is a full-service residential, commercial, and industrial [electrical contractor based in Scappoose](#), Oregon, serving the greater Columbia County area including Portland, Vancouver, and Hillsboro. Residential services include panel and service upgrades, whole home rewiring and remodels, HVAC wiring, electrical troubleshooting, and generator installation. Commercial and industrial services include tenant improvements, LED lighting retrofits, emergency electrical repairs, motor control wiring, switchgear installation, and new equipment hook-ups. The company is a member of NECA and a signatory with IBEW Local 48. Licensed in Oregon, CCB #206443, and Washington, license #PEAKEEG854KA. Located at 50425 Columbia River Hwy., Scappoose, OR 97056.

Lisa Appleby
Service Scalars
[email us here](#)

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.